

Details of Samagams at
Sri Anandpur Sahib

◆ 25th November, 2025 ◆

Bhog Sri Akhand
Path Sahib

State-level Blood
Donation Drive

Statewide Campaign to
plant 3.50 lakh saplings

Gurbani Kirtan

Sarbat Da Bhala
Gathering

Drone Show

SRI GURU TEGH BAHADUR JI

Bhai Mati Das Ji,
Bhai Sati Das Ji,
Bhai Dayala Ji



Accords Holy City status to
Sri Amritsar Sahib Walled City,
Talwandi Sabo and Sri Anandpur Sahib

Events organized & initiatives undertaken by the Punjab Government dedicated to the Martyrdom Day

- The Punjab Government organized events dedicated to the Martyrdom Day of Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji in various States.
- The events commenced from Gurdwara Sri Sis Ganj Sahib, New Delhi.
- A grand Kirtan Durbar was held at Gurdwara Sri Rakabganj Sahib.
- Rs. 71 crore were given for the development of 142 villages and cities graced by the divine feet of Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji. Every village and city received Rs. 50 Lakh.
- Light and Sound shows were organized in all the districts of Punjab from November 1st with show being held currently in Sri Anandpur Sahib. These shows brought to fore the great life & philosophy of Sri Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji.
- Kirtan Samagams were held in the towns and cities blessed by 'Charanchhoh' of Guru Sahib Ji.
- A Kirtan Durbar was held in Srinagar (Jammu and Kashmir) on November 18. On November 19, a Nagar Kirtan was organized from Srinagar. On November 20, Nagar Kirtans started from Talwandi Sabo, Faridkot & Gurdaspur. These four Nagar Kirtans culminated at Sri Anandpur Sahib on evening of November 22 & early morning on November 23.
- Tent city named 'Chakk Nanki' was setup for the comfortable stay of devotees converging at Sri Anandpur Sahib.
 - A Sarv Dharm Sammelan was held in the sacred city.
 - An exhibition as well as drone shows were held chronicling the life and philosophy of Guru Sahib.
 - Kirtan Durbar, Katha, Gatka, Guided Tours were also organized.

