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ADOOR GOPALAKRISHNAN

'We are living in the days of super censor'

First, films are censored by government, and then on social media, says *Vidheyam* director

INTERVIEW » PAGE 12



POWER MILESTONE

Understanding nuclear fusion breakthrough

WORLD » PAGE 13



BOUNDARY DISPUTE

Bommai, Shinde meet Amit Shah in Delhi

NEWS » PAGE 11

STUDY OF STATE

Census is a mirror of past and present

India is better off, but more needs to be done

OPINION » PAGE 7



MESSI MESMERISES

Argentine wave drowns Croatia

SPORT » PAGE 15

Wholesale price inflation fell to 5.85% in November

Vikas Dhoot
NEW DELHI

India's wholesale price inflation fell sharply to 5.85% in November from 8.4% in October, thanks to a broad-based dip in price rise led by food items whose inflation slipped from 6.5% in October to just 2.2%.

Inflation in primary articles at the wholesale level halved from 11% in October to 5.5% in November, while manufactured products saw price rise easing from 4.4% to 3.6% over the same period.

Fuel and power inflation dropped to 17.35% in November, nearly half the 33.1% recorded in September and lower than October's 23.2% level.

Wholesale price inflation had slipped below 10% for the first time in 19 months in October.

CONTINUED ON
» PAGE 10

THE HINDU ARCHIVES

Hooch tragedy claims several lives in dry Bihar

Officials put death toll at six, while villagers say at least 20 have died; several of the victims lost eyesight, while others are battling for life; family members block highway in protest; three held

Amaranath Tewary
PATNA

Six villagers have died in a suspected hooch tragedy in Saran district in dry Bihar, the district administration said on Wednesday. However, villagers told mediapersons that at least 20 people have died in several villages.

"Three people have been taken into custody," Prohibition, Excise and Registration Minister Sunil Kumar said.

Family members told mediapersons that the victims had gone to the Doyila village market under the Ishuapur block in Chhapra on Monday night and consumed liquor. "Their condition deteriorated on Tuesday and five of them died the same night while others lost their lives on



At a loss: Family members of the hooch tragedy victims grieving in Bihar's Saran district on Wednesday. PTI

Wednesday morning," said a family member of one of the deceased.

Irate family members of the deceased blocked the State Highway in Chhapra and disrupted the movement of traffic. They burnt tyres and shouted slogans against the district administration, demanding

compensation for the kin of the hooch tragedy victims. They also demanded action against those involved in the incident.

"The death toll will increase by tomorrow [Thursday] as several critically ill people are undergoing treatment in private hospitals secretly for fear

of the police," the protesting villagers said. Reports said several of the victims had lost eyesight before breathing their last, while others were struggling for life in hospitals. Four of them have been referred to the Patna Medical College and Hospital.

170 dead this year

Bihar has been a dry State since April 2016 under stringent laws. Official records show that about 170 people died in Bihar from January to November this year due to consumption of spurious liquor.

Chief Minister Nitish Kumar blamed the Opposition BJP legislators when they raised the issue in the Assembly.

CONTINUED ON
» PAGE 10

IN BRIEF



Check if service parameters being met: AAI to DIAL

NEW DELHI
The Airports Authority of India on Monday issued a notice to Delhi International Airport Limited to examine whether it was failing to meet the "service quality requirements" specified in their mutual pact. » Page 3

Maharashtra govt. to monitor interfaith couples

MUMBAI
The Maharashtra government has constituted a 13-member committee to collect details of couples in interfaith and intercaste marriages, and the maternal families of the women involved if they are estranged. » Page 11

Row in House over China border tussle

The Hindu Bureau

NEW DELHI

The Opposition parties walked out of both Houses of Parliament on Wednesday after the government

declined to allow a discussion on the India-China border issue. In the Lok Sabha, the walkout was led by Congress leader Sonia Gandhi.

As soon as the Zero

Hour began, Congress leader of the House, Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury, demanded a discussion on the India-China border situation and gave the example of late former Prime

Minister Jawaharlal Nehru allowing a discussion in the Lok Sabha on the India-China war in 1962.

CONTINUED ON
» PAGE 10

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AAI writes to DIAL to examine if service parameters being met

2006 agreement says check-in should not take more than 20 minutes and security check not more than 10 minutes; the first bag should arrive on conveyor belt within 10 minutes of landing

Jagriti Chandra

NEW DELHI

The Airports Authority of India (AAI) on Monday issued a notice to Delhi International Airport Limited (DIAL) to examine whether it was failing to meet the "service quality requirements", which were specified in an agreement signed between the two, at the Indira Gandhi International (IGI) Airport.

The notice comes as massive overcrowding at IGI resulted in long waiting time for passengers as well as some of them missing their flights as the airport sees unprecedented travel demand that has exceeded pre-COVID levels. This forced the Minister for Civil Aviation, Jyotiraditya Scindia, to step in and announce measures to ease congestion. A Parliamentary panel on Transport, Tourism and Culture has summoned DIAL CEO Virendra Kumar Jaipuria on Thursday.

Status of services

"The AAI has asked DIAL to give the status of services as per standards as specified in the Operations, Management and Development Agreement (OMDA) and mitigate measures initiated if any to remove the deficiency in services," an AAI spokesperson said.

Under the agreement



Massive overcrowding at IGI Airport has resulted in long waiting time for passengers as well as some of them missing their flights. PTI

signed in 2006, the AAI granted DIAL the exclusive right for "operation, maintenance, development, design, construction, upgradation, modernisation, finance and management" of IGI for a period of 30 years, extendable for another 30 years.

As per Schedule 3 of the OMDA, the airport operator has to meet certain "objective service quality requirements" within a specific number of years after the signing of the agreement.

These include services such as maximum queuing time – within two years of the deal the airport has to

ensure that for check-in the maximum waiting time is 5 minutes for business class and 20 minutes for economy, and for security check as many as 95% of passengers are cleared within 10 minutes. Similarly, 95% of passengers should not take more than 10 minutes for clearing customs, immigration and quarantine, which should be achieved within the first five years.

As far as baggage delivery is concerned, the first bag should arrive on the conveyor belt within 10 minutes, and the last bag should arrive within 30 minutes after the aircraft lands. The airport should

The notice comes as massive overcrowding at IGI resulted in long waiting time for passengers as well as some of them missing their flights

also ensure availability of wheelchairs within five minutes for 100% of passengers who need them.

There are other service parameters too, which include time taken to find parking space, maximum waiting time for taxis, and response to customer complaints on phone.

Penalty of 0.5%

If the airport operator fails to meet these requirements, it is liable to pay a penalty of 0.5% of the revenue for every month that the standards do not meet the laid down requirements.

As per the OMDA, DIAL has to submit quarterly reports to the AAI detailing its compliance with these service requirements, and the last such report for the period of July 2022 to September 2022 was submitted on October 12.

The AAI spokesperson said that if required, action will be taken as per the provisions of the agreement. The airport spokesperson declined to comment on the AAI letter.

Activist memoir row: Ajit Pawar slams Maharashtra govt.

Shoumojit Banerjee
PUNE

Condemning the Eknath Shinde-Devendra Fadnavis-led government's "interference" in the fields of art and literature, Maharashtra Leader of the Opposition and senior Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) leader Ajit Pawar on Wednesday said the State's decision to withdraw an award for the Marathi translation of alleged Maoist ideologue Kobad Ghandy's memoir smacked of an "undeclared emergency".

In another development, Laxmikant Deshmukh, chairman of the State government's Language Advisory Committee, said he was stepping down in protest against the manner in which the government withdrew the award.

Four members of the literary board have resigned in protest against the ruling government's "one-sided" decision to withdraw the award for the translation of Mr. Ghandy's memoir.

Mr. Deshmukh, in his letter addressed to Minister for Marathi language Deepak Kesarkar, said that while Maharashtra had not witnessed such incidents, the first incident of rejection (since the Maharashtra government started this literature award) was in 1981.

On December 6, the Marathi Language Department of the government had announced an award for literary translation in the memory of renowned 'Tarkatirtha' (logician) Laxman Shastri Joshi to Anagha Lele for her Marathi translation of Mr. Ghandy's book *Fractured Freedom: A Pri-*

The State govt. was trying to impose an "undeclared emergency" by scrapping the literary award

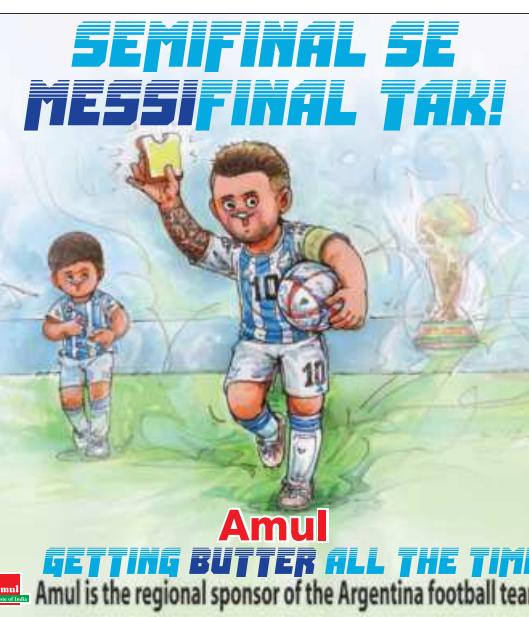
son Memoir. However, a government resolution issued on Monday this week said the government was reversing the decision of the selection committee, dissolving the committee and withdrawing the award (which carries a cash prize of ₹1 lakh) for "administrative reasons."

'Highly improper'

Hitting out at the State government's unwarranted interference in cultural fields of art and literature, Mr. Pawar said that despite the award being announced after careful deliberation by the committee of the Sahitya Sanskriti, it was highly improper of the government to dissolve the award selection committee.

Likewise, Mr. Pawar's colleague in the Opposition 'Maha Vikas Aghadi' alliance, Shiv Sena (Uddhav Balasaheb Thackeray) leader Sanjay Raut, too, censured the State government's decision. "There was no need to scrap this award which was given for a translation of Kobad Ghandy's book. Maharashtra is a progressive State and we have respected all streams of thought," said Mr. Raut.

Sources say that the government's 'jittery' decision allegedly followed social media outrage over the award being given to a translation of a book by a one-time Maoist ideologue.



IN BRIEF

Moosewala case: security beefed up for 13 policemen

Security cover has been increased for 13 police officers who are involved in investigating the murder case of Punjabi singer Sidhu Moosewala after they received threats from a Canada-based gangster Lakhbir Singh Landa, official sources said on Wednesday. All 13 officers are attached to the Delhi police. They have been given round-the-clock security cover. A strict vigil will also be kept outside their residences here in Delhi, they said. Shubhdeep Singh Sidhu, popularly known as Sidhu Moosewala, was shot dead in Punjab's Mansa district on May 29 this year. PTI

3 dead in stampede at Bengal blanket distribution drive

Three persons were killed and five others seriously injured on Wednesday in a stampede at a blanket distribution programme in West Bengal's Paschim Bardhaman district, the police said. The stampede occurred when people rushed towards the dais in an attempt to get blankets after the Leader of the Opposition in the State Assembly Suvenu Adhikari of the BJP left the venue. The ruling TMC alleged that the incident occurred due to "chaos created by" Adhikari who described the deaths and injuries as "unfortunate". Asansol Mayor Bidhan Upadhyay, a TMC leader, claimed that around 5,000 people were present at the programme. PTI

PFI leader doing fine, NIA tells HC

The Hindu Bureau

NEW DELHI

The National Investigation Agency on Wednesday told the Delhi High Court that the jailed former chairman of the outlawed Popular Front of India, E. Abubacker, was "absolutely fine" and receiving treatment.

The agency's submission came while responding to Mr. Abubacker's plea challenging a trial court order refusing to release him on medical grounds.

Timings

DELHI	
THURSDAY, DEC. 15	
RISE 07:06	SET 17:27
RISE 23:43	SET 12:08
FRIDAY, DEC. 16	
RISE 07:07	SET 17:27
RISE 00:00	SET 12:37
SATURDAY, DEC. 17	
RISE 07:08	SET 17:28
RISE 00:37	SET 13:06

Delhi Weather

max min

Delhi City 25 10
Safdarjang 25 10
Palam 23 10

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26°C The weather will be dry. Morning will be slight cold with mist and haze. Day will be comfortable with cool breeze. Night also will be slight cold.

Delhi Palam Tomorrow

25°C Morning will be slight cold with shallow fog and mist. Day will be comfortable with cool breeze. Night also will be cool.

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Traffic blues



A massive traffic jam on the Delhi-Gurugram expressway near Sirhaul toll plaza on Wednesday. PTI

SC gives Centre three months to form T.N.-Karnataka water disputes tribunal

The Hindu Bureau

NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Wednesday gave the Centre three months to constitute an Inter-State River Water Disputes Tribunal to resolve the dispute between Tamil Nadu and Karnataka over constructions in Pennar river.

Tamil Nadu had filed an original suit in 2018 against Karnataka's work on check

dams and diversions' structures in the river.

Tamil Nadu told the Supreme Court that Karnataka had no right to utilise the waters of the Pennar river to the detriment of the people of Tamil Nadu. The flowing water of an Inter-State river was a national asset, and no single State can claim exclusive ownership of it, Tamil Nadu said.

In a previous hearing, the Centre had stated that

Tamil Nadu's complaint was referred to a negotiation committee, and there was "no likelihood of settlement by negotiation".

The Centre had submitted that it was "likely to constitute a tribunal to resolve the dispute between the two States".

Tamil Nadu argued that a 1892 agreement over the river water was "valid and binding" on the party States. Tamil Nadu said that

Karnataka, without furnishing the details of its new diversions or new schemes or projects and obtaining the consent of the lower riparian State, should not suo motu proceed to construct check dams/pump directly from the river or from the tanks draining into the river, which would clearly amount to an infringement of the rights of the inhabitants of the Plaintiff State [Tamil Nadu].

Why Agniveers, other cadre have different pay scales: HC

The Hindu Bureau

NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Wednesday asked the Centre why there was a difference in the pay scale of Agniveers and the regular cadre in the Army.

A Bench of Chief Justice Satish Chandra Sharma and Justice Subramonian Prasad asked Additional Solicitor-General Aishwarya Bhati, who was representing the Centre, "If the job profile is same, then how can you justify different pay? A lot will depend on the job profile. Get instructions on this and put it on an affidavit."

Ms. Bhati said that as the Agniveer cadre was separate from the regular cadre, their terms and conditions as well as responsibilities were also different from sepoys (soldiers).



Not regular service

"Agniveer has been created as a separate cadre. It will not be counted as regular service. After serving as an Agniveer for four years, if he or she volunteers and is found fit, then his journey in the regular cadre begins," Ms. Bhati submitted.

The Centre was responding to a batch of petitions challenging the Agnipath scheme of recruiting soldiers.

It said that below the officers' post, Agnipath was the only way to join the armed forces now at the soldiers' level and only the medical section had been kept out of it.

Many candidates have moved the court to direct the armed forces to resume the recruitment process cancelled due to the introduction of the Agnipath scheme.

The Centre, however, has argued that no appointment letter has ever been issued to the candidates who had applied under various recruitment advertisements, issued by the Air Force, Army and Navy.

In an earlier affidavit, the Centre has defended the Agnipath scheme saying that it aims at enhancing the youthful profile of armed forces, reducing av-

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BJP's Satpal Satti could be Leader of Opposition in Himachal

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI / CHANDIGARH

The BJP, which failed to repeat its government in the recent Himachal Pradesh Assembly election, could choose Satpal Satti as its leader in the Assembly.

Sources said the party was likely to finalise the name of Mr. Satti as leader of the BJP legislature party. Mr. Satti has the support of Jai Ram Thakur, the former Chief Minister, added sources.

Mr. Satti, who won from the Una constituency, had worked as the BJP State president in the past. Under his leadership, the BJP had won the 2017 Assembly and 2019 parliamentary elections. Mr. Satti, however, lost the election from Una in the year 2017 after winning consecutively in 2003, 2007 and 2012. In the 2022 Assembly election, the Congress won 40 seats and formed the government, while the BJP, which got only 25 seats, would be sitting in the Opposition.

Hectic lobbying on for Himachal Cabinet berths among Congress MLAs

Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu is in New Delhi and likely to have a discussion with Rajeev Shukla, the party in-charge of the State, over the probable names for the Ministry

Vikas Vasudeva
CHANDIGARH

Days after the Congress formed its government in Himachal Pradesh, hectic lobbying for ministerial berths in the government led by Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu continues as several party MLAs make a beeline for the party high command in Delhi.

On Monday, Mr. Sukhu took oath as new the Chief Minister and Mukesh Agnihotri as the Deputy Chief Minister, and now the Cabinet expansion is awaited. There can be a maximum of 12 Ministers, including the Chief Minister.

After assuming charge, Mr. Sukhu had said that the Cabinet formation would be done according to the guidelines of the party



Himachal Pradesh CM Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu with State Congress president Pratibha Singh and party MLA Vikramaditya Singh.

high command. Mr. Sukhu headed for Delhi on Wednesday. Speculation is rife that he might have a discussion with Rajeev Shukla, the party in-charge of the State, over the probable names to be inducted into the Ministry. The names would then be discussed with the party high

command. A Congress insider said a decision is not likely to be out before this weekend as all party MLAs from Himachal Pradesh are expected to join party leader Rahul Gandhi's Bharat Jodo Yatra in Rajasthan on Friday when it would complete 100 days.

As several names continue to do the rounds, striking a balance between the 'Sukhu camp' and the 'Pratibha camp', apart from regions and caste, would be tough for the Chief Minister.

The key contenders for Cabinet berths include former party State president Kuldeep Singh Rathore, MLA from Theog; Lok Sabha member Dhani Ram Shandil; former Lok Sabha Member Chander Kumar; former Minister Sudhir Sharma and six-time MLA Harshvardhan Chauhan.

Besides, Vikramaditya Singh, son of Virbhadr Singh, could be accommodated in the Cabinet. Four-time MLA from Jubbal Kotkhai Rohit Thakur, grandson of former Chief Minister Ram Lal Thakur, is also in the fray.

J&K 1996 polls were fixed in Delhi, says BJP leader

The Hindu Bureau
SRINAGAR

Jammu and Kashmir BJP leader Devender Singh Rana on Wednesday said that the 1996 Assembly elections were "fixed in New Delhi that paved the way for a particular political party in the sensitive State to form the government after nearly six years".

Mr. Rana, who was a close aide of National Conference (NC) vice-president Omar Abdullah before joining the BJP last year, said, "The beneficiaries of the crucial 1996 elections know the fact that the number of seats to be won by the contesting political parties were fixed on a high table in New Delhi."

Mr. Rana was referring to his earlier party, the NC, which contested and won the 1996 polls.

He said the BJP had been credited with holding free and fair elections in J&K in 1977 under the leadership of Morarji Desai, in 2002 under the premiership of Atal Behari Vajpayee and in 2014 under Narendra Modi.

Mann making it Punjab vs. Haryana over SSP issue, says Purohit

The Hindu Bureau
CHANDIGARH

Punjab Governor Banwari Lal Purohit and the Bhagwant Mann-led Aam Aadmi Party government appear to be heading for yet another tussle.

A day after Mr. Mann expressed resentment over the premature removal of Punjab cadre IPS officer from the post of Senior Superintendent of Police in Chandigarh, Mr. Purohit on Wednesday blamed the CM for painting the issue as "Punjab versus Haryana".

In the letter to the Governor, Mr. Mann said the post of SSP-Chandigarh has traditionally been occupied by a Punjab cadre officer. Mr. Mann said he was surprised to learn that Punjab cadre officer Kuldeep Singh Chahal was repatriated to Punjab prematurely.

He added the charge of SSP-Chandigarh has been given to a Haryana cadre IPS officer. He said this move was unwanted and undesirable. Mr. Mann wrote that if SSP Chahal was to be repatriated, then

Punjab Governor and the Bhagwant Mann-led AAP government heading for another tussle

a panel of suitable IPS officers should have been sought from Punjab well in advance.

Replying to Mr. Mann, the Governor in his letter said the CM's letter demonstrates that due care has not been taken to ascertain the facts while writing the said letter. "... When serious inputs about the misconduct of Mr. Chahal started coming, I ascertained their authenticity after which, on November 28, 2022, I communicated telephonically with Punjab Chief Secretary my decision. I advised him to send a panel for the post of SSP."

Mr. Purohit added the Chandigarh DGP met Punjab CS on November 30 and requested for a panel. He added, "You raised an unnecessary issue of Punjab v/s Haryana, which is not applicable in this case of ad hoc appointment."

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Will make T.N. a destination for sports, says Udhayanidhi Stalin

B. Kolappan
CHENNAI

DMK's youth wing leader and MLA Udhayanidhi Stalin was sworn in as Minister in the Tamil Nadu Cabinet on Wednesday. He said his priority was to make Tamil Nadu a sports destination.

Governor R.N. Ravi ad-

ministered the oath of office to Mr. Udhayanidhi on Wednesday. Tamil Nadu's Cabinet strength has now increased to 35, and Mr. Udhayanidhi occupies the 10th position.

Mr. Udhayanidhi said that he had plans for sports development. "I have an idea about converting Ta-

mil Nadu into a sports destination," he said.

On dynastic politics, he said: "There was criticism and pressure even when I was appointed as the secretary of the youth wing and later when I became an MLA. I will respond to it only through my performance."

TMC moves Tripura human rights panel against partisan police'

Syed Sajjad Ali

AGARTALA

The Trinamool Congress on Wednesday moved the Tripura Human Rights Commission against the State police for allegedly acting in a partisan manner. The party complained that the police are preventing the Opposition parties from holding political programmes and "often committing excesses on innocent protesters".

A party delegation, comprising Rajya Sabha MP Sushmita Dev and newly appointed president Pijush Kanti Biswas, met Commission officials and submitted a memorandum. The memorandum cited several instances where police allegedly acted at the behest of the ruling party.

The party also mentioned the recent assault on unemployed job aspirants who were staging demonstrations outside the residence of Education Minister Ratan Lal Nath. The police even baton-charged a youth suffering from kidney-related ailments and a pregnant woman during the protest on Monday, Mr. Biswas said.

Mr. Biswas is a senior advocate and former Central government standing counsel.

The Opposition alleged that Mr. Nath had "ordered the police to disperse the mob from the premises".

The TMC said the police actions were aimed at silencing voices of resentment ahead of the State Assembly elections.

TAMIL NADU WATER SUPPLY AND DRAINAGE BOARD
INVITATION OF BIDS - ITEM WAR (TWO COVER SYSTEM) E-SUBMISSION

IFB No.	42 /F,CWSS to CDM/DO-2 / CE / VLR / 2022 / Dt.14.12.2022.
Fund Tie up	JJM 2022-23
Eligibility	Registered Class I Contractors (Civil)
Tender invitee	The Chief Engineer, TWAD Board, Vellore - 632006.
Downloading Period	22.12.2022 to 19.01.2023 upto 15.00 Hours (as per server time)
Available Website	E-Tendering Website www.tntenders.gov.in
EMD Payable	1. Online Mode through E-Tendering website www.tntenders.gov.in (OR) 2. Offline Mode Payable at Executive Engineer, TWAD Board, RWS Division, Cuddalore
Pre Bid Meeting	03.01.2023 at 11.00 Hours at Office of the Chief Engineer, TWAD Board, Vellore - 632 006.
Bid Submission	19.01.2023 upto 15.00 Hours Digitally signed encrypted Tenders through E-Tendering website www.tntenders.gov.in .
Bid Opening	20.01.2023 at 15.30 Hours at the Office of the Tender Invitee through E-Tendering website.

Name of work Approximate value of work including GST @ 18% (Rs. in Crore) Bid Security (Rs.in lakhs)

CWSS to Chidambaram MPTY, Annamalai Nagar TP and 36 rural habitations in 10 village Panchayats in Parangipettai and Kumaratchi unions in Cuddalore District - Construction period 15 months, Trial run 6 months and Paid Maintenance 5 Years Under JJM 2022-23.	190.00	95.00
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DIPR/ 5556 /TENDER/2022 Chief Engineer, TWAD Board, Vellore-6.

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OFFICE OF THE CHIEF GENERAL MANAGER (P&C)
IDCO, IDCO TOWER, BHUBANESWAR

Tender Call Notice File No.: IDCO/HO-P&C/O-2987/04/2022/V-2 32436 Dated - 13.12.2022

NOTICE INVITING TENDER THROUGH e-Procurement

Name of the Work : Supply, Installation, Testing & Commissioning of 33/11 KV Primary Substation with 2x5 MVA Transformer including complete Control Room Building, Civil Works at Industrial Hub of IDCO at Bamuni under Kosagumuda Block in Nayagarbupur.

Period of Completion : 09 (Nine) Calendar Months.

Procurement Officer	Bid Identification No.	Availability of Tender On-Line for Bidding
1	2	3 4
Chief General Manager (P&C), IDCO Tower, Bhubaneswar.	Bid Identification No.: P&C/EST/E-120 / 2022-23	17.00 Hours of dt. 22.12.2022

Further details can be seen from the e-Procurement Portal, www.tendersodisha.gov.in and Corrigendum if any will be published in newspapers and can only be seen in the e-Procurement portal as well as in IDCO Website.

Sd/-
Chief General Manager (P&C), IDCO, Bhubaneswar

OIPR-14003/11/2022/223

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*This is applicable to all Open (Domestic/Global) Tenders issued through e-procurement portal of CIL.

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IN BRIEF



Congress flays police raid on its war room in Telangana

The Congress in Telangana went on the offensive against the BRS government after its poll strategist Sunil Kanugolu's office was raided. It raised the issue in Parliament and accused the police of robbing data and poll strategies. The police 'raided' the office alleging that some unknown persons posted derogatory comments against the Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao and his daughter K. Vaitha on social media.

Kerala HC prevents arrest of Sabu, others in MLA case

The Kerala High Court on Wednesday directed the police not to arrest Sabu M. Jacob, chief coordinator, Twenty20, and five others in a case registered against them for allegedly humiliating CPI(M) MLA P.V. Sreeni in public. The case has been registered against them under the provisions of the SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act based on a complaint lodged by the MLA. Justice Kauser Edappagath directed the petitioners to cooperate with the investigation and appear and when directed.

Mullaperiyar dam level at 141 ft, second warning issued

Tamil Nadu on Wednesday issued the second flood warning after the water level in the Mullaperiyar dam in Idukki touched 141 ft. at 6 a.m. The maximum storage level as per the top court order is 142 ft. Idukki Collector Sheeba George said there was a possibility of opening the spillway shutters of the Mullaperiyar dam if the water level reached the near the maximum level.

CBI to investigate theft of evidence in A.P. Minister case from court in Nellore

S. Vijay Kumar
CHENNAI

The Special Crimes Branch of the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) here has re-registered a case relating to the theft of "crime property" from a courtroom in Nellore, Andhra Pradesh, and launched an investigation.

Acting on the directions of the Andhra Pradesh High Court, the central agency took over the investigation from the Chinna Bazar police station, Nellore district, in the case booked on April 14, 2022.

It relates to the theft of evidence materials like electronic gadgets and documents in a case involving Andhra Pradesh Agriculture Minister Kakani Govardhan Reddy and others from the court of the IV Additional Judicial Magistrate

They were part of the 'crime property' in the defamation case filed by TDP leader against Govardhan Reddy

of First Class, Nellore.

The theft case is that, on April 14, 2022, the main door locks of the court were found broken and one of the almirahs open.

A bag containing the properties relating to a 2016 case involving Mr. Govardhan Reddy and others was taken away. The theft took place despite police personnel guarding the court premises.

On a search in the vicinity of the court, the bag was found dumped in a drain canal and 15 crime properties such as laptop, tablet, mobile phones, fake

Telangana CM inaugurates BRS party office in New Delhi

Akhilesh Yadav and H.D. Kumaraswamy were present at the opening of the Delhi office of KCR's renamed party; the CM had earlier declared his ambition to play a larger role in national politics

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Taking the first step towards carving out a bigger role for himself at the national stage, Telangana Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao on Wednesday inaugurated the office of his newly renamed party, Bharat Rashtra Samithi, in Delhi. Samajwadi Party Chief Akhilesh Yadav and Janata Dal (S) leader H.D. Kumaraswamy were present during the ceremony.

The Election Commission on December 8 had



Grand opening: K. Chandrasekhar Rao taking part in the inauguration of the BRS party office in Delhi. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

approved the change of name of the Telangana Rashtra Samithi to the Bharat Rashtra Samithi as per the party's request.

"With the inauguration of the party office in the national capital, the party starts its journey as a national political party under KCR's

leadership and will expand its footprint across the country," BRS MP Ranjith Reddy said.

Telangana Rashtra Samithi was launched in April 2001 on the demand of separate Telangana State. Earlier this year, Mr. Rao had declared his ambition to play a larger role in national politics trying to construct a third front against both the BJP and the Congress. As part of this effort, he held meetings with DMK president M.K. Stalin, JD(S) patriarch Deve Gowda and JDU leader Nitish Kumar.

The Hindu Bureau
JAIPUR

The committee will be headed by the Child Empowerment Minister

A high-power committee in Rajasthan will monitor the cases of child labour and abuse and help the State government in evolving strategies to prevent these incidents. Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot has approved a proposal to appoint the first-of-its-kind committee, which will be headed by the Child Empowerment Minister.

Mr. Gehlot said here that the committee would study the cases of children being forced into labour and subjected to violence in an in-depth manner and provide solutions to the issue through its recommendations.

Four subject experts, running non-government organisations for protection of child rights, have been appointed members of the committee.

Children rescued
Child labourers working in bangle-making and other factories in Jaipur and elsewhere have been rescued several times during the last two years and the factory owners arrested.

While the children have been rehabilitated with the assistance of voluntary groups, the labour department has been collecting information about children absent from schools for 30 days to ensure that no child is engaged for work.

The Congress government has raised the issue of inward and outward migration.

Vaagdha secretary Jayesh Joshi said the child protection committees and children's groups had been formed in as many as 100 villages in the region with the support of Save the Children for protecting young children at the risk of abuse, neglect, exploitation, trafficking and forced labour. Child labour migration was essentially a socio-economic problem linked to poverty and illiteracy, he said.

Geographical Indication tag sought for Kerala's legendary Beypore Uru

Sangeetha Kandavel
CHENNAI

The District Tourism Promotion Council, Kozhikode has applied for a Geographical Indication (GI) tag for the famous Beypore Uru (boat).

It is a wooden dhow (ship / sailing boat / sailing vessel) handcrafted by skilled artisans and carpenters in Beypore, Kerala. According to details provided by the District Tourism Promotion Council in



Urus are made of wood without using any modern techniques.
SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

its filing with the Geographical Indications Re-

gistry here in Chennai, the Beypore Urs are a symbol of Kerala's trade relations and friendship with the Gulf countries.

The Urs are purely made of premium wood, without using any modern techniques. The wood used to build the Uru is still sawed the traditional way which requires immense expertise. It takes one to four years to build each Uru and the entire process is done manually, said IPR Attorney P. Sanjay Gandhi,

who filed the application.

Today, many artisans involved in Uru-making are over 50-70 years old and have been in the profession since their fathers passed on the tradition to them.

Records quoted in the filing show that Beypore has been a legendary maritime hub for traders from across the world since the 1st Century C.E. and the iconic Uru ships have been in high demand for around 2,000 years.

Indefinite protest against 'caste discrimination' at film institute in Kottayam

Hiran Unnikrishnan
KOTTAYAM

The K.R. Narayanan National Institute of Visual Science and Arts (KRNNIVSA) at Thekkumthala in Kottayam has been witnessing an indefinite strike for the last 10 days demanding the resignation of Shankar Mohan, the institute's director, for alleged caste discrimination and other charges.

The venue of the International Film Festival of Kerala in Thiruvananthapuram witnessed a protest by the students of the only film institute in Kerala on Tuesday to press the demand. Aside from the students, a section of the workforce too has been protesting against Mr. Mohan for alleged harassment based on caste.

The director, meanwhile, has been staying away from the campus since the strike began, while Higher Education Minister R. Bindu has constituted a three-member committee to look into the issue.

COVID period issue
The troubles at the institute originally began during the COVID-19 lockdown period, according to Sreedev Suprakash, chairman of the students' council.

"This was the time when the director initiated a restructuring of our three-year PG diploma courses by cutting short the duration by one year. This was also when he began openly discriminating against Dalit students as well as the staff," he said.

The granting of autonomy status to the institute last year coincided with a weakening of the council,

High-power panel to prevent child labour, abuse in Rajasthan

The Hindu Bureau
JAIPUR

A high-power committee in Rajasthan will monitor the cases of child labour and abuse and help the State government in evolving strategies to prevent these incidents.

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Kerala seeks to use sports to tackle drug menace

M.P. Praveen
KOCHI

The Excise department in Ernakulam is gearing up to top off its protracted attempts to woo the young generation away from drug menace by helping them find a high in sports.

Steps have been initiated to form teams in select schools in their preferred sports depending on their strengths in sporting events over the years. The project has been conceived as an extension of the department's Vimukthi clubs in schools.

"The idea is to form teams in three schools from each of the 15 ranges



Chasing the high: Youth playing football after a heavy monsoon rain in Fort Kochi beach. FILE PHOTO

in the district thus creating 45 teams in the initial stages. The choice of sports will be left to the schools concerned. Football has emerged as the overwhelming choice though volleyball, netball, kabaddi,

be lured away by drugs. The need for such a potent diversion was further driven home after it emerged recently that a Standard 8 girl was used by the drug racket as a peddler in Kozhikode.

Though the project is primarily meant for higher secondary schools, high schools may also get to participate where not enough quality players could not be found at the higher secondary level. Trials will be held to find the best 15 players for each team.

The team selection is bit tardy at the moment owing to the exam season. Teams are likely to be ready by next month. It will be fol-

lowed by contests at the educational district and district level, and the winners will get to compete at the State level.

The project has evoked very good response from the schools with the department even allocating ₹10,000 for each chosen school. The funds will be spent on jerseys with Vimukthi logo, balls, and related equipment. Some schools have already printed the jerseys," said Mr. Sudhakar.

The department plans to expand the project to more schools in the district depending on the success of what is being seen as a pilot initiative.

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The granting of autonomy status to the institute last year coincided with a weakening of the council,



Seeking justice: Students of the K.R. Narayanan Institute of Visual Science and Arts staging a protest in Kottayam. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

which was first disbanded under pressure from the director and lost representation in the academic and executive councils of the institute. "The restructuring of study programmes to two years was carried out by keeping the students in the dark. The laxity in ensuring grants and fellowships in a time-bound manner even forced one student to drop out," added Mr. Suprakash.

Earlier this year, the students had forced the management to reverse unauthorised expulsion of four students through similar protests. While a semblance of normality had sustained for months afterwards, the situation took yet another turn for the worse with a section of employees raising complaints of caste discrimination against Mr. Mohan.

The allegations levelled by the women cleaning staff, employed on daily wages, are even more shocking. They accuse Mr. Mohan of forcing them to clean the official residence, including toilets, regularly. "Before entering the house, he would enquire

about my caste and insist on taking a bath and changing my clothes before entry," said a cleaning staff.

While support has been pouring in for the protesters from various quarters, no concrete efforts appear to be forthcoming from the authorities concerned in addressing the issue. A meeting of the KRNNIVSA executive committee held in Thiruvananthapuram on Wednesday failed to arrive at a resolution.

Official sources, meanwhile, maintained that the lack of transparency and discrimination against communities with reservation are evident during the admissions.

When contacted, KRNNIVSA chairman and filmmaker Adoor Gopalakrishnan said the issues at the film institute had indeed come to his notice. "The matter has been under the consideration of the State government. It will be improper for me to comment on the same at this point of time," he said.

The director was not available on phone when contacted.



Warning sign

India cannot wish away the situation on the China border by staying silent

Another attempted transgression by the Chinese military, this time in the Tawang sector in the eastern section of the India-China boundary, has served a reminder of the precarious state of affairs along the Line of Actual Control (LAC). A crisis which began in April 2020, with PLA transgressions in Ladakh, in the western sector of the boundary, has now appeared to have widened to Arunachal Pradesh. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said in Parliament that the Indian Army had forced the PLA to return to its posts. The Minister's comments, on December 13, came four days after the incident, details of which were first reported by *The Hindu* on December 12. An Army statement confirmed the clash. The Opposition, which has criticised the Narendra Modi government's continuing reticence on the China border issue, staged a walkout after being denied a discussion.

As troubles now flare in Arunachal, the situation in Ladakh still remains unresolved. India is yet to resume patrolling in any of the five disengagement areas where temporary buffer zones have been established, while the Chinese military remains on India's side of the LAC in two other friction points, in Depsang and Demchok. What is clear is that the Chinese military has decided, for reasons still unexplained, to unilaterally change how both sides manage what were previously mutually recognised disputed areas. Managing what has become a live border after three decades of relative peace, and crafting a *modus vivendi* with China in this new situation, has now emerged as a pressing challenge for New Delhi. This is both a military and a political challenge. Addressing it will require, as a first step, transparency, and taking the Opposition and public along on an issue far too important to be led by apparent considerations over optics. Those considerations also appear to be one factor behind the continuing freeze in high-level political contact with China, with Prime Minister Modi and President Xi Jinping avoiding a formal meeting at two recent multilateral summits. That the leaders have not spoken for more than three years, barring an exchange of pleasantries at the G20 summit, is an untenable situation as risks continue to rise along the borders. A resumption of dialogue will, at the very least, allow India to convey its concerns at the highest level. The public also remains largely in the dark on the events that have transpired along the borders, as well as the developments that led to the loss of life of 20 Indian soldiers, in 2020. If the Government's apparent hope was to maintain a silence until the crisis resolves in due course, the latest clash has served a warning sign that it is nowhere near ending.