Let's pay obeisance at Sri Anandpur Sahib

Department of Information and Public Relations, Punjab

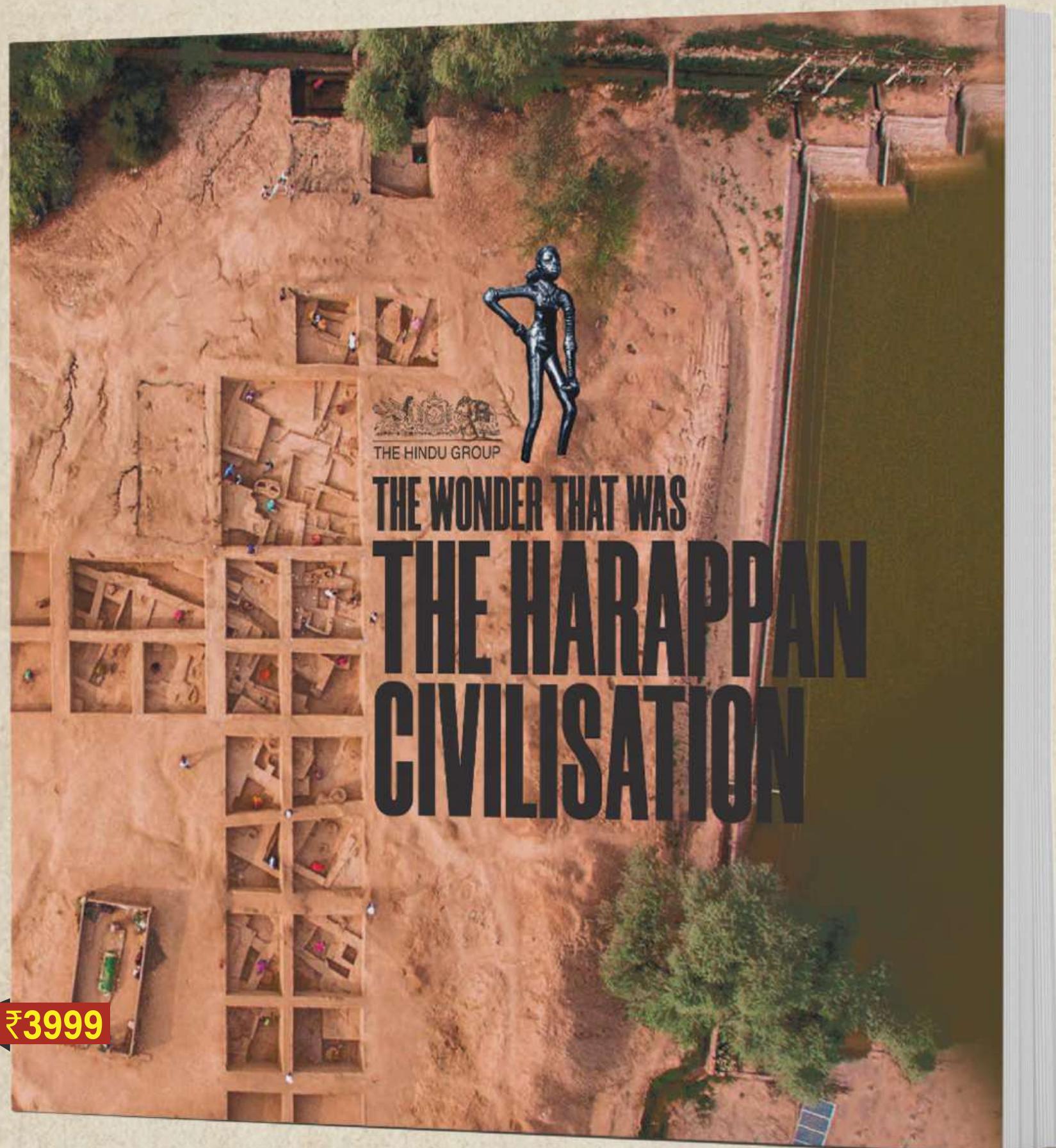


NEW ARRIVAL



A SPECIAL PUBLICATION FROM THE HINDU GROUP

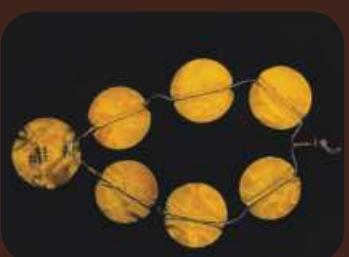
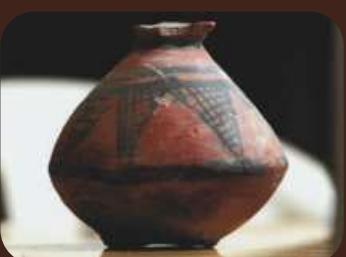
The Hindu marks the centenary of the announcement of the discovery of the Indus Civilisation with a new edition of the book 'The Wonder that was the Harappan Civilisation'. The book has a bonanza of photographs and 48 extra pages, featuring interviews with Director General, Archaeological Survey of India, Y S Rawat, scholars R S Bisht and Asko Parpola. There are new stories on the excavations at Karanpura and Padka Bet, both Harappan sites in India. A treasure to own.



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Highlights of the Programme

The Sant, Mahapurush and Devotees participating in the Shaheedi Yatra from across the state (Sirsa, Panchkula, Yamunanagar and Faridabad) will gather here

350 children will perform the Shabad Kirtan of 'Guru Ki Vaani'

A special Sand Art Show will also be performed

'Guru Ka Langar' will be served by Sants, Mahapurush and the Devotees

August Presence

Sh. Narendra Modi

Prime Minister

Sh. Nayab Singh Saini

Chief Minister, Haryana

November 25, 2025 | 4 PM | Jyotisar, Kurukshetra, Haryana

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Live telecast on DD News



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Prime Minister
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Kendra based on Mahabharata

Participate in the evening Aarti at
Purushottampura Bagh, Brahma Sarovar

Presided Over By

Prof. Ashim Kumar Ghosh
Governor, Haryana

August Presence

Sh. Nayab Singh Saini
Chief Minister, Haryana

November 25, 2025

5:30 pm
Jyotisar, Kurukshetra

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IN BRIEF



Arunachal woman harassed, stopped at China airport

NEW DELHI

India has issued a "strong demarche" to China after a woman from Arunachal Pradesh was harassed and stopped by immigration officials at Shanghai airport on November 21. The officials told her to "apply for a Chinese passport". [» Page 10](#)

Govt. and private offices to run with 50% staff in Delhi

NEW DELHI

The Delhi government on Monday issued an order directing all government and private offices to work with staff strength of 50% and the rest working from home with "immediate effect". [» Page 4](#)

Goa tops in digitisation of SIR forms, Kerala lags

Election Commission says enumeration forms of 99.07% voters have been collected and over 47% of them digitised; BLOs race against time to finish exercise, many complain of 'excess workload'

Vijita Singh
Sreeparna Chakrabarty

NEW DELHI



Collecting information: Special intensive revision (SIR) camps were held across Chennai on Monday. B. VELANKANNI RAJ

With 10 days remaining to complete the enumeration phase of the second round of the special intensive revision (SIR) of electoral rolls, the Election Commission on Monday said more than 47% of the enumeration forms distributed across 12 States and Union Territories have been digitised.

Goa has achieved the highest digitisation at 76.89% followed by Rajasthan at 72.20%, while Kerala and Uttar Pradesh have the lowest at 23% and 26.6%, respectively.

The enumeration phase, which began on November 4, will end on December 4. The draft list will

be published on December 9 following which the period for claims and objections will begin.

According to the EC, out of the 51 crore voters being covered in this SIR, enumeration forms of 50,50,24,723, or 99.07%, have been collected and 24,13,75,229 (47.35%) have

been digitised. The enumeration phase involves distribution of forms, collection of the filled ones, and uploading the data on the commission's website.

The whole exercise is being done by booth-level officers (BLOs), making them the most important cog in the wheel. However,

BLO threatens to kill himself, cites SIR pressure

KOTTAYAM

In another instance of a booth level officer expressing distress over the mounting workload from the special intensive revision, an