Energy conundrum

Solar power is important for India, but it will not serve every energy need

At the core of India's energy transformation is its bet on solar power. Based on a commitment to address the global climate crisis, India has promised to source nearly half its energy from non-fossil fuel sources by 2030 and, in the shorter term, source at least 60% of its renewable energy from solar power. However, a disclosure in Parliament by the Minister for Power, New and Renewable Energy suggests that India faces significant headwind in this quest. A key central policy to source solar power is facilitating the establishment of large solar parks; small solar power projects usually translate to higher per-unit production costs. And so, in 2014, the Centre announced the 'Solar Parks and Ultra-Mega Solar Power Projects' policy to facilitate the creation of large parks. The initial plan was to set up 25 parks capable of generating at least 20,000 MW by 2019. In 2017, the Government scaled this to 61 parks with a target of 40,000 MW. It emerges, however, as of 2022, that only a fourth of the capacity has been achieved, that is, projects worth 10,000 MW have been commissioned. Four projects have been cancelled, by the Centre's own admission, due to tardy progress. The roadblocks, in the Centre's estimate, have been challenges in acquiring land with a clear title, setting up infrastructure necessary to transmit power produced at these parks to the grid and, in an unusual disclosure, "environmental issues" in Rajasthan and Gujarat, where projects have been halted because their transmission lines encroach upon the habitat of the critically endangered Great Indian Bustard.

Notwithstanding its claims on international podiums that it is on track to meeting renewable energy targets, it is no secret that India is lagging behind. By the end of 2022, India had committed to having in place 1,75,000 MW of renewable energy capacity, with 1,00,000 MW from solar power. However, only around 61,000 MW of such capacity has actually been installed. For a few years now, there has been considerable hype around solar power achieving grid parity in India – meaning power companies are able to sell it at a price lower or as much as conventional sources – but this does not account for the subsidies or concessions front-loaded by the Government. While India should continue to expand its economy on the back of renewable energy, the Government must take a hard look at whether renewable power, solar, wind or nuclear, meets standards of economic viability and environmental sustainability. Solar power may be a valuable tool in India's energy transformation story, but it cannot be the panacea for every need.

The arithmetic for Tamil Nadu as a \$1 trillion economy

The Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu has set Tamil Nadu the goal of becoming a trillion dollar economy (by 2030), as he has indicated over the past year. This is a good aspirational goal. Tamil Nadu's GDP this year is expected to be equivalent to \$0.31 trillion. To reach the goal set by the Chief Minister, Tamil Nadu has to triple the size of its economy. If this is the goal, we need to examine what the required annual rate of growth will have to be in conjunction with the period over which this rate should be maintained.

Possible scenarios

At the outset, the possibility of achieving the status of a trillion dollar economy by 2030-31 has to be ruled out. It requires a nominal annual growth rate of 18.2%, and on the assumption of inflation of 5% a real growth rate of 13.2%. This is not in the realm of possibility. The *Table* presents the results for the scenario which may be considered achievable, given the required effort. In this scenario, the target is achieved in 2033-34, and for this the required real rate of growth will

C. Rangarajan

K.R. Shanmugam

Reaching the target by 2030-31 has to be ruled out as it requires a nominal annual growth rate of 18.2%; instead, the scenario can be 2033-34, with the required real rate of growth at 9%

be 9% per cent. The exchange rate is assumed to depreciate from the present level to ₹100.38 per dollar, that is, a depreciation of 2% per annum. The nominal rate of growth required will be 14% and with an assumption of 5% inflation, the real rate required is derived as 9%. The higher the exchange rate depreciation, the higher will be the required nominal and real rates of growth. Under this scenario, the per capita income of the State in the terminal year will be \$13,400, which will be a shade higher than the per capita income of \$13,205 required to classify a country as a developed country as of now.

We examine the feasibility of achieving this real rate of growth in the background of the past performance of the Tamil Nadu economy. From 2005-06 to 2011-12, Tamil Nadu registered a strong real growth performance of 10.3% per annum as against an all India growth rate of 8.2%. However, its average annual growth declined to 6.43% as against all India growth of 5.48% from 2012-13 to 2021-22. Thus the task of achieving a growth rate of 9% per annum over an extended period is not going to be that easy. With a real growth rate of 8%, the target date would get postponed by one more year to 2034-35. We should also keep this in mind as a possible scenario.

The strategy

We have spelled out, thus, the quantitative implications of Tamil Nadu reaching a trillion dollar-strong economy. The government and all other stakeholders need to draw up a suitable strategy of development. Here are some ideas: in agriculture, the State needs to shift towards the cultivation of highly remunerative and less water-intensive crops. The food processing industry needs to be given priority attention to prevent excessive production going to waste. With respect to industry and services, the emerging sectors such as biotechnology, pharmaceuticals, logistics and advanced information technology need to be identified and detailed plans chalked out. Infrastructure needs, particularly in power, will also expand.

Exports can act as a stimulus to growth. Currently Tamil Nadu's exports equal \$26 billion. Tamil Nadu's exports as a percent of Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) are 8.87%. One stated goal of policymakers is to reach a level of \$100 billion of exports. This means that when Tamil Nadu reaches \$1 trillion strong, the exports-GSDP ratio will have to be 10%. Thus, a special drive is needed to raise the exports-GSDP ratio.

To sustain a rate of growth of 9%, the investment rate required will be 36% of GSDP on the assumption of an Incremental Capital Output Ratio (ICOR) of 4. This will have to be financed by domestic savings supplemented by a flow of resources from the rest of India and other countries. Tamil Nadu must be made the investment destination by creating an appropriate environment.

Fiscal balance

A strong growth over a sustained period can happen only in a stable economic environment. This implies both price stability and fiscal stability. Some econometric results show that with 14% nominal growth, the State should work towards a fiscal deficit of less than 3% so that the debt-GSDP ratio stabilises around 18%. The Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management (FRBM) Review Committee had indicated a normative level of 20% for all States.

What we have presented so far can be described as the arithmetic of achieving a trillion dollar economy by Tamil Nadu. What can happen a decade from now depends upon a number of factors. Therefore, any projection over such a long period has to be conditional. Perhaps, the most likely scenario is a nominal growth of 14% per annum over the next 10 years which will take Tamil Nadu to become a trillion dollar economy by 2033-34. We spell out some implications of what this journey will demand.

C. Rangarajan is former Chairman, Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister, former Governor, Reserve Bank of India and Chairman, Madras School of Economics.

K.R. Shanmugam is the Director, Madras School of Economics

A 9% growth scenario

Details of achieving \$1 trillion economy by 2033-34

Year	Nominal GSDP (₹Trillion)	Derived Nominal Growth (%)	Real Growth Rate (%)	Exchange Rate (U.S.\$)	Nominal GSDP (U.S.\$ Trillion)	Per Capita GSDP U.S.\$
2022-23	24.8481	-	-	80.73	0.31	4005
2023-24	28.3268	14.0	9.0	82.34	0.34	4462
2024-25	32.2926	14.0	9.0	83.99	0.38	4973
2025-26	36.8135	14.0	9.0	85.67	0.43	5541
2026-27	41.9674	14.0	9.0	87.38	0.48	6185
2027-28	47.8428	14.0	9.0	89.13	0.54	6903
2028-29	54.5408	14.0	9.0	90.92	0.60	7704
2029-30	62.1766	14.0	9.0	92.73	0.67	8599
2030-31	70.8813	14.0	9.0	94.59	0.75	9597
2031-32	80.8046	14.0	9.0	96.48	0.84	10727
2032-33	92.1173	14.0	9.0	98.41	0.94	11989
2033-34	105.014	14.0	9.0	100.38	1.05	13400

Building climate resilience collectively

India unveiled its long-term climate action plan at the 27th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP27), held in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, in November. While the document titled 'Long-Term Low-Carbon Development Strategy (LT-LCDS)' has multi-sectoral measures to reach a net-zero emissions status, climate-resilient urbanisation forms a cornerstone of the Government of India's strategy under the Paris Agreement.

This three-pronged and long-term plan for urban areas focuses on adaptation and resource efficiency in urban planning, climate-responsive and climate-resilient buildings, and municipal service delivery.

Have a data-driven approach

There are several flagship missions championed by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs as well, which target specific objectives towards creating a smart, sustainable and resilient urban India. To facilitate implementation of the LT-LCDS and other missions, and enable their integration, a data-driven approach may be useful.

Demonstrating urban planning strategies aimed at climate resilience through specific actions and interventions (backed by sound data) and linking them to various finance streams accessible to the urban local bodies is important.

Cities need effective and efficient planning instruments that translate master plans into transformative business-ready investment projects.

For instance, the Urban Sustainability Assessment Framework (USAf), a decision support tool of UN-Habitat for municipal commissioners and urban practitioners, supports the sustainable and resilient urban planning and management of Indian cities. It enables cities to regularly capture inter-sectoral data and corresponding analysis on urban metrics, thereby helping in monitoring the performance of a city in static and dynamic contexts. Cities can enhance vertical integration by pulling together the missions' objectives at the central level, State policies and projects, and local implementation through city-specific strategic actions linked to



Mansi Sachdev

is Senior Urban Planner, UN-Habitat India



Pushkal Shivam

is Urban Planner, UN-Habitat India

Active involvement by government, non-governmental, community-based organisations, and academic institutions will help build a sustainability profile and arrive at specific interventions

capital investment planning.

The urban transport sector is among the key contributors to greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.

The cases of Bhopal and Jaipur

In the case of Bhopal (Madhya Pradesh), for example, they make up for 19% of the city's GHG emissions. Bhopal favours non-motorised transport (NMT) with a 43% NMT modal share but provides access to public bike docking stops to only 24% of its population; only half of its streets have footpaths. By designing 'shared streets' for personal vehicles, public transport, NMT and pedestrians, and linking them with future economic activity zones and underserved areas, the city has immense potential to reduce its carbon footprint. These streets can also be conduits for native plant species and groundwater recharge by integrating water-sensitive urban design features with a potential of reducing GHG emissions of up to 15 tCO₂/annum per kilometre. In Bhopal, the Smart Cities Mission has made significant investments in NMT, though the use of this infrastructure has been sub-optimal. There are opportunities for improvement and increased usage of the NMT network through better land-use integration. Spatial analyses can inform decision-making towards co-location of investments and projects from various missions for cumulative community impact and enhanced urban value.

Nature-based solutions provide a range of solutions for climate change adaptation over hard grey infrastructure. As seen in Jaipur (Rajasthan), with only 1.42 sq.m per capita of open space against a benchmark of 12 sq.m per person, the desert capital also experiences various hazards that include heat waves, droughts and urban flooding. Residential areas with at least 10% of land area under open space and parks were found to be at least 1.25°C cooler than neighbourhoods with less green pockets. In industrial pockets, the urban heat island impact was greater with temperatures higher by 1.1°C. There are several macro and micro options available to Jaipur such as planting shade trees, urban forests, installing cool roofs, planning cool islands and investing in city scale blue green

infrastructure to improve the micro-climate and environmental conditions.

Jaipur has also witnessed a significant decline in porous surfaces (by 50%) in the last three decades and a corresponding sharp increase in surface stormwater run-off (156%) which the city struggles to accommodate leading to regular urban flooding. Simple yet effective solutions that can increase Jaipur's resilience include community recharge pits in neighbourhood parks, and increasing permeable spaces along mobility corridors to decrease the run-off by a sizeable fraction. Such interventions find consonance with the Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT) mandates and allows for cities to integrate them with their capital investment plans.

The suggested planning approach merits a comprehensive stakeholder participation towards building climate resilience. Active involvement from various tiers of government, non-governmental, community-based organisations, and academic institutions is desirable at each step – from building a sustainability profile to arriving at very specific interventions. Movements on the city performance indicators communicate the impact of these interventions to the decision-makers and the community at large. In addition, cumulative benefits and efficient use of public resources from various central and State missions, and on-ground convergence are possible by identifying neighbourhoods/wards to co-locate investments for holistic and integrated city-level transformations. This evidence-based approach aims at making cities sustainable, resilient and inclusive with no one and no place left behind.

All this is in the spirit of the Sharm el-Sheikh Implementation Plan which affirms that "sustainable and just solutions to the climate crisis must be founded on meaningful and effective social dialogue and participation of all stakeholders". Therefore, India's long-term strategy must accommodate the most vulnerable of its people in its low-emissions pathways to achieve sustainable economic growth and poverty eradication.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Border clash

The uproar in Parliament over the recent clash between Indian and Chinese troops near the Arunachal Pradesh border leaves one disappointed. The walkout by the Opposition on a crucial issue concerning the nation's security is baffling. If security concerns over repeated clashes are not dealt with on a priority basis, what else would? Why is the Government unable to convince the Opposition with facts and figures? It is the prime responsibility of the Government to have a clear discussion and debate and

the responsibility of the Opposition to cooperate. What is the message senior politicians are sending to the nation, especially the young generation? The art of listening, before questioning, is absent. Mudslinging and references to the past will do us no good.

Balasubramaniam Pavani, Secunderabad

Creating a ruckus in Parliament is nothing new as things have changed since the days of Jawaharlal Nehru. Even in matters that concern foreign relations, the ruling and Opposition parties can never take a

joint stand. A uniform stand is essential in all cases of external threats.

P.R.V. Raja, Pandamal, Kerala

The clash is indeed serious and the ruling party and Opposition must speak in one voice. It is the responsibility of the government of the day to call for an all-party meeting and share all the details. At no point should it be allowed to become a game of political one-upmanship.

N. Nagarajan, Secunderabad

The clashes are a grim reminder of an unresolved

border dispute between the two Asian giants. Despite the existence of an institutional mechanism to engage in dialogue, the persistent attempts by China to unilaterally alter the status quo on the Line of Actual Control are disturbing. Given the increasing assertiveness of China along the LAC, India has to be better prepared to foil the Chinese designs.

M. Jayaram, Sholavandan, Tamil Nadu

China is becoming a huge concern. The Indian soldiers appear to have handled the situation deftly. But the fact is that China cannot be

trusted. India has to be in a constant state of alert.

Utkarsh Singh, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh

Recusal and effects

The Bilkis Bano case is horrifying and even the lay person with little or no knowledge of the nitty-gritties of the law is sure to be taken aback on getting to know about the release of the perpetrators. In this context, the development where a Supreme Court judge has recused herself from hearing the petition submitted by Ms. Bano is startling. It does raise questions. Apart from this, it

Census as a mirror of past and present

A recent study of India's experience under colonial rule by Dylan Sullivan and Jason Hickel concludes that data from the Census of India reveal that between 1880 and 1920 approximately 100 million Indians died due to British policy in India. Their method is to calculate the excess mortality, being the difference between the actual deaths and the deaths that may be expected. While they used Census data for actual deaths, the duo arrived at the deaths to be expected using two alternative benchmarks - the mortality rate for India in 1880 and that for England in the 16th and 17th centuries.

The assumption implicit in the choice of the latter as a benchmark is that before colonial rule, the mortality rate of India is unlikely to have been very different from that of contemporary England. The resulting estimates for excess deaths during 1880-1920 are 50 million in the first case and 160 million in the second one, respectively. The authors settle for the midway figure of approximately 100 million for the deaths caused in India due to colonial policy. For perspective, they point out that this figure is greater than the death from famine in "the Soviet Union, Maoist China, North Korea, Pol Pot's Cambodia, and Mengistu's Ethiopia". In their view, this provides a direct assessment of the consequences of the Raj for India.

Attempts to quantify the impact of colonial rule in India have mostly relied on the change in national income. But reliable income data for the nineteenth century are almost non-existent. Population figures, though, are available from the time of the first Census of India in 1871. The age-wise population distribution in the census has been used to estimate the mortality rate, which Sullivan and Hickel utilise to draw conclusions about the evolution of



**Pulapre
Balakrishnan**

teaches at Ashoka University, Sonipat

economic conditions in colonial India. Their figure for excess deaths is of course only as good as the benchmarks chosen, and the mortality rate itself is the result of estimation and not enumeration, for the registration of births and deaths became established practice in India only much later on.

Subject to these caveats, the Sullivan-Hickel study does draw attention to something not so widely recognised. The mortality rate in British India is seen to rise steadily after 1881, recording an increase of close to 20% by 1921. As it is unusual for the mortality rate of a country to rise continuously due to natural causes, this suggests that the living conditions worsened during this period. The mortality rate dipped in 1931, which was the last census conducted in British India, but the last famine recorded in the country was yet to come. It took place in Bengal in 1943, in the last five years of the close to two centuries of British colonial rule.

Recurring famines

British arguments for the empire, including "English forms of land tenure, the English language, banking, the common law, Protestantism, team sports, the limited state, representative assemblies, and the idea of liberty", have been advanced by the Harvard historian Niall Ferguson. But in this statement, there is no mention of the famines which started almost at the onset of rule by the East India Company in Bengal, the de-industrialisation of India in the nineteenth century, the drain of wealth, or the worsening food security as India's peasants were forced to grow commercial crops for export so that Britain could balance its trade. Indian economic historians have analysed these developments. Yet, by drawing our attention to a sustained rise in the death rate at the height of the Raj, the Sullivan-Hickel study vindicates Dadabhai Naoroji's claim of the immiserisation of

The Census of India not only helps understand the perils of British rule, but also flags the roadblocks lying ahead

India under British rule.

The belief that British policy in India caused repeated famines is bolstered by the fact that there has not been a single famine since 1947. This is despite a population explosion following a sharp fall in death rates. The decline in the mortality rate surely signals improved living conditions. The Census shows that in the 1950s, life expectancy at birth of Indians increased by more than it did in the previous seventy years.

A double-edged sword

But the Census, from which we know all this, can be a double-edged sword in the hands of nationalists. The population numbers recorded after 1947 point to the extent to which the lives of Indians improved since the end of colonial rule in dimensions other than merely income. However, the mirror it holds up is not always flattering to us. It points to a worsening gender inequality in India. A simple indicator of this would be the ratio of females to males in the population. It is believed that in the absence of factors that lower the life chances of women, including foeticide, this ratio would tend to one. The Census of India shows that we have not attained that level in our recorded history, except in pockets within the country.

While this is disturbing in itself what is more so is that this ratio has steadily declined after 1947. After declining for four decades from 1951 it started inching up in 1991. But in 2011, it was yet lower than what it was in 1951. So, even though life expectancy increased soon after Independence, in the early years at least it increased faster for men than it did for women. So, though India became free of foreign rule, some Indians grew more free than others. As India chants Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam at the G-20, implying that the nations of the world are a family, it behoves us to ensure that all the persons in our own family enjoy the same freedoms.

A political act in the making

M.K. Stalin's son had an easier rise to the post of a Minister unlike his father

STATE OF PLAY

B. Kolappan

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Ever since the DMK won the Tamil Nadu Assembly election in 2021 after a gap of 10 years, there had been speculation that actor-producer Udhayanidhi Stalin, the party's youth-wing leader, may be inducted into the Cabinet headed by his father M.K. Stalin. Though there was a clamour from a section of the party - not to mention whispers of pressure from his family - to make him a minister, Mr. Stalin did not immediately opt for it, wary of criticism that it would be called out as dynastic politics. However, he could not delay it for long. On Wednesday, Mr. Udhayanidhi was sworn in as a minister with the portfolios of Youth Welfare and Sports Development, Special Programme Implementation, and Poverty Alleviation Programme and Rural Indebtedness.

The shifting sands of Tamil Nadu politics has ensured a meteoric rise for Mr. Udhayanidhi in the party and in the government, while his father had to wait for almost half a century to become the party leader and Chief Minister.

Mr. Stalin had to spend many years under the shadow of his redoubtable father, M. Karunanidhi, despite a long career as the DMK's youth wing secretary, the first elected Mayor of Chennai, and an MLA, before he was made the Minister of Local Administration and the Deputy Chief Minister.

Karunanidhi, who had to compete with other DMK stalwarts during the time of its founder C.N. Annadurai, captained the party leadership



through political manoeuvres in 1969. Subsequently, his friend-turned-foe in politics, M.G. Ramachandran, remained a formidable challenge. Later, Jayalalithaa replaced her mentor as a formidable foe. Yet, Karunanidhi never played into the hands of his political enemies by promoting his son early, though the party gradually came under Mr. Stalin's control. The DMK was also once critical of the dynasty politics of the Nehru-Gandhi family.

No challenge

Mr. Udhayanidhi faces none of the challenges encountered by his grandfather and father.

First, there is no strong Opposition to raise the issue. His uncle and former Union Minister M.K. Alagiri, who once challenged Mr. Stalin's elevation, is no longer in the picture. In recent years, Mr. Stalin has given party tickets to the children and relatives of almost all DMK regional sattraps, giving them no room to complain now.

AIADMK, the main Opposition party that can campaign against Mr. Udhayanidhi's elevation, is riddled with inner-party squabbling. Only former Chief Minister Edappadi Palaniswami has called out Mr. Stalin for promoting dynastic politics, while his rival O. Panneerselvam does not have the moral authority to raise the issue, as his son P. Ravindra Nath is already an MP. The BJP,

of course, will step up its attack on dynastic politics. MDMK general secretary Vai ko, who revolted against the DMK leadership against the promotion of Mr. Stalin, has already paved the way for the rise of his son Durai Vaipuri in the party.

An eventuality

In a country where regional parties in most States are run by families, and the main Opposition party at the Centre, the Congress, struggles with experiments to elect a leader outside its first family, Mr. Udhayanidhi's elevation may appear inevitable. Political parties need a leader with charisma to attract crowds. The AIADMK remains a divided house because it does not have a leader with Jayalalithaa's appeal. In the BJP too, L.K. Advani had to step aside for a more charismatic Narendra Modi.

In the case of Mr. Udhayanidhi, he and his father are fully aware of the criticism. However, they must reckon that the backlash would weaken over time. In addition, they believe the initial murmurings could be overcome by performance. Mr. Udhayanidhi has shown he can easily attract people. During the pandemic, he ensured that almost all households in his constituency received essential commodities. Given that he is a political power centre, he will have at his disposal the State government's resources and efficient officials to prove his mettle.

Mr. Udayanidhi's elevation to the Cabinet is unlikely to become a talking point during the 2024 Lok Sabha elections as it will be fought on national issues. By the time Tamil Nadu goes to polls four years later, much water would have flown under the bridge of State politics.

Himachal stands tall, but has more peaks to conquer

The State outperforms others in gender and education indicators, but has a patchy record in terms of health and environment

DATA POINT

Gautam Doshi

In the NITI Aayog report on Sustainable Development Goals 2020, Himachal Pradesh is ranked second in the country and the only north Indian State, other than Uttarakhand, that figures in the top 10. Between 1990-2019, Himachal made the most progress when it comes to the Human Development Index (HDI) (see Table 2).

A look at the State's performance across socio-economic indicators reveal a few issues that should be of concern to the State's new regime. The largely hilly terrain State's performance is much better in some indicators such as female well-being, and others related to educational attainment, in comparison to other northern States - Jammu & Kashmir, Punjab, Uttarakhand, Haryana, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, and Rajasthan. For e.g., in 2019-20, Himachal came second among northern States in the percentage of women aged 6 and above who attend school, and had among the least share of women aged between 20 and 24 married before they turned 18.

Yet, there are certain health indicators related to stunting, wasting, and underweight children that point to poorer performance by the State. Environment-related indicators - such as fossil fuel consumption per capita - don't paint a favourable image of the State.

Table 1 shows Himachal Pradesh's rank on social indicators and its actual score in 2019-20, 2015-16, and 2005-06. The table also showcases the change in Himachal's rank in 2019-20 when compared to 2015-16. The top three (major) States are also shown for comparison. The percentage of underweight children in the State in 2015-16 was 21.2% (ranked 8 out of the 30 States considered). But in 2019-20, the same indicator had increased to 25.5% indicating a

growth in the number of underweight children, and Himachal Pradesh dropped to the 13th place. There was little improvement in the population of women that attended schools in Himachal - from 79% in 2015-16 to 81% in 2019-20.

In terms of Infant Mortality Rate (IMR), the State's record has been much better in recent years compared to the earlier part of this decade and the previous decade. In 2005-06, the State ranked 7th out of the 28 States considered - with an IMR of 36 (infant deaths for every 1,000 live-births). The State made little progress in the next 10 years, as the IMR in 2015-16 had decreased minimally to 34.3 causing it to slip to the 19th position. However, the State made noticeable progress later, as in 2019-20 the IMR had decreased to 25.6, much below the national average of 35.2, lifting its rank to 14.

Himachal's Per Capita Net State Domestic Product has been in the top half, in both 1993-94 (ranked 13 of 27) and 2020-21 (ranked 11 of 27) as shown in Table 3. Manufacturing has contributed to about 30% of the Gross State Value Added between 2019-20, and this is among the highest in the country, with major States like Gujarat and Uttarakhand ranked ahead of Himachal as shown in Table 4.

Among environment-related indicators, the State performed decently when it came to plastic waste generated per 1,000 people and the percentage of industries complying with wastewater treatment (Table 5).

Himachal's Gross Enrolment Ratio in higher education (18-23 years) and Adjusted Net Enrolment Ratio in elementary education (Class 1-8) place it among the best performers as shown in Table 6. The State's average annual dropout rate at the secondary level (class 9-10) is the lowest in the country and the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) in higher secondary (class 11-12) is the highest in the country.

Himachal report card

The tables show Himachal's performance across socio-economic indicators. The data for the tables were sourced from the National Family Health Survey, Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, Global Data Lab and NITI Aayog

Table 1

Indicator	2019-20		Top major States	Change from 2015-16	2015-16		2005-06	
	Value	H.P.'s rank			Value	H.P.'s rank	Value	H.P.'s rank
% women who ever attended school	81	10 of 30	Kerala: 95.5; Delhi: 83.8; T.N.: 80.4	0	79	10 of 30	73.1	6 of 28
Women aged 20-24 married before 18 years of age (%)	5.4	2 of 30	J&K: 4.5; Kerala: 6.3; Punjab: 8.7	1	8.6	3 of 30	12.3	2 of 28
Infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)	25.6	14 of 30	Kerala: 4.4; T.N.: 18.6; W.B.: 22	5	34.3	19 of 30	36	7 of 28
Stunted children (low height-for-age) (%)	30.8	12 of 30	Kerala: 23.4; Punjab: 24.5; T.N.: 25	-7	26.3	5 of 30	38.6	9 of 28
Wasted children (low weight-for-height) (%)	17.4	14 of 30	Punjab: 10.6; Delhi: 11.2; Haryana: 11.5	-9	13.7	5 of 30	19.3	19 of 28
Underweight children (weight-for-age) (%)	25.5	13 of 30	Punjab: 16.9; Kerala: 19.7; J&K: 21	-5	21.2	8 of 30	36.5	13 of 28
Households with any member having a health insurance (%)	34.5	16 of 30	Rajasthan: 87.8; Chhattisgarh: 71.4; Andhra: 70.2	-2	25.8	14 of 30	5.5	14 of 28
Population that use an improved sanitation facility (%)	81.8	10 of 30	Kerala: 98.7; Punjab: 86.6; Haryana: 85	-1	72.3	9 of 30	-	-

Table 2: HDI

Value	Himachal's rank	2019		1990	
		Top major States	Value	Himachal's rank	Value
0.725	4 of 30	Kerala, Delhi, Punjab	0.478	14 of 30	

Table 3: Per capita NSDP

Value	Himachal's rank	2020-21		1993-94	
		Top major States	Value	Himachal's rank	Value
1,83,333	11 of 27	Delhi, Karnataka, Haryana	7870	13 of 27	

Table 4

Text & Context

THE HINDU

NEWS IN NUMBERS

Not enough women in Parliament: Nepal election commission

31 In percentage, the share of women lawmakers in the 275-member Nepal Parliament. This is lower than the 33% reservation mandated for women by the constitution, the country's Election Commission said on Wednesday. Out of the 275 newly elected members to the House of Representatives, 184 are men and 91 are women. PTI

Rise in production of electronics, says Ministry of Electronics

6.4 In ₹ lakh crore, the worth of electronic production in FY22 while exports from the sector reached an all-time high of ₹1.09 lakh crore, Minister of State for Electronics and IT Rajeev Chandrasekhar informed Parliament. Electronics production in FY21 was over ₹5.44 lakh crore based on data from Industry and Directorate General of Commercial Intelligence and Statistics. PTI

Alcohol and drug addiction among children in India

1.58 In crore, the number of children aged between 10 and 17 years addicted to substances in India, the government told the Supreme Court on Wednesday. Citing data from a survey conducted following an apex court order, it said alcohol is the most commonly used psychoactive substance by children followed by cannabis and opioids. PTI

More female students enrolled in UG courses at IITs: MoE

20 The percentage of female students who enrolled for undergraduate courses at Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) in 2021, as compared to only 8% the previous year, according to data from the Ministry of Education (MoE). There has been consistent improvement in the enrolment of female students in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics courses. PTI

More beneficiaries added to the Orunodoi scheme in Assam

10.54 In lakh, the additional number of people who will benefit from Assam government's second edition of 'Orunodoi', its ₹4,142-crore poverty alleviation scheme. With this, the total number of beneficiaries will come to 27 lakh. The financial outlay for Orunodoi is ₹4,142 crore per annum. PTI

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How gene therapy could cure cancer

Who led the trial for this form of experimental medicine? How does 'base editing' help in curing cancerous T-cells? How does the CRISPR-cas9 system work? Was the treatment a complete success? Does base editing treat blood disorders as well?

EXPLAINER

Jacob Koshy

The story so far:

Scientists in the United Kingdom testing a new form of cancer therapy, reported success in a teenaged girl, Alyssia, with a form of cancer called T-cell acute lymphoblastic leukaemia.

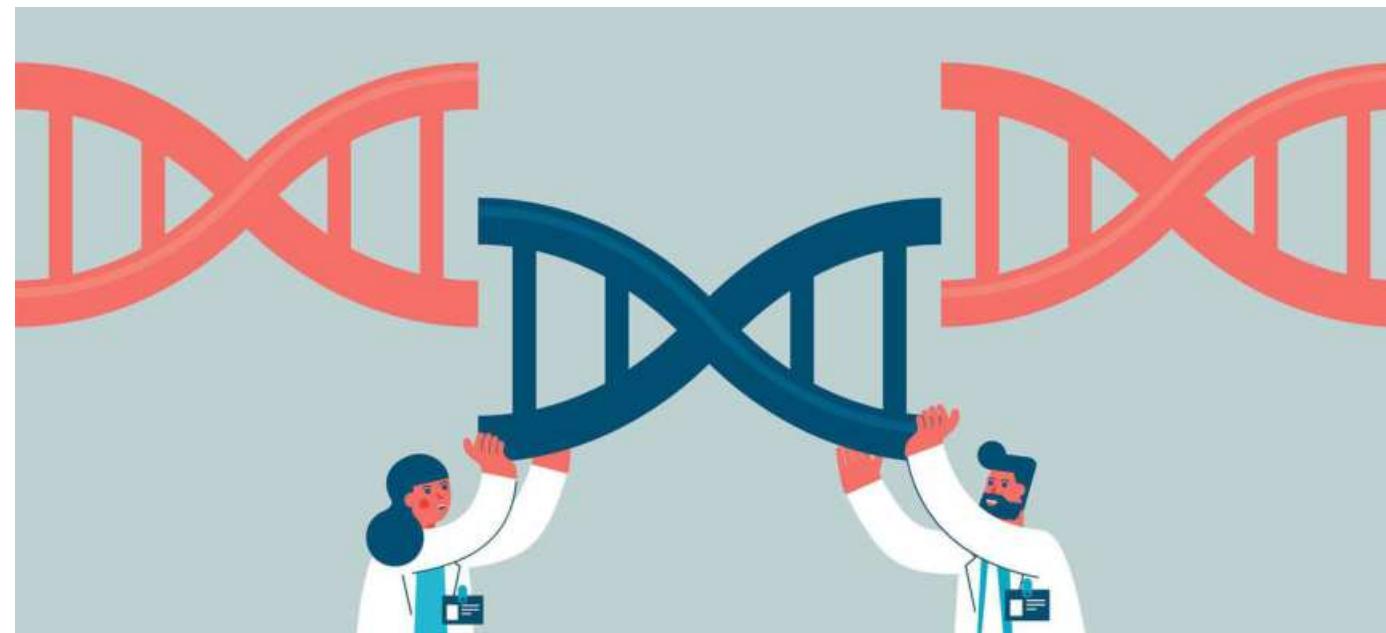
What happens in this form of cancer? In this form of blood cancer, the T-cells, which are a class of white blood cells, equipped to hunt and neutralise threats to the body, turn against the body and end up destroying healthy cells that normally help with immunity. The disease is rapid and progressive and is usually treated by chemotherapy and radiation therapy.

What marked Alyssia's treatment?

The BBC reported that Alyssia, 13, tried several of the standard treatments including chemotherapy and radiation but with limited success. Just when it seemed there was no hope, she was enrolled in the trial testing of an experimental medicine. This trial was led by doctors and scientists at the University College, London and Great Ormond Street hospital. Alyssia was the first to receive experimental gene therapy that relied on a new technique called 'base editing.'

What is 'base editing'?

A person's genetic code is several permutations of four bases: Adenine (A), Guanine (G), cytosine (C) and thymine (T). Sequences of these bases, akin to letters in the alphabet, spell out genes that are instructions to produce the wide array of proteins necessary for the body's functions. In Alyssia's case, her T-cells – perhaps because of a mis-arrangement in the



sequence of bases – had become cancerous. A way to correct this mis-arrangement could mean a healthier immune system. In the last two decades, the world of biomedical engineering has been enthused by a technique that allows genes to be altered and errors 'fixed.' The most popular among these approaches has been the CRISPR-cas9 system.

Inspired by how certain bacteria defend themselves against viruses, by snipping out and storing pieces of their genes, the CRISPR-cas9 system, consists of an enzyme that acts like molecular scissors. It can be made to cut a piece of DNA at a precise location and a guide RNA can be used to insert a changed genetic code at the sites of incision. While there are a few ways to effect such changes, the CRISPR-cas9 system is believed to be the fast, most versatile system to effect such gene editing. David Liu, of the Broad Institute, Mas-

sachusetts has improvised on the CRISPR-cas9 system to be able to directly change certain bases: thus, a C can be changed into a G and T into an A.

While still a nascent technology, base editing is reportedly more effective at treating blood disorders which are caused by so-called single point mutations, or when a change in a single base pair can cause terminal disease.

How did base-editing work for Alyssia's therapy?

The objective of the gene therapy in the case of T-cell leukemia was to fix her immune system in a way that it stops making cancerous T-cells. First, healthy T-cells were extracted from a donor and put through a series of edits. The first base edit blocked the T-cells' targeting mechanism so it would cease attacking Alyssia's body, the second removed a chemical marking,

called CD7, which is on all T-cells and the third prevented the cells being killed by a chemotherapy drug. Finally, the T-cells were programmed to destroy all cells – cancerous or protective – with CD7 marked on it. After spending a month in remission, she was given a second donor transplant to regrow her immune system that would contain healthy T-cells.

How effective was the treatment?

Three months after the treatment, her cancer seemed to resurface but the most recent investigations suggest no signs of it, according to the BBC. Alyssia was one of 10 people enrolled in the trial to receive the treatment.

It has been 1.5 years since she was first diagnosed with the disease and whether the treatment has reliably and entirely fixed her immune system, remains to be established.

THE GIST

Scientists in the United Kingdom testing a new form of cancer therapy, reported success in a teenaged girl, Alyssia, who has T-cell acute lymphoblastic leukaemia. Alyssia was the first to receive experimental gene therapy that relied on a new technique called 'base editing.'

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THE GIST

India's exports declined about 16.7% in October compared with the year-earlier period. This is the first slide reported for any month since February 2021.

The monthly Finance Ministry review for October states that the global slowdown is driven by a 'confluence of stubbornly high inflation, rising borrowing costs and geopolitical tensions'.

One seemingly positive signal for the economy is that the private sector capital expenditure is on track to touch six lakh crore this fiscal.

Why are India's slowing exports a cause for concern?

How are other export-dominated countries faring? Why is the government optimistic that domestic demand will counter the effects of declining exports?

K. Bharat Kumar

The story so far:

India's exports declined about 16.7% in October compared with the year-earlier period. This is the first slide reported for any month since February 2021. October imports rose at a much milder pace than earlier, most likely because of softening commodity prices worldwide, and trade deficit widened by as much as 50%.

How is the export sector faring? Engineering goods, which have lent a strong shoulder to India's goods exports in recent years, slid 21%. The Engineering Export Promotion Council of India Chairman Arun Garodia attributed the slowdown to high inflation in developed regions, falling demand in China, slowdown in the EU and the U.S. and the Russia-Ukraine war. The Commerce Ministry pointed out that for October, a decline of \$2 billion worth of exports was seen in steel and allied products, highlighting the fact that the government

had levied an export duty on these products to help increase local availability and hence temper local prices. The government has since removed this duty. The Ministry also highlighted that in the month of Diwali every year, workers tend to take leave, thus impacting output. Therefore, one should wait and see whether export decline was only a blip or whether it was a trend that would stay.

What about other exporting nations? Vietnam, an export-dominated country, recorded a 4.5% growth in exports from a year earlier to \$29.18 billion amid 'sustained foreign demand', according to tradingeconomics.com. Similarly, exports by the Philippines grew 20% in October. The government there had said that exports rose for the first time in three months in September amid what it calls 'signs of reviving foreign demand'. China is an outlier this year because of stringent lockdowns that are impacting manufacturing output, though lockdowns are being eased currently following protests against restrictions.

Is domestic demand enough?

The monthly Finance Ministry review for October acknowledges a slowing export scenario but emphasises that domestic demand will carry through. The report states that the global slowdown is driven by a 'confluence of stubbornly high inflation, rising borrowing costs and geopolitical tensions', but cites local demand as being 'resilient'. It also expects a 're-invigorated' investment cycle which will spur growth and job creation in the coming days.

Interestingly, the Ministry says that recently, inflation has been driven up more by local factors, including higher food prices, than imported reasons and that those pressures are set to dampen thanks to easing international commodity prices and the arrival of Kharif crop. (Retail inflation has been consistently above 7% these past few months, but stood at 6.8% in October). Sure enough, consumer inflation eased to 5.88% for November. In the monthly report, the Ministry also pinned hope on the fact that the last month saw the lowest sign-ons

this year for the employment guarantee scheme MGNREGS. It is hoping that a spike in tractor sales in September and October reflects improved sentiment.

One seemingly positive signal for the economy is the private sector capital expenditure which Chief Economic Adviser V. Anantha Nageswaran says is on track to touch six lakh crore this fiscal which would make it the highest of the past six years. Private capex typically depends on credit, or loans, from the banking system. And that has seen a healthy growth in the recent past touching a high of 18% last month. There have been reports of banks scrambling to gather deposits, with videos of managers and their teams walking the streets announcing deposit rates to help mobilise funds for credit growth. Whether this credit growth is due to inflation and low base effect from last year, remains to be seen over the coming months.

What about our foreign reserves? For the week ended December 2, foreign exchange reserves stood at about \$561 billion. If we take October imports at \$56.7 billion (an eight-month low) as a benchmark, then we have roughly about 9-10 months' worth of import cover which isn't as healthy as the 14-to-15-month cover that we had seen during the pandemic. However, economists feel this isn't as bad as 2013 when foreign investors began pulling out of India's financial markets. At that time, we had less than seven months' worth of import cover. And if anything, forex reserves have been rising in recent weeks signalling hope for the future.

FROM THE ARCHIVES



At odds: Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping at the BRICS summit in Goa, India in 2016. AP

The race of two Asian giants: the story of India and China so far

There is little doubt that the actions of both China and India will determine the region in the next decade. But it is likely that they will do so in wary opposition to each other, and not as part of a wider Asian power bloc; the sort that Nehru might have imagined back in 1947

Rana Mitter

As tensions yet again rise on the India-China border, this article dated August 15, 2022 by Rana Mitter explains how the two neighbouring countries, for better or for worse, will shape Asia in the next decade.

Last month, a United Nations population survey estimated that a milestone may be passed in 2023. For the first time in over two millennia, China will not be the most populous society on earth. Instead India will have the largest population, and China will be second.

It's a rare example of a global ranking where India sits higher than China, and it's an ambivalent victory at best: a larger population does not have merit in itself, unless it is well-fed and endowed with economic prospects. China has other number 2 rankings which may raise its standing, such as the second largest economy in the world. It is not second to India but the U.S. This is a reminder of how far the two Asian giants have come since their moments of profound political change in the late 1940s: independence for India in 1947, and the victory of the Chinese Communist Party and establishment of the People's Republic of China (PRC) in 1949. In global power terms, China now looms above India, but the fluidity of geopolitics in the 2020s may give India advantages in the world now being shaped.

Different directions
The world of the late 1940s was one where global order was just as much in turmoil as in the present day. India had become the first major British colony to gain freedom, and its new leader, Jawaharlal Nehru, saw the fate of India as important not only for his country's own people but also for the other, still-colonised peoples of Asia. Although the violence of Partition cast a bloody cloud across the landscape, the establishment of India as a multi-party

electoral democracy with a free media was a foundation stone of the secular politics that Nehru embodied, and wanted an independent India to represent. China's fate at that time was also marked by violence, but it had a very different result. China had fought Japan from 1937 to 1945 during World War II, but was then plunged into a civil war between the ruling Nationalists of Chiang Kai-shek and the Communists under Mao Zedong. Mao's victory saw the establishment of the PRC, which leaned heavily on the Soviet Union for its economic model. China was kept out of the United Nations for another two decades, and did not open diplomatic relations with the U.S. for three. The years of Mao's rule saw immense domestic turmoil, with events such as the Great Leap Forward of 1958-62, an experiment in self-sufficient socialism that went horrifically wrong and starved millions of farmers to death, as well as the Cultural Revolution of 1966-76, in which China went to war with itself. Mao's China also, of course, went to war with India, in a border conflict in 1962 whose after-effects are still very evident today.

Common concerns

Yet, in the later years, the thawing of the Cold War saw both countries change path, and even share some common concerns. By the 1990s, India's highly protected economy was producing limited growth, and controversial reforms under figures including P.V. Narasimha Rao opened up the economy in various ways, creating a new class of millionaires as well as increasing inequality. In a sense, China had been there first, with the astonishing economic experiment begun in the 1970s with the blessing of Mao's ultimate successor, Deng Xiaoping. Instead of the command economy that Mao had favoured, China's senior leader allowed the development of a market economy. This did not follow the model pioneered by Ronald Reagan, Margaret Thatcher, and Bob Hawke, of removing the government as much as possible from

the workings of the market. Instead, the Chinese private sector was given space to develop within a framework controlled by the party. But it worked astonishingly well. China became a manufacturing hub for the world, regularly posting 10% growth rates in the late 1990s and early 2000s. Today, China's per capita GDP rate is around \$9,000 a year, as opposed to around \$2,000 for India.

Today, geopolitical tensions mean that China and India mostly sit on opposite ends on major global questions. There are some areas of commonality, to be fair; both are nervous about climate change commitments that may hamper their growth, and both abstained at the United Nations this year rather than condemning Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

Lessons to be learned

Yet there are also elements behind their rise that mean that both sides can learn from each other. One of China's most powerful engines for growth has been its stress on education: 2.4% of GDP goes on research and development broadly defined, and in international university rankings, which mostly rate hard sciences, China has a group of institutions in the top tier, many more than India. Education is not evenly distributed, with urban centres obtaining much more of the pie than the children of the countryside. Yet, there is no doubt that China's stress on building human capital has had results.

However, China's current political system runs the risk of losing its gains as it becomes narrower and more authoritarian. In the last few years, technology entrepreneurs, academics and lawyers have all become victims of political crackdowns by the party, which is concerned about any voices that do not simply follow the line sent down by Beijing. However, societies that suppress questioning voices find, in time, that their capacity to innovate is damaged. India has long had a pluralist system with a variety of voices; the flexibility and capacity to change that such a system can

provide should give both China and India pause for thought if neither wants to fall behind in the next stage of global development.

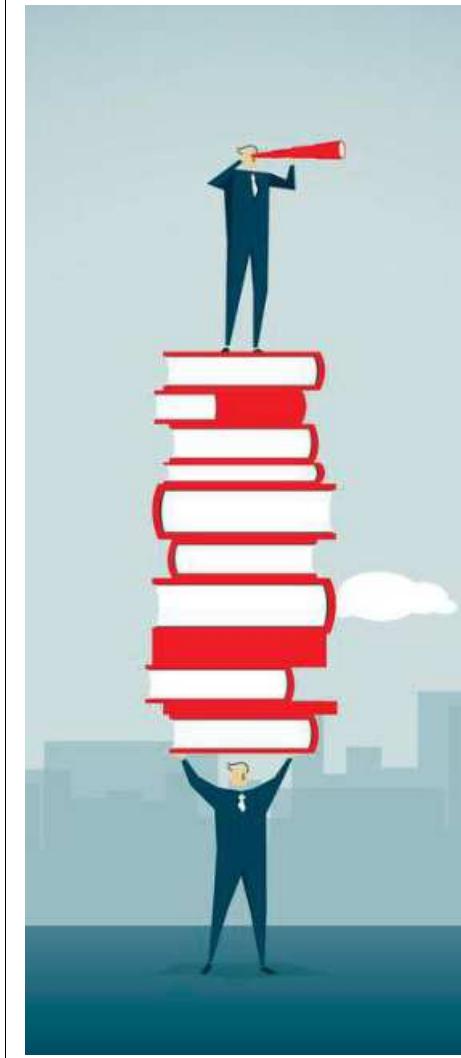
Challenges ahead

The 2020s will provide a set of challenges for both India and China. On the international stage, both countries need to think where they can find new friends. In the case of India, there are plenty of suitors, as the establishment of the Quad naval agreement with the U.S., Australia, and Japan suggests. Yet independent India has always been reluctant to become too entangled in disputes beyond its borders. The growing strength of China has become a source of alarm for India, but it is not yet obvious that New Delhi wants to accept the invitations of the U.S. to become a full-blown ally against Beijing, nor what New Delhi's reaction would be, say, to a Chinese attempt to take Taiwan in the near future. China is likewise wary of formal alliances, but that is in part because its potential partners are ambivalent ones. Russia and China declared a "friendship without limits" in February this year, but it seems unlikely that Russian President Vladimir Putin shared the full extent of his ambition to invade Ukraine with Chinese President Xi Jinping when he met him at the Winter Olympics.

There is little doubt that the actions of both China and India will shape Asia in the next decade. But it is likely that they will continue to do so in wary opposition to each other, and not as part of a wider Asian power bloc of the sort that Nehru might have imagined back in 1947, even if they continue to remain the first and second most populous societies on earth - in whichever order.

The 2020s will provide a set of challenges for both India and China. On the international stage, both countries need to think where they can find new friends.

Rana Mitter is Professor of History and Politics of Modern China, University of Oxford



FROM THE ARCHIVES

Know your English

"Sir what's the difference between 'I am feeling all right' and 'I am doing all right'?"

"'I am feeling all right' means 'I am all right physically'. After giving the injection the doctor may ask, 'How do you feel now?' You might respond by saying 'I am feeling all right' or 'I don't feel all right, I am feeling giddy'. 'I am doing all right' means 'I am prospering, my business is flourishing'. 'I am doing well' means, 'I am all right, business-wise, workwise, etc.' It has nothing to do with your physical well-being".

"Sir, Mr. K. Subbarao Rao of Vijayawada wants to know the pronunciation of 'receipt'."

"The first 'e' in the word is pronounced like the 'i' in 'bit', and 'bill'. The 'ei' is pronounced like the 'ee' in 'feel'. The 'p' in the word is silent. 'Receipt' rhymes with 'deceit'. The stress is on the second syllable".

"Sir, Dr. K. Naganna of Kumool wants to know the meaning of 'He is barking up the wrong tree'."

"To bark up the wrong tree" is to be misled or mistaken, to criticise or attack the wrong person. This idiom relates to raccoon hunting. A raccoon is a small, fish-eating animal. Raccoons are generally hunted at night. Dogs are used to chase them. When the raccoon climbs a tree when it is chased, the dog would stand under it and bark till the hunter arrives. Sometimes the dog would lose track of the raccoon and bark up the wrong tree. This is the origin of the idiom.

Look! I did not throw the stone. You are barking up the wrong tree.

If you think that I gave the information to the boss, you are barking up the wrong tree.

"Sir. Mr. P. Sundaram of Chrompet, Madras, wants to know whether it is permissible to use 'printer's devil' to denote a misprint"

"No. A printer's devil is a boy who is employed in a printer's office to do odd jobs. He is an errand-boy. The boys working in a printer's office generally handle printer's ink and wet proofs. Their hands and faces become black and perhaps on account of the dark colour, they are jocularly called 'devils'. So a printer's devil is a human being and not a misprint."

THE DAILY QUIZ

In 1903, on this day, Italian-American food cart vendor Italo Marchiony received a U.S. patent for inventing a machine to make ice cream cones. Here's a quiz on how some everyday items were invented

**Aarnav V
Karishma Ashwin
C. S. Abhinav**

QUESTION 1

A Romanian student in Paris, Petreche Peonaru, had a revolutionary idea wherein reservoirs of dye when deposited to a tip by using capillary action and gravity, eliminated the need for longer work. What was his invention?

QUESTION 2

William Addis invented this in 1780 by attaching pig bristles to a specially carved handle made from cow bone for hygiene purposes. It was further developed in 1844 but completely changed with the introduction of nylon which was much softer and more hygienic than its original counterpart. What item is this?

QUESTION 3

This naturally occurring material has been used by many Stone Age societies across the globe for the production of sharp cutting tools. It remained a luxury material, and the disasters that overtook the late bronze age civilisations seemed to have brought its making to a halt. However, it is used as much as common plastic today. What?

QUESTION 4

This household item was first used in central Europe during the Middle Bronze Age in the second millennium B.C. From these the first variant called fibula was developed in the 13th or 12th century B.C. Later on, its many variants spread rapidly across the Mediterranean. It was considered an upper-class ornament centuries ago but now its use is universal. What item?

**Visual question:**

In 1826, John Walker, a chemist in Stockton-on-Tees, discovered through a lucky accident this invention that we use till date, unchanged. What is it?

Questions (abridged) and Answers to the previous day's daily quiz: 1. Monkeys belong to this order of the hierarchical taxonomic rank and are collectively known by this term. **Ans:** **Infrarorder, Simians**

2. The collective noun for baboons and the species of virus that infects baboons. **Ans:** **Troop; baboon lymphocryptovirus**

3. The three species of primates which are called strepsirrhine primates. **Ans:** **Lemurs, lorises, and galagos**

4. This macaque species is native to the Atlas Mountains of Algeria, Libya, Tunisia and Morocco. **Ans:** **Barbary macaque**

5. These monkeys are nocturnal and found across much of South America. **Ans:** **Peruvian night monkey**

6. This jungle monkey is a fictional character with bird-like feathered wings. **Ans:** **The Winged Monkey from The Wonderful Wizard of Oz**

7. This monkey species is consumed by humans in Mexico. **Ans:** **Spider Monkey**

Visual: Identify this monkey. **Ans:** **Pygmy marmoset; The smallest monkey in the world**

Early Birds: Varghese Joseph| Rahul Patel| Anvitha Holkar

Aarnav, Karishma and Abhinav are students of PSBB Higher Secondary School, Nungambakkam, Chennai

Word of the day**Savant:**

someone who has been admitted to membership in a scholarly field

Synonyms: learned person, pundit**Usage:** She is a musical savant.**Pronunciation:** bit.ly/3FrPAt5K**International Phonetic Alphabet:** /savnt/

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

From Page One**Hooch tragedy claims several lives in Bihar**

When the Opposition BJP legislators raised the hooch deaths in the Bihar Assembly on Wednesday, Chief Minister Nitish Kumar lost his cool. "Arre, tum bol rahe ho...chup raho. Sarabi ho gaye ho tum...tum log karwa rahe ho sab...kitna ganda kaam kar rahe ho...sabko baahar nikalo...yeh bardast nahi hoga (Oh, you are speaking? Keep quiet. You [BJP legislators] have gone drunk...you have been doing all this [hooch tragedies]...what dirty work you've been doing...get all of them out...this will not be tolerated)," Mr. Kumar shouted.

The BJP members later created a ruckus inside the House and subsequently staged a walkout. They demonstrated outside the House, demanding Mr. Kumar's "apology" for his "undemocratic behaviour".

"Until Chief Minister Nitish Kumar apologises for his undemocratic behaviour, we will not allow the State Assembly to run smoothly...the way Mr. Kumar used unparliamentary language against BJP members on the floor of the House is not acceptable. The BJP has decided to boycott the House," senior BJP leader and leader of the party in the House, Vijay Kumar Sinha, said.

'File FIR against CM'

The BJP's leader of the party in the State Council, Samrat Choudhury, held Mr. Kumar responsible for the hooch deaths. Other protesting BJP legislators blamed the "nexus between police and illicit liquor traders" for the deaths. "I'll even appeal to the family members of those who died in the hooch tragedy to file an FIR (First Information Report) against Nitish Kumar," Mr. Choudhury said.

However, ruling party legislator and Finance Minister Vijay Kumar Choudhury said there was "no question of Mr. Kumar apologising as he has said nothing undemocratic".

"We've liquor prohibition law in Bihar but still people are drinking liquor and dying, which proves that it is not right to drink and die," Mr. Choudhury said. "Opposition members often claim that liquor is available everywhere in the State but when we ask them to provide details of sellers, they turn silent," he said.

Raids under way

"We have detained three persons after the incident and raids are being conducted to nab others involved in the illegal liquor business," Superintendent of Police-Saran, Santosh Kumar, said.

Speaking to local mediapersons, District Magistrate Rajesh Meena said: "Investigation is on. We have urged villagers to report fearlessly about illegal liquor trade in the area."

Wholesale price rise fell to 5.85% in November

The Commerce and Industry Ministry said the decline in inflation this November is "primarily contributed by fall in prices of food articles, basic metals, textiles, chemicals & chemical products and paper & paper products" compared to November 2021.

The high base effect from a year ago also played a role, as wholesale inflation stood at 14.87% in November 2021, but this is the sixth successive month of moderation in wholesale inflation since it hit a record peak of 16.63% in May. Retail inflation also cooled in November to an 11-month low of 5.88% from a nearly eight-year high of 7.8% in April, driven by an over 8% deflation in vegetable prices.

At the wholesale level, vegetables recorded a deflation of 20.1% in November compared to a 17.6% inflation in October, as per official data, with onions recording a 19.2% fall in prices and fruits reported deflation of 1.1%, from a year ago. Potato inflation moderated significantly to 13.75% in November from 45% in October and 49.8% in September.

However, some key food items saw an acceleration in wholesale inflation, similar to the uptick in retail prices, with cereals inflation rising to 12.85% from 12% in October and wheat inflation nudging up from 16.25% in October to 18.11% in November.

Row in House over China border tussle

"In 1962, when the India-China war took place, Jawaharlal Nehru, had given 165 MPs the chance to speak, and a decision was taken on what to do only after that," Mr. Chowdhury said.

Speaker Om Birla, however, said a decision could be taken on the matter only in the Business Advisory Committee and continued with the proceedings of the House. As the Speaker continued with the Question Hour, members of the Congress, the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK), the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP), the Trinamool Congress and the National Conference (NC), among others, walked out of the House.

Similar scenes were witnessed in the Rajya Sabha. Leader of the Opposition in the House and Congress leader Mallikarjun Kharge said the Opposition parties wanted a detailed discussion to get full information on Chinese aggression and encroachment on Indian territory, and that they stood by the Army.

Deputy Chairperson of the Rajya Sabha Hari vansh said no notice had been given by any of the Opposition parties on the issue and a debate could not be allowed. Opposition members shouted slogans for some time before staging a walkout.

CBI lodged 15 cases for derogatory posts since 2019, says govt.

The NCRB does not maintain data under 'hate crime' as it is not defined in the Indian Penal Code, says Home Ministry in the Rajya Sabha

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The CBI registered 15 cases from 2019 to November 2022 in connection with alleged derogatory posts against government and constitutional functionaries, Union Minister of State for Personnel Jitendra Singh said in the Lok Sabha on Wednesday.

Of these, six were under investigation, while in nine cases, 28 chargesheets had been filed against 28 accused, he said in a written reply to a question by T.R. Baalu. All the cases in which chargesheets had been filed were under trial.

In November 2020, the CBI had taken over 12 cases earlier registered by the cybercrime unit of the Andhra Pradesh police, following a directive by the Andhra Pradesh High Court to probe the allegations that some judges of the Supreme Court and the And-



Keeping posted: Union Minister Jitendra Singh said 28 chargesheets had been filed in nine cases.

hra Pradesh High Court were being intentionally targeted through interviews to the media, and abusive comments and threats on social media platforms.

Hate crime

In the Rajya Sabha, the Union Home Ministry said that as the Indian Penal Code did not define any offence as "hate crime", the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) did not maintain data under the head "hate crime".

The Ministry said police and public order were State subjects. Minister of State for Home Nitin Jayant Rai, in a written reply, said State governments were responsible for the prevention, detection, registration and investigation of crimes and for prosecuting criminals through their law enforcement agencies. However, the Ministry had issued advisories from time to time to ensure that any person who took law into his or her own hands was punished promptly.

Need for fiscal prudence in implementing PFMS: panel

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Public Accounts Committee (PAC), in its 54th report on "Implementation of Public Financial Management System (PFMS)", stressed fiscal prudence in financial planning by incorporating scientific methods into budgeting, projecting and utilisation of funds.

Noting that the actual budgeting and year-to-year phasing of expenditure varied from the plan approved by the government, the committee observed in its report presented on Wednesday that the tasks related to the implementation of the PFMS appeared to have been dealt with a casual approach and there was no proper financial planning of the process.

The committee held the view that incorporating scientific methods into budgeting, projecting and utilisation of funds would have ensured maintenance of fiscal prudence.

House committee calls for more medical facilities for troops at forward locations

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Public Accounts Committee (PAC), in its 55th report on "Provisioning, procurement and issue of High Altitude Clothing, Equipment, Ration and Housing", said all efforts should be made to fully implement Phase III of the Central Inventory Control Group (CICG) for effective inventory management and procurement.

The report, presented on Wednesday by Lok Sabha Member Satya Pal Singh on behalf of PAC Chairman Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury, is based on the Comptroller and Auditor General's (CAG) findings in 2019.

The committee observed that a huge quantity of essential items under the Special Clothing and Mountaineering Equipment (SCME) Category-II were procured or held when they were not issued or required for long. Not

Ministry may fulfil assurance that there is no shortfall of high altitude clothing and equipment in Army

ing that CICG, an automated centralised database, had been created to mitigate such issues, it said all measures needed to be taken to fully implement Phase III of the project.

The PAC recommended an overhaul of the contracting process between the Defence Ministry and vendors with built-in contractual responses and contractual liabilities on them; and an outcome-oriented monitoring of expenditure and revenue and capital procurement.

The committee said the Ministry should collaborate with friendly countries with similar geographical conditions and learn from their experiences for technical specifica-

India shares Aadhaar roll-out experience with G-20 members

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI



The meeting of the Finance Track was held in Bengaluru on December 13 and 14.

The Indian side shared its experience in rolling out Aadhaar and the digital payments system during the meeting.

He revealed that India was poised to help others in framing the Financial Inclusion Action Plan for 2024-26. "Digital public infrastructure leading to financial inclusion, and financial inclusion is not limited to just the bank accounts but also transactions and what it can facilitate for the companies as well. That will be one of the priorities where action will be there," he added.

"In line with the Prime Minister's Make-in-India initiative, today, the 4G and 5G technologies stack are made in India, designed in India. Today, it is recognised all over the world...Now, BSNL is going to be revived in a very big way," he said.

He added that the revival measures focussed on infusing fresh capital for upgrading BSNL services, allocating spectrum, de-stressing its balance sheet and augmenting its fibre network.

BSNL is going to be revived in a big way, says Minister

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

State-run Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd. (BSNL) went through a very bad phase "primarily" due to political parties during the UPA government, and was used like a "cash cow" by certain people who were still MPs, Union Information Technology Minister Ashwini Vaishnav said during Question Hour on Wednesday.

But now, the Prime Minister had approved a package of ₹1,64,000 crore for the revival of BSNL. This would totally transform it, he added.

"Substantive discussions were held during the session on international taxation on the priority areas for 2023, including monitoring the progress of the Two-Pillar Tax Package being developed under OECD/G-20 inclusive framework, enhancing tax transparency and multilateral capacity building on taxation," the G-20 Secretariat said in a press release.

Ajay Seth, Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs, on Wednesday said

IN BRIEF**Concession for senior citizens may not be restored soon**

Arguing that the subsidy Bill of the Railways was already huge at ₹59,000 crore, Railways Minister Ashwini Vaishnav on Wednesday hinted that the concession in railway tickets given to senior citizens might not be restored anytime soon. "We have given ₹59,000 crore passenger subsidy last year. New facilities are coming. If new decisions are to be taken, we will take them. But as of now, everyone should look into the condition of the Railways," he said.

Eklavya schools running with just 58% of teachers: govt.

The Eklavya Model Residential Schools for tribal students are functioning with just 58% of the teachers required to do so, the Ministry of Tribal Affairs told the Rajya Sabha on Wednesday in response to a question from the Leader of the Opposition in the Rajya Sabha Mallikarjun Kharge. Minister of State for Tribal Affairs Renuka Singh Saruta said, "As per data submitted by States, there are 394 functional schools with 1,05,463 students...The proportionate teachers requirement is 7,030 and presently available teachers are 4,138."

Titles given for just 50% of the total claims on forest land

The Union government on Wednesday revealed in the Rajya Sabha that under the Forest Rights Act of 2006, titles had been given for just 50% of the total claims on forest land received till June this year from members of Scheduled Tribe communities and other traditional forest dwellers. The data showed that a total of 44.46 lakh claims have been made for title rights over forest land (both individual and community), against which title rights have been issued for just 22.35 lakh.

Scholarship for Class 9 and 10 only under OBC category

Amid confusion over whether the government had cancelled pre-matriculation scholarship for SC, ST and OBC students in government schools through Classes 1-8, Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment Virendra Kumar on Wednesday said, "The pre-matric scholarship has now been limited to Class 9 and 10 in government schools only under OBC category." He said this had been done to rationalise the scholarship.

NSCS has prepared draft cybersecurity strategy: govt.

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The National Security Council Secretariat (NSCS) has formulated a draft National Cyber Security Strategy, which holistically looks at the issue of security of national cyberspace, the government said in the Lok Sabha on Wednesday.

Responding to a query from Lok Sabha members Rajveer Singh and Sunkanta Majumdar raised in the wake of recent cyberattacks, Minister for Electronics and Information Technology Ashwini Vaishnav said in a written reply the NSCS had formulated a draft strategy. However, the timeline for its implementation and other details were not mentioned.

Mumbai to experience 'poor' to 'very poor' AQI in coming years

The Hindu Bureau
MUMBAI

Experts have warned that Mumbai is likely to experience an increasing number of days with "poor" and "very poor" air quality in the coming years during winter months, but Mumbai's air pollution is likely to see a dip in the coming days after the wind speed is expected to pick up after cyclone Mandous.

The Air Quality Index (AQI) data for Mumbai from November 1 to December 10, 2022, recorded using the System of Air Quality Weather Forecasting and Research (SAFAR) mobile application shows Malad, Chembur, and Mazgaon were the three most polluted areas.

RS clears Bill to move Gond community to ST list in UP.

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Rajya Sabha on Wednesday passed the Constitution (Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes) Order (Second Amendment) Bill that aims to move the Gond community from the Scheduled Castes list to Scheduled Tribes list in Chandauli, Kushinagar, Sant Kabir Nagar and Sant Ravidas Nagar districts of Uttar Pradesh.

The Bill was discussed at length on Tuesday, with members cutting across party lines supporting the legislation. Some members insisted on considering the addition of other communities and also conducting a caste census so that accurate data can be gathered.

Maharashtra govt. to monitor interfaith, inter-caste couples

Abhinay Deshpande

MUMBAI

The Maharashtra government has constituted a 13-member committee to collect details of couples in interfaith and inter-caste marriages, and the maternal families of the women involved if they are estranged. State Minister of Women and Child Development Mangal Prabhat Lodha, who is heading the committee, said the move was aimed at avoiding a repeat of the Shraddha Walkar case.

However, the Nationalist Congress Party called it a "rubbish committee" and said that the Eknath Shinde-Devendra Fadnavis government had no right to spy on the private life of people.

According to a government order, the panel will hold regular meetings with district officials and collect information on registered and unregistered interfaith and intercaste marriages.

Speaking to *The Hindu*, Mr. Lodha said the State government's reason behind setting up the committee was to ensure that crimes like the murder of Shraddha Walkar did not happen again. "In some cases family members of the women, who get married without their acceptance, get estranged. In such cases our committee members, with the help of counsellors, will get in touch with the families and counsel them to resume the contact and get them together again," he said.

NCP MLA and former Minister Jitendra Awhad took to Twitter and asked the State government to "stay away from the private life of people." "What's this rubbish committee to check inter-caste/religion marriages?" he tweeted.

Mr. Lodha said that the Opposition had "every right" to criticise them, but the government had the responsibility to save the lives of people.

Centre tells Maharashtra, Karnataka to wait for SC judgment on border issue

Amit Shah meets Shinde and Bommai in New Delhi; panels of Ministers to be formed in both States for dialogue and a committee headed by an IPS officer will monitor law and order

The Hindu Bureau

NEW DELHI

Amid the border row between Maharashtra and Karnataka, Union Home Minister Amit Shah met the Chief Ministers of both States and asked them to not claim any territory or make any demands till the Supreme Court gave its verdict.

Emerging from the meeting, Mr. Shah flanked by Chief Ministers Eknath Shinde of Maharashtra and Basavaraj Bommai said fake Twitter handles created in the name of senior politicians had played a role in whipping up emotions. "The Twitter handles were in the names of political entities. We have decided to file FIRs and expose the people behind



Amit Shah flanked by the delegations from Maharashtra, right, and Karnataka on Wednesday. PTI

this act," Mr. Shah said after the hour-long meeting.

He stated that a committee headed by an Indian Police Service (IPS) officer would be constituted to monitor law and order in the border areas. "No local, traveller or businessman should be disturbed on the basis of language they speak. The IPS committee will ensure this," he said.

Mr. Shah said the border dispute had to be addressed through constitutional means.

Till the time the Supreme Court gives its verdict, no State will claim or generate demand for any territory as their own. Three Ministers each from both the States will meet and deliberate on how to percolate the message to the last mile. There are other local issues that are to be discussed," he said.

He also appealed to Opposition parties in both States to not politicise the issue.

Explained: What is the Karnataka-Maharashtra border dispute?
bit.ly/disputeborder

Modi praises Gujarat BJP unit for displaying organisational strength

The Hindu Bureau

NEW DELHI

The BJP's parliamentary party on Wednesday felicitated Prime Minister Narendra Modi on the party's seventh straight win in the Gujarat Assembly polls, that too with a record-breaking margin, a victory Mr. Modi credited to the BJP's organisation at a meeting of the party's MPs.

This was the first meeting of the BJP's parlia-

tary party in the current Winter Session.

In turn, the Prime Minister praised the Gujarat unit, and said the victory is owed to the BJP's organisational strength. "Prime Minister Modi gave credit for Gujarat's victory to Gujarat BJP chief C.R. Paatil and BJP national president J.P. Nadda and the workers of the party," Union Minister Pralhad Joshi told reporters after the meeting.

According to Mr. Joshi,

Mr. Modi also called on MPs to ensure the success of the G-20 meet to be held in India next year, and to treat it not as a government or a BJP programme but as India's programme.

He pointed out to the "panna (page) committee" system – every page has details of at least 30 voters in the area for micro-management – put in place by Mr. Paatil as being a contributor to the party's success.

Number of journalists jailed has reached record high: CPJ report

The Hindu Bureau

NEW DELHI

The number of journalists jailed around the world for practising their profession has touched a record high, with 363 reporters deprived of their freedom as of December 1, 2022, according to the 2022 prison census released by the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), a non-profit organisation that promotes press freedom worldwide.

This figure is a new global high that overtakes last year's record by 20% "and marks another grim milestone in a deteriorating media landscape", the report said.

This year's top five jailers of journalists were Iran, China, Myanmar, Turkey, and Belarus, respectively.

Regarding India, the report said that the country, "with seven journalists in jail, continues to draw criticism over its treatment of

the media, in particular its use of the Jammu and Kashmir Public Safety Act, a preventive detention law, to keep Kashmiri journalists Aasif Sultan, Fahad Shah, and Sajad Gul behind bars after they were granted court-ordered bail in separate cases." The report further noted that six out of these seven journalists were being investigated or charged under the terrorism-related Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act.

IN BRIEF



Stan Swamy's death is nothing short of murder, says CPI(M)

The latest report by a U.S.-based digital forensic analysis company, which says that fake documents used as evidence to implicate Father Stan Swamy in the Bhima Koregaon case were planted in his computer between 2017 and 2019, is a "damning indictment" of the Narendra Modi government and the modus operandi of the National Investigation Agency (NIA), the CPI(M) Polit Bureau said in a statement here. "Worst of all, Stan Swamy was refused bail, he was denied minimum facilities, his death in custody was nothing short of murder," the statement said.

Stop vacations for judiciary, demands Sushil Modi

BJP MP in the Rajya Sabha Sushil Kumar Modi on Wednesday demanded that judicial "vacations be vacated" as a measure to bring down high pendency of cases in courts. He was speaking on the New Delhi International Arbitration Centre (Amendment) Bill, 2022, when he made the demand. The Bill was cleared by the Rajya Sabha thereafter. He stated that courts remained shut for around 47 days in the summer and around 20 days during winter while all other public offices remained functional all year round.

More girls than boys adopted in last three years, data show

More girl children had been adopted than boys in the last three years, the government said in Parliament on Wednesday. According to data from the Women and Child Development Ministry, 2,991 children including 1,698 girls, were adopted in 2021-22. As many as 3,442 children, including 1,856 girls, were adopted in-country in 2020-21 and 3,351 children including 1,938 girls, were adopted in 2019-20. Women and Child Development Minister Smriti Irani said that after the new adoption regulations were brought in on September 23 this year, over 580 children were adopted.

भारत सरकार / अंतर्राष्ट्रीय विभाग Government of India, Department of Space
भारतीय अंतर्राष्ट्रीय विभाग / Indian Institute of Space Science and Technology,
[वि. अ. आरोग्य विभाग] वर्ष 1959 का ३ अप्रैल १९८५ के द्वारा विभागीय प्रबन्धन विभाग
विभागीय प्रबन्धन विभाग वालामुख PO, Thiruvananthapuram - 695 547
टेल: 0471-256884/3/6/7/8/9/10/11/12/13/14/15/16/17/18/19/20/21/22/23/24/25/26/27/28/29/30/31/32/33/34/35/36/37/38/39/40/41/42/43/44/45/46/47/48/49/50/51/52/53/54/55/56/57/58/59/60/61/62/63/64/65/66/67/68/69/70/71/72/73/74/75/76/77/78/79/80/81/82/83/84/85/86/87/88/89/90/91/92/93/94/95/96/97/98/99/100/101/102/103/104/105/106/107/108/109/110/111/112/113/114/115/116/117/118/119/120/121/122/123/124/125/126/127/128/129/130/131/132/133/134/135/136/137/138/139/140/141/142/143/144/145/146/147/148/149/150/151/152/153/154/155/156/157/158/159/160/161/162/163/164/165/166/167/168/169/170/171/172/173/174/175/176/177/178/179/180/181/182/183/184/185/186/187/188/189/190/191/192/193/194/195/196/197/198/199/200/201/202/203/204/205/206/207/208/209/210/211/212/213/214/215/216/217/218/219/220/221/222/223/224/225/226/227/228/229/230/231/232/233/234/235/236/237/238/239/240/241/242/243/244/245/246/247/248/249/250/251/252/253/254/255/256/257/258/259/260/261/262/263/264/265/266/267/268/269/270/271/272/273/274/275/276/277/278/279/280/281/282/283/284/285/286/287/288/289/290/291/292/293/294/295/296/297/298/299/299/300/301/302/303/304/305/306/307/308/309/310/311/312/313/314/315/316/317/318/319/320/321/322/323/324/325/326/327/328/329/330/331/332/333/334/335/336/337/338/339/340/341/342/343/344/345/346/347/348/349/350/351/352/353/354/355/356/357/358/359/360/361/362/363/364/365/366/367/368/369/370/371/372/373/374/375/376/377/378/379/380/381/382/383/384/385/386/387/388/389/390/391/392/393/394/395/396/397/398/399/399/400/401/402/403/404/405/406/407/408/409/4010/4011/4012/4013/4014/4015/4016/4017/4018/4019/4020/4021/4022/4023/4024/4025/4026/4027/4028/4029/4030/4031/4032/4033/4034/4035/4036/4037/4038/4039/4040/4041/4042/4043/4044/4045/4046/4047/4048/4049/4050/4051/4052/4053/4054/4055/4056/4057/4058/4059/4060/4061/4062/4063/4064/4065/4066/4067/4068/4069/40610/40611/40612/40613/40614/40615/40616/40617/40618/40619/40620/40621/40622/40623/40624/40625/40626/40627/40628/40629/40630/40631/40632/40633/40634/40635/40636/40637/40638/40639/40640/40641/40642/40643/40644/40645/40646/40647/40648/40649/40650/40651/40652/40653/40654/40655/40656/40657/40658/40659/40660/40661/40662/40663/40664/40665/40666/40667/40668/40669/406610/406611/406612/406613/406614/406615/406616/406617/406618/406619/406620/406621/406622/406623/406624/406625/406626/406627/406628/406629/406630/406631/406632/406633/406634/406635/406636/406637/406638/406639/406640/406641/406642/406643/406644/406645/406646/406647/406648/406649/406650/406651/406652/406653/406654/406655/406656/406657/406658/406659/406660/406661/406662/406663/406664/406665/406666/406667/406668/406669/4066610/4066611/4066612/4066613/4066614/4066615/4066616/4066617/4066618/4066619/4066620/4066621/4066622/4066623/4066624/4066625/4066626/4066627/4066628/4066629/4066630/4066631/4066632/4066633/4066634/4066635/4066636/4066637/4066638/4066639/4066640/4066641/4066642/4066643/4066644/4066645/4066646/4066647/4066648/4066649/4066650/4066651/4066652/4066653/4066654/4066655/4066656/4066657/4066658/4066659/4066660/4066661/4066662/4066663/4066664/4066665/4066666/4066667/4066668/4066669/40666610/40666611/40666612/40666613/40666614/40666615/40666616/40666617/40666618/40666619/40666620/40666621/40666622/40666623/40666624/40666625/40666626/40666627/40666628/40666629/40666630/40666631/40666632/40666633/40666634/40666635/40666636/40666637/40666638/40666639/40666640/40666641/40666642/40666643/40666644/40666645/40666646/40666647/40666648/40666649/40666650/40666651/40666652/40666653/40666654/40666655/40666656/40666657/40666658/40666659/40666660/40666661/40666662/40666663/40666664/40666665/40666666/40666667/40666668/40666669/406666610/406666611/406666612/406666613/406666614/406666615/406666616/406666617/406666618/406666619/406666620/406666621/406666622/406666623/406666624/406666625/406666626/406666627/406666628/406666629/406666630/406666631/406666632/406666633/406666634/406666635/406666636/406666637/406666638/406666639/406666640/406666641/406666642/406666643/406666644/406666645/4

UNITED NATIONS

UN removes Iran from women's rights body over rally crackdown



The UN on Wednesday voted to remove Iran from a women's rights body over Tehran's brutal crackdown of women-led protests. Iranian pro-democracy activists hailed the expulsion of the Islamic republic from the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (UNCSW) for the remainder of its 2022-2026 term. AFP

LONDON

At least four dead, dozens rescued after boat capsizes in Channel



At least four people died when a small boat apparently packed with migrants capsized in freezing temperatures in the Channel overnight, the U.K. government said on Wednesday. Dozens of others were plucked from the waters of one of the world's busiest shipping lanes in a large-scale rescue operation. AFP

ISTANBUL

Istanbul's Opposition mayor barred from politics over 'insult'



A Turkish court on Wednesday sentenced Istanbul's popular Opposition mayor Ekrem Imamoglu to nearly three years jail in a politically charged defamation trial that effectively bars him from standing in next June's presidential election. The case was about a remark he made after defeating President Erdogan's ally in 2019.

LIMA

Peru declares state of emergency as ousted leader remains in prison



Peru declared a nationwide state of emergency on Wednesday amid violent protests against the ouster of ex-president Pedro Castillo that have left seven people dead. The message came as Mr. Castillo was ordered to remain in prison, on charges of rebellion and conspiracy for another 48 hours ahead of a hearing. AFP

China targets elderly with booster jab drive as COVID-19 cases surge

Beijing has seen long lines outside fever clinics, but as yet has not seen any apparent strain on hospital resources for treatment of severe cases; Government not to log daily asymptomatic cases as the rise in numbers is 'impossible to track'

Ananth Krishnan
BEIJING

Chinese authorities on Wednesday said they would launch a vaccine booster shot campaign targeting the elderly, amid a record surge in COVID-19 cases.

Beijing for the first time said it would also no longer report daily asymptomatic cases because the rapid surge had made the numbers "impossible to track".

A week after China's easing of "zero-COVID" restrictions, cases have spiralled around the country. The capital has seen long lines outside fever clinics, but as yet has not seen any apparent strain on hospital resources for treatment of severe cases.

Fever clinics, set up as the first point of contact to avoid a strain on hospital services, have seen the number of patients jump 16 times from a week earlier to 22,000 on Sunday, according to Li Ang, deputy director of the Beijing Health Commission. City hospitals had also seen a six-fold increase in patients with flu symptoms, while 31,000 emergency medical calls were made on December 9, also a six-fold increase, the official *China Daily* reported.



Urgent care: A woman tends to a child at the fever clinic of a Children's hospital in Beijing on Wednesday. AP

While most cases so far have been reported as mild, there is concern over at least some of these turning serious particularly among the large number of unvaccinated elderly.

The National Health Commission on Wednesday announced a plan to roll out a second booster shot, starting with elderly and those with underlying diseases.

Some health experts had called for a booster campaign to be rolled out before China's lifting of measures to prevent deaths among the elderly. China's campaign to vaccinate the elderly, which now faces a race against time, has lagged during the past year, with only 40% of the 30 million-plus above-80 population completing three doses. Vaccination numbers slowed as under the zero-COVID policy, many elderly saw little need to get vaccinated given low risks of contracting the virus.

Four-fold jump

That calculus has now changed for many. In the first four days since the December 7 opening, 3.59 million shots were administered, a four-fold jump from the previous four days. This month, Beijing approved four new COVID-19 vaccines for emer-

gency use, adding to nine other vaccines in use. Three doses of Chinese vaccines, which are less effective than mRNA vaccines after two shots, were shown to be effective in preventing hospitalisation and death according to data from Hong Kong.

The challenge now is to step up the vaccination campaign amid the current spread of cases. Some local community vaccination centres have suspended services because of infections among staff. The opening from zero-COVID, including stopping of mass testing and lockdowns, has been welcomed by many but has also led to new concerns. In the Chinese capital, it hasn't led to a burst of activity but instead seen deserted streets in the first week since the easing of measures, with many fearful of contracting the virus for the first time and choosing to stay home.

Ahead of UNSC session, Pak. raises claims against India

Suhasini Haidar
NEW DELHI

As External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar prepares to chair a UN Security Council meeting on terrorism on Thursday, Pakistan said it is distributing a new "dossier" on terrorism to UNSC members that alleges Indian agencies were involved in "masterminding" a 2021 blast near Hafiz Saeed's home in Lahore.

The briefing on "Threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts: Global counter-terrorism approach – principles and the way forward" will be chaired by India, as President of the UNSC this month, and is one of a



Hina Rabbani Khar

number of special sessions that the EAM has travelled to the U.S. to convene. Pakistan's Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari is also in New York to chair sessions of the G-77 and China, which India is a member of. However, while Mr. Zardari attended the open debate at UNSC meeting on reformed mul-

tilateralism chaired by Mr. Jaishankar on Wednesday, he is not invited to the special UNSC session on terrorism.

In a press conference on Wednesday, Pakistan's Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Hina Rabbani Khar said Pakistan has issued "red warrants" through Interpol for a number of Indians she claimed were responsible for a series of terror attacks in Pakistan, including several that targeted Chinese nationals and the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) projects. Ms. Khar also accused India of "blocking" UNSC terror designation requests for four Indian nationals, that were rejected by the UNSC in 2020.

Japan to come up with major defence policy

Agence France-Presse
TOKYO

Japan is expected to announce its biggest defence overhaul in decades this week, hiking spending, reshaping its military command and acquiring new missiles to tackle the threat from China. The policies, to be outlined in three defence and security docu-

ments as soon as Friday, will reshape the defence landscape in a country whose post-war constitution does not even officially recognise the military.

Key among the new policies is a pledge to boost spending to 2%, from the previous spending of 1% of GDP by 2027 to bring Japan in line with NATO members.

Pentagon may send Patriot missile batteries to Ukraine

Agence France-Presse
WASHINGTON

The Pentagon is finalizing plans to send Patriot missile batteries that can shoot down incoming missiles to Ukraine, U.S. media reported Tuesday.

As Russia has ramped up missile strikes on key Ukrainian infrastructure,

the administration of President Joe Biden could announce the deployment as early as this week, U.S. officials told *The New York Times* and CNN.

Ukraine's air defences have played a key role during Russia's invasion, but with Moscow stepping up strikes on energy infrastructure as it faces growing

losses on the ground, Kyiv has repeatedly pressed other countries – especially the United States – for the Patriot system.

The U.S. Army describes Patriot – which consists of multiple parts including a radar, a control station and up to eight launchers – as its "most advanced air defence system."

U.S. military creates space unit in S. Korea

Associated Press
SEOUL

new U.S. military service in more than 70 years.

The Space Force was seen soberly as an affirmation of the need to more effectively organise for the defence of U.S. interests in space – especially satellites used for civilian and military navigation, intelligence and communication.

The activation of the U.S. Space Forces Korea at Osan Air Base near Seoul came after North Korea test-fired a barrage of nuclear-capable ballistic missiles designed to strike the U.S. mainland and its allies South Korea and Japan in recent months.

The unit belongs to the U.S. Space Force, which was launched in December 2019 under then-President Donald Trump as the first

Understanding the fusion energy breakthrough announced by the U.S.

EXPLAINER

Vasudevan Mukunth
BENGALURU

United States government officials announced on Tuesday that a federal facility had achieved a significant milestone in nuclear fusion research. Energy secretary Jennifer Granholm said the feat puts us on the path to "zero-carbon abundant fusion energy powering our society."

Officials said the National Ignition Facility (NIF) at the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory (LLNL), California, had conducted a fusion test on December 5 that produced 153% as much energy as went into triggering it.

The NIF uses powerful lasers to heat and compress hydrogen nuclei. When the nuclei fuse, they release heat. When this heat is equal to or greater than the heat delivered to

the container, the event is called ignition. The ratio of the output energy to the input delivered to the container is the gain.

In 2021, the NIF reported that it had achieved a gain of 0.72. Now, it has reportedly achieved ignition with a gain of 1.53 with a yield of 3 megajoules. "The recent results from the NIF are a major achievement on the road to fusion energy," Matthew Zepf, professor at the Friedrich Schiller University Jena and a director of the Helmholtz Institute Jena, said.

Inertial confinement

Magnetic confinement and inertial confinement are two popular ways to achieve nuclear fusion. Magnetic confinement uses bespoke reactors in which a hydrogen plasma is heated to a high temperature and the nuclei are guided by strong magnetic fields to fuse. Its corresponding technology is con-

sidered to be more technologically mature than that of inertial confinement.

In the NIF's setup, 192 high-power lasers fire pulses at a 2-mm-wide capsule inside a 1-cm-long cylinder called a hohlraum, in less than 10 billionths of a second. The capsule holds deuterium and tritium atoms. As the pulses strike the hohlraum's insides, the latter heats up and releases X-rays, which heat the nuclei to millions of kelvin and compress them to billions of Earth-atmospheres.

The high temperature is used to energise the nuclei to overcome their mutual like-charges-repel repulsion. The technique is called inertial confinement because the nuclei's inertia creates a short window between implosion and explosion in which nuclear forces dominate, fusing the nuclei.

When two hydrogen-2 nuclei fuse, they yield a he-

lium-4 nucleus, a neutron and 17.6 MeV of energy according to the mass-energy equivalence.

Burning plasma

For a fusion chain reaction, the energy released by the initial reaction needs to set the stage for more reactions. To this end, the NIF's goal has been to create a "burning plasma": when nuclei are encouraged to fuse not by the external heat source

but by the heat of other reactions. The NIF achieved this in 2021 with a gain of 0.72: 1.37 megajoules produced by the fusing nuclei versus 1.97 megajoules delivered by the lasers.

In August 2022, the facility reported it had produced a burning plasma that met the Lawson criterion: the heat generated was sufficient to potentially trigger other fusion reactions as well as offset heat

loss during the reaction. Now, the facility has reportedly achieved a burning plasma that meets the Lawson criterion as well as a gain greater than 1.

Caveats

The NIF's is a significant scientific achievement – but where energy is concerned, the important question is: what does it imply for practicable fusion?

After the NIF achieved a gain of 0.72 in 2021, the people in charge of the experiment tried thrice to repeat their feat. They failed – because the NIF fusion facility is a highly sophisticated system with tiny moving parts. Even small changes in input conditions, like microscopic bumps on the capsule, can lead to large variations in output.

So the NIF will need to reproduce its new results.

Second: For fusion to be truly gainful, the energy re-

leased by the reactions needs to be greater than the energy going into the lasers, about 300 megajoules, and not just the energy delivered to the hohlraum. This hasn't yet been achieved.

"The energy transferred to the plasma is just about 1%, the rest is all lost in other processes," said Shishir Deshpande, a professor at the Institute for Plasma Research, Gandhinagar.

Next milestone

"Future research will need to focus on reaching the next major milestone – a target gain of $G > 100$, which is required to run a power plant efficiently," according to Matthew Zepf, professor at the Friedrich Schiller University Jena and a director of the Helmholtz Institute Jena, said.

"It wouldn't be possible to set a timeline" about a power plant, Mr. Deshpande said, "as the scientific understanding is still evolving."



The NIF uses 192 laser beams converging at the centre of this giant sphere to make a tiny hydrogen fuel pellet implode. AP

and "even if one were to achieve high gain," Mr. Deshpande said. "Questions about how often one can repeat the pulse, to get sustained power, and couple a higher fraction of the initial energy investment [to the fuel] will be crucial in future," he added.

Third: The road to a power plant from the NIF's current achievement isn't well-understood.

For example, at the NIF, lasers fire at a hohlraum, generating X-rays that heat the capsule – instead of hitting the capsule directly. This prevents the laser pulses from being pinpoint accurate and allows the capsule to be heated in a symmetric way, which is highly desirable. But the cost is lower gain.

"It wouldn't be possible to set a timeline" about a power plant, Mr. Deshpande said, "as the scientific understanding is still evolving."

IN BRIEF



Yes Bank okays allotment of shares to Carlyle, Advent funds

The board of directors of Yes Bank on Wednesday approved the allotment of equity shares and equity share warrants aggregating to ₹8,887 crore (\$1.1 billion) through a preferential issue to the funds affiliated with Carlyle and Advent International. After the issuance (post conversion of the equity share warrants), both investors will own 9.99% each in the bank.

JB Pharma to buy Razel's India, Nepal franchise for ₹314 crore

JB Chemicals & Pharmaceuticals Ltd. (JB Pharma) said it had entered into an agreement with Glenmark Pharmaceuticals Ltd. to acquire the entire Razel (Rosuvastatin) franchise for India and Nepal for ₹313.7 crore. "With this acquisition, JB Pharma will complete its cardiac portfolio, making it a leader in this segment, as Razel ranks among the top 10 brands in the Rosuvastatin molecule category in the country," the company said in a filing. The acquisition will be funded through long-term debt and internal sources.

KFintech unveils ₹1,500 cr. offer-for-sale by promoter

KFin Technologies Ltd. (KFintech) announced that its ₹1,500-crore initial public offering (IPO) through an offer-for-sale by promoter General Atlantic Singapore Fund Pte would open on December 19. The offer will close on December 21. The price band has been fixed at ₹347 to ₹366 per equity share. Bids can be made for minimum of 40 shares and in multiples of 40 thereafter. KFin Technologies is a technology-driven financial services platform providing services and solutions to the capital markets ecosystem.

TSF Group unveils carbon fibre parts manufacturing plant

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

TSF Group, a part of the erstwhile TVS Group, in partnership with MIND S.r.l. of Italy, announced the inauguration of a carbon fibre components manufacturing facility near Chennai.

The new unit has started serial production of carbon fibre components for global mobility, the company said. "Establishing Leggaro's manufacturing facility in Chennai is a mil-

estone, which will allow us to scale up our presence and provide cost-effective composites solutions across industries," said Sri Ram Viji, management member, Leggaro Composites and MD, Brakes India. "MIND, the Italian base of Leggaro, has developed experience in carbon composites over several years and established itself as a supplier to many luxury car brands and motor sports companies," said Francesco Varrasi, CEO, MIND S.r.l.

Indian agritech to address \$34-bn market by 2027: Study

The Hindu Bureau
MUMBAI

Indian agritech is expected to lead the next decade's technology-first value creation opportunity, growing at a CAGR of 50% over the next five years, and addressing a \$34 billion market by 2027, Avendus Capital said in a report.

The sector is expected to replicate the success of other tech sectors, creating unicorns in the next couple of years, according to the report.

M&M electric vehicle manufacturing unit to come up in Pune

The Hindu Bureau
MUMBAI

Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd. said its ₹10,000-crore investment for electric vehicles had been approved under the Maharashtra government's industrial promotion scheme for EVs.

M&M said its EV manufacturing plant would be located in Pune.

The company, through an unnamed subsidiary, would invest about ₹10,000 crore over a period of seven to eight years

for setting up the facility, development, and production of its upcoming Born Electric Vehicles (BEVs), some of which were showcased in Oxfordshire, U.K. on August 15 this year.

"The [State] government's focus on ease-of-doing-business and progressive policies, together with Mahindra's investment, will act as a catalyst for Maharashtra to become India's EV hub," said Rajesh Jejurikar, executive director, Auto & Farm Sectors, M&M.

ICAO says no airline was audited in the wake of SpiceJet's claim

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The UN's aviation safety and policy coordinator, the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO), has clarified that its Universal Safety Oversight Audit Programme team did 'not audit or inspect' any airline during its visit to India last month. The ICAO clarification assumes significance as it comes in the wake of low-cost carrier SpiceJet's claim on December 5 that a "comprehensive audit by ICAO firmly establishes SpiceJet's credentials as a



safe airline".

The ICAO team visited India between November 9-16 to examine the safety oversight of the aviation regulator, Director General of Civil Aviation (DGCA). As part of this, it had visited multiple operators, ICAO's

MARKETS

MARKET WATCH

	WEDNESDAY	%CHANGE
Sensex	62,678	0.23
US Dollar	82.49	0.13
Gold	54,913	0.69
Brent oil	81.81	2.13

NIFTY 50

	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Enter.	4055.80	-4.40
Adani Ports	900.55	5.75
Apollo Hosp	4666.15	-12.70
Asian Paints	3145.95	-32.55
Axis Bank	942.40	-2.20
Bajaj Auto	3652.05	-15.30
Bajaj Finserv	1623.05	-11.60
Bajaj Finance	6655.20	-35.10
Bharti Airtel	829.20	-8.85
BPCL	348.75	2.60
Britannia Ind	4409.70	-16.85
Cipla	1112.70	2.80
Coal India	232.15	0.60
Divis Lab	3393.85	38.30
Dixons Lab	4504.55	46.40
Eicher Motors	3369.40	56.40
Grasim Ind	1821.85	11.05
HCL Tech	1056.20	11.50
HDFC	2729.35	26.75
HDFC Bank	1662.25	13.95
HDFC Life	580.30	-2.00
Hero MotoCorp	2747.35	-12.10
Hindalco	469.30	-11.20
Hind Unilever	2684.65	-25.65
ICICI Bank	921.75	-11.20
IndusInd Bank	1253.15	18.20
Infosys	1579.40	7.25
ITC	345.40	-0.20
JSW Steel	175.95	13.70
Kotak Bank	1873.20	4.70
L&T	2195.45	22.55
M&M	1286.45	3.10
Maruti Suzuki	8641.60	20.90
NestleIndia	2063.50	-324.80
NTPC	171.60	2.40
ONGC	147.60	3.25
PowerGrid Corp	219.20	2.90
Reliance Ind	2615.50	-9.50
SBI Life	1269.75	-8.05
State Bank	625.50	8.75
Sun Pharma	1000.25	5.60
TataConsumerPro- duct	815.45	7.85
Tata Motors	417.90	-0.60
Tata Steel	113.05	1.85
TCS	3365.35	33.25
Tech Mahindra	1065.10	19.35
Titan	2591.10	15.20
UltraTech Cement	7197.55	-27.75
UPL	780.90	13.50
Wipro	400.05	2.30

EXCHANGE RATES

Indicative direct rates in rupees a unit except yen at 4 p.m. on December 14

CURRENCY	TT BUY	TT SELL
US Dollar	82.26	82.58
Euro	87.71	88.08
British Pound	101.91	102.32
Japanese Yen (100)	61.05	61.29
Chinese Yuan	11.84	11.89
Swiss Franc	88.78	89.12
Singapore Dollar	61.11	61.36
Canadian Dollar	60.66	60.89
Malaysian Ringgit	18.71	18.80
Australian Dollar	56.46	56.72

Communications Officer William Raillant-Clark tweeted on Tuesday.

"ICAO wishes to clarify that visits to these operators are not an audit or inspection at all," he said on his Twitter handle.

SpiceJet had, in a filing, claimed it "was the only scheduled Indian airline to be audited by ICAO".

"The ICAO audit is the benchmark of safety. We are proud that our safety culture, systems, processes and operations have been found to be in order," CMD Ajay Singh was cited as having said in the filing.

Sport

Perry, Harris and bowlers deliver for Aussies



AUSTRALIA IN INDIA

P.K. Ajith Kumar
MUMBAI

Elyse Perry hadn't batted in a T20I for a year and two months. The noisy crowd that turned up to watch her take apart the Indian attack at the Brabourne Stadium on Wednesday may have wondered why.

Perry smashed a 47-ball 75 (9x4, 3x6) to help Australia beat India in the third T20I. The visitors avenged their rare loss, at Navi Mumbai three days ago, and took a 2-1 lead in the five-match series.

Riding on Perry's magnificent knock and a quickfire 41 (18b, 4x4, 3x6) from Grace Harris, Australia finished at 172 for eight. In reply, India could manage

only 151 for seven and went on to lose by 21 runs.

Opener Shafali Verma (52, 4lb, 6x4, 3x6) and skipper Harmanpreet Kaur (37, 27b, 6x4) kept India in the hunt with their 73-run stand for the third wicket, but the target turned out to be too big for those walked in after them. It was a fine bowling effort by Australia, spearheaded by pacer Darcie Brown.

Earlier, the visitors had got off to a poor start for the first time in the series. Skipper Alyssa Healy was trapped in front by a Renuka Singh delivery that came in sharply.

Anjali Sarvani, in only her third game for India, took her maiden wicket. It was a valuable one, that of Tahilia McGrath, who only this week moved to the No. 1 spot in the ICC T20I rank-

ing for batters. The impressive left-arm seamer got one to move in through the gate as McGrath was dismissed for the first time in the series.

However, the player McGrath swapped her ranking with - Beth Mooney - carried on from where she left off at Navi Mumbai. Mooney (30, 22b, 4x4) added 64 for the third wicket with Perry.

Then came Harris' blitzkrieg that powered Australia to a total that proved beyond India.

The scores: Australia 172/8 in 20 overs (Beth Mooney 30, Elyse Perry 75, Grace Harris 41, Renuka Singh 24, Anjali Sarvani 2/34, Deepthi Sharma 2/40, Devika Vaidya 2/22) bt India 151/7 in 20 overs (Shafali Verma 52, Harmanpreet Kaur 37, Deepthi Sharma 25 n.o., Darcie Brown 2/19, Ashleigh Gardner 2/21).

Ghazanfar – the 15-year-old is the youngest to register in auction

IPL

Shayan Acharya
MUMBAI

Allah Mohammad Ghazanfar is a 15-year-old off-spinner from Afghanistan who has registered for the Indian Premier League auction in Kochi on December 23. He is the youngest player in the auction and had also enrolled himself for the Big Bash League auction earlier this year but did not find any takers.

Those who have seen him in Afghanistan cricket circuit believe Ghazanfar is in the mould of Mujeeb Zadran, who is already a popular finger-spinner in international cricket and franchise leagues.



Ghazanfar is 6ft 2 inches tall. Given his height, he initially started as a fast bowler but gradually, under the watchful eyes of former Afghanistan captain Dawlat Ahmadzai, transformed into a spinner. "I started with tennis ball cricket and would play in my neighbourhood, but under the guidance of my coach, I started bowling spin, and soon, I developed an action, and there hasn't been any looking back since."

"I have played a fair bit of junior cricket, and my ultimate target is to play for Afghanistan. The IPL will help me improve my game and I am really looking forward to the experience. I hope to get picked by a franchise," he said.

M ND-NDE

ON A HIGH

Calchin and Argentina's Alvarez enjoying the ride of his life



Julian Alvarez is enjoying the ride of his life as he has been among the goals for Argentina, including two against Croatia. "I'm happy personally and for the group," he said. "We hope to have a great game on Sunday. Calchin (my home town), like the whole country, must be going crazy. We are happy for what we are achieving."

FAIR ASSESSMENT

Losing to Saudi Arabia was the turning point, feels Scaloni



"After we lost to Saudi Arabia, we felt a lot of love and support from our fans, our people, and that was amazing because it gave us the strength and energy we needed to recuperate," said coach Lionel Scaloni after Argentina entered the final. "I try not to get emotional but it's difficult because I'm in a dream place for any Argentine."

HAIL THE KING

Croatia undone by 'true Messi' performance, says coach Dalic



"He is the best player in the world, he is dangerous," Croatia coach Zlatko Dalic said. "He put in a high-quality show... it was the true Messi we expected to see. Messi being a player of such quality, Argentina plays as it best sees fit. He can make one move and make a difference, which he did for the third goal."

REGIONAL RIVALRY

Brazil's Ronaldo won't be happy if Argentina wins World Cup



Brazilian World Cup-winner Ronaldo is not happy with the idea of Argentina winning the tournament in Qatar. "To say I'll be happy for Argentina (if they win), that will not be true, it would be a lie, I will not be a hypocrite," said Ronaldo. "Argentina are not playing very well, but they have so much desire... and then there is Messi."

Resilient Argentina bounds past a flagging Croatia

Messi conjures up another magical night to send *La Albiceleste* closer to their dream; Alvarez shines bright too, winning a penalty and capping a bursting run through the middle with a goal



Triple treat: Messi sets the ball rolling with an emphatic finish from the spot, Alvarez makes the most of some clumsy Croatian challenges for the second and then applies the finishing touch following his skipper's slaloming run past a dazed defence. GETTY IMAGES, AP

FIFA WORLD CUP

Ayon Sengupta
DOHA

The playlist had run its course, the voices were all hoarse, but they refused to stop singing as the man they were praising was there in front, crying after delivering yet another joyful night.

The long unfulfilled promise of the shiny World Cup trophy is making Lionel Messi draw up hitherto hidden weapons from his

armoury. Here he scored one and created another in Lusail as he and his beloved Argentina found an extra gear to ward off Croatia and move into the final.

Argentina was circumspect as Croatia's trio of Luka Modric, Mateo Kovacic, and Marcelo Brozovic used their experience and skill to take over the early midfield battle.

But this Argentina is more resilient and has weathered every storm. Messi led the way, dropping deep to be most involved in this World Cup – 65 touches, 10 dribbles

(the most in the game) and three take-ons – to drag his team out of this mess.

As Croatia slowed to regain its breath, Argentina picked up, with Messi jolting on like an appliance suddenly plugged in and danced past a few challenges to play a one-two with Enzo Fernandez, with his pass almost reaching Nicolas Tagliafico, who had darted in from the left.

He was back soon, weaving and dancing down the middle, and Kovacic, in control till then, was suddenly looking out of place. Argentina's penalty

came when Julian Alvarez's bursting run was cut short by Dominik Livakovic as the striker lifted the ball over his head after Enzo Fernandez robbed Modric to play a simple through ball over the high press.

Immense pressure
The pressure was immense; Emiliano Martinez, at the other end, turned his back to the drama as Messi stepped up and slotted it to the top right with power and rage. He ran to the right corner flag to celebrate with his teammates; Emiliano, too, was jiving

with the blue-and-white fans who had started singing as soon as the ball left Messi's feet.

Moment of magic

Alvarez then produced a moment of magic. He latched on to a ball from a Croatian corner to run past all challenges from the centre circle.

Three men in the dark-blue shirts were eager to backtrack but not ready to tackle, behaving like extras who have not been informed about their role in a movie. Josip Juranovic's clumsy clearance came

back to Alvarez inside the box, and it was worse from Borna Sosa, the next man standing, and the Argentina forward was happy to lift it over the 'keeper who could do little.

Messi had energy left for more and woke up again from his slumber in the 58th minute. Twisting past two challenges, he ran behind and received a lay-off from Alvarez and forced Livakovic to go down quickly to parry a snap shot that came rocketing his way.

And Messi then took on Josko Gvardiol, this World Cup's standout defender, with the ball beyond Livakovic. Modric, the other maestro on the field, ended his night with a deflected shot hitting his head. As the legend walked away, the stadium was up on its feet, applauding him for all those years of toil.

The game was coming to an end and the chants soon changed back to being about the patron saint.

The Maradona cut-outs were there, but Messi was ruling their hearts and this World Cup which is now just a step away.

The result (semifinal):
Argentina 3 (Messi 34-pen, Alvarez 39 & 69) bt Croatia 0.

Messi indicates the final may be his last in the World Cup

Ayon Sengupta
DOHA

For 20 minutes in the semifinal against Croatia, Argentina was outthought and outrun by its hard-working opponent. But Lionel Messi took the match by the scruff of the neck to show the world yet again that he can write his own destiny.

"We played with discipline today. We knew the game would be set up this way. We did a great job. We were aware they'd keep possession, as they have key players in that sense," said the Argentina captain.

"But despite that, we created our usual chances. We prepared for this game in the best way. That's why we didn't feel desperate when we had to run."

"The first match was a hard blow to all of us. At that time, we had played the last 36 matches without a single loss. So, to lose the first match in the World Cup to a team nobody thought we could lose to was a strong blow to all of us as a group," Messi said.

"We played five finals, and luckily won all of

Messi and more

■ Argentina has won all of five World Cup semifinals (1930, 1986, 1990, 2014 and 2022)

■ It has lost only one of its last 42 international matches (won 29, drawn 12)

■ Messi is now Argentina's all-time leading scorer in World Cups with 11 goals (2006-1; 2014-4; 2018-1; 2022-5)

■ He is the first Argentinian to find the target five times in an edition after Gabriel Batistuta (five in 1998)

■ Messi is the sixth player in World Cup history to score in the round of 16, quarterfinals and semifinals of the same edition after Salvatore Schillaci (1990), Roberto Baggio

(1994), Hristo Stoichkov (1994), Davor Suker (1998) and Wesley Sneijder (2010)

■ Argentina's 3-0 win over Croatia is the biggest margin for a South American team in a semifinal since Brazil's 5-2 victory over France in 1958

■ Messi's men have scored 12 goals in Qatar - the best since 1986 (14)

■ Julian Alvarez is the fourth to strike twice in a semifinal for Argentina after Carlos Pueelle (1930), Guillermo Stabile (1930) and Diego Maradona (1986)

■ At 37 years and 95 days, Croatia's Luka Modric is the oldest outfield player to start in six games in an edition



them. Hopefully, we'll win the next one too. To finish my World Cup journey by playing the last game in the

final would be nice. It's many years for the next one and I don't think I will be able to do it," Messi said.

Pujara and Shreyas revive Indian innings with a crucial fifth-wicket partnership

N. Sudarshan
CHATTOGRAM

A middle-order rescue act led by Cheteshwar Pujara (90, 203b, 11x4) and Shreyas Iyer (82 batting, 169b, 10x4) carried India to a respectable 278 for six at stumps on day one of the first Test against Bangladesh at the Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium here.

The hosts could have gone into the second day with significant tailwind if wicketkeeper Nurul Hasan had not grassed a low catch off Pujara when on 12 and Ebadot Hossain had not made a mess of a sitter at deep mid-wicket off Shreyas when on 67.

Ebadot's misery was compounded when he breached Shreyas's defence and got the ball to kiss the off-stump only for the bails to budge but not fall.

Much of the day's cricket was slow burn. Perhaps it had to be after India, which elected to bat, found itself 48 for three on a pitch that was not quite the 'batting paradise'. There was uneven bounce from as

early as the second over and significant turn, which will surely please India's three spinners (R. Ashwin, Axar Patel and Kuldeep Yadav).

Still, this is a time when the world seems enthralled by the way England is setting the standards in red-ball cricket, an approach that current India captain K.L. Rahul has doffed his hat to and Rishabh Pant seemingly embraces (46, 45b, 6x4, 2x6).

But Pujara is neither a trendsetting tastemaker of swashbuckling things nor does he live aesthetically as someone else. He found the answer within himself and for a good while appeared set for this first three-figure mark in four years (since 193 vs Australia in Jan. 2019).

The 34-year-old used his feet well to negate the turn, had the bat well in front of the pad to avoid the leg-before and close-in dismissals and punished the short deliveries by either rocking back to cut or steering them on the leg-side.

Shreyas provided the aggressive spark from time to



time, like the uppish flick to the mid-wicket fence to get to his half-century and the dance down the track to loft left-arm spinner Taijul Islam over mid-wicket. The duo put on 149 runs for the fifth wicket, which may ultimately prove match-defining.

Through this, Taijul was excellent for Bangladesh (30-8-84-3), bowling a middle and leg-stump line with sufficient drift and repeat-

edly beating the batters outside off.

He scalped two of the best – Kohli went on the backfoot for a ball that was only deceptively short and paid the price; Pujara thought he had all ends covered, only for the ball to do enough to slip past the bat but not as much to miss the stumps.

Earlier, Rahul and Shubman Gill negotiated the opening hour cautiously.

SCOREBOARD

INDIA — 1ST INNINGS
K.L. Rahul b Khaled 22 (54b, 3x4), Shubman Gill c Yasir b Taijul 20 (40b, 3x4), Cheteshwar Pujara b Taijul 90 (203b, 11x4), Virat Kohli lbw b Taijul 1 (5b), Rishabh Pant b Mehidy 46 (45b, 6x4, 2x6), Shreyas Iyer (batting) 81 (169b, 10x4), Axar Patel lbw b Mehidy 14 (26b, 2x4); Extras (lb-1, nb-2); Total (for six wkts. in 90 overs): 278.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-41 (Gill, 13.2 overs), 2-45 (Rahul, 18.1), 3-48 (Kohli, 19.3), 4-112 (Pant, 31.4), 5-261 (Pujara, 84.2), 6-278 (Axar, 89.6).

BANGLADESH BOWLING
Ebadot 17-1-63-0, Khaled 12-2-26-1, Shakib 12-4-26-0, Taijul 30-8-84-3, Mehidy 18-4-71-2, Yasir 1-0-7-0.

Toss: India.

But just as they looked set to up the rate, Gill was caught in the leg-slip area by Yasir Ali who smartly moved from first slip as the batter shaped to sweep Taijul. Rahul was bowled off the inside edge by Khaled Ahmed. And when Taijul sent Kohli back and leapt with joy, Bangladesh was clearly on the ascendency, only to be brought back down, slowly and steadily.

INBRIEF



Flintoff airlifted to hospital after car crash

Former England cricket team captain Andrew Flintoff has been airlifted to a hospital after suffering a horror car crash in Surrey while filming an episode for BBC's TV Show. The 45-year-old was filming for *Top Gear* in icy conditions at Dunsfold Park Aerodrome in Surrey on Tuesday when the accident happened. "Freddie (Flintoff) was injured in an accident at the Top Gear test track this morning – with crew medics attending the scene immediately," the BBC said in a statement. "He has been taken to hospital for further treatment and we will confirm more details in due course." According to *The Sun*, Flintoff's injuries are not "life-threatening" and he was "driving on the track as normal" and was not going at a high speed. "All the usual health and safety measures were in place for filming too," a source was quoted as saying.

16-year-old Pheiroijam fourth Indian to take nine on debut

Sixteen-year-old Manipur medium-pacer Pheiroijam Singh on Wednesday became the fourth Indian to grab nine wickets on First Class debut during the Ranji Trophy Plate group match against Sikkim at Rangpo, near Gangtok. The teenager, who returned figures of 225-69-9, joined an elite list that has Vasant Ranjane (9/35, 1956-57), Amarjith Singh (9/45, 1971-72) and Sanjay Yadav (9/52, 2019-20), all of whom claimed nine wickets on their First Class debut.

LIVE TELECAST

Bangladesh vs India: 1st Test, day 2, Sony Sports Ten 5 (SD & HD) & LIV, 9 a.m.
Ranji Trophy: Star Sports 2 (SD & HD) & Hotstar, 9.30 a.m.
I-League: Eurosport (SD & HD), 2 & 4.30 p.m.
ISL: Star Sports 1 (SD & HD) & Hotstar, 7.30 p.m.
PKL: Star Sports 2 (SD & HD) & Hotstar, 7.30 p.m. onwards

Deep Grace and Gurjit help India defeat South Africa in Nation's Cup

Press Trust of India

VALENCIA

Already through to the semifinals, India defeated South Africa 2-0 to notch up its third win on the trot and top the pool in the FIH Women's Nation's Cup hockey here on Wednesday.

Deep Grace Ekka (14th mi-

nute) and Gurjit Kaur (59th) scored for India against the South Africans to end the pool B league engagement with an all-win record.

World No. 8 India topped the pool with nine points. It had defeated Chile (3-1) and Asian Games nemesis Japan (2-1) in its earlier matches.

The eight-team tournament is important for India as it brings in the system of promotion-relegation, where the champion will be promoted to the 2023-24 FIH Hockey Women's Pro League, a key event ahead of next year's Asian Games and the 2024 Paris Olympic Games.

Atul ousts Navaneeth

Sports Bureau

NEW DELHI

Atul Kumar Yadav beat top seed Navaneeth Prabhu 8-11, 11-6, 11-6, 11-7 in the men's quarterfinals of the IndusInd Bank Northern India squash championship here on Wednesday.

The results (quarterfinals):

Men: Atul Kumar Yadav bt Navaneeth Prabhu 8-11, 11-6, 11-6, 11-7; Pritvi Singh bt Rounak Yadav 11-6, 11-4, 11-7; Gursimar Singh bt Dharmender Wnwal 11-3, 11-9, 11-5; Ranji Singh bt Vedant Patel 11-5, 11-8, 6-11, 14-12.

Women: Sanika Choudhari bt Priyanka Choudhary 11-9, 11-1, 11-2; Anyana Pandey bt Sunita Ranigrahi 9-11, 11-1, 11-5, 11-9; Khushi Puranik bt Mansha Malhotra 11-0, 11-2, 11-5; Tanvi Khanna bt Chitrangda Goel 11-4, 11-2, 11-1.

Boys: Under-19: Aarav Gill bt Rajansh Sharma 11-7, 11-8, 11-2; Abhishek Yadav bt Ajay Rathee 11-6, 12-10, 10-12, 11-9; Lakshya Gwala bt Aditya Bhadani 11-5, 11-6, 11-6; Aryan Pratap Singh bt Ansh Tripathi 11-3, 12-10, 12-10.

Under-17: Karan Yadav bt Kavin Sood 11-6, 3-11, 11-9; Arhant KS bt Raj Yadav 11-5, 11-1, 11-5; Adhish Kancharla bt Priyanshu Kumar 11-4, 11-9, 14-12; Aryaveer Dewan bt Aditya Prakash 11-1, 11-4, 11-8.

Panthers meet Bulls and Paltan take on Thalaivas

Sports Bureau

have found the right balance.

Bulls, on the other hand, will count on Bharat (272 raid points) and Vikash Kandola (130 raid points), who put an overwhelming season behind him to help his side beat defending champion Dabang Delhi 56-24 in Eliminator 1.

Paltan go into the semifinal with one of the most effective three-pronged attacks – Aslam Inamdar (138 raid points), Akash Shinde (131) and Mohit Goyat (120). Skipper Fazel Atrachali (51 tackle points) has had a great season too. "It is not my best season yet. It will be when I lay hands on the trophy," said Fazel.

Panthers, have in their ranks, the league's best raider and second-best defender (going into the final phase) in Arjun Deshwal (286 raid points) and Ankush (81 tackle points). After a few hiccups early on, Panthers

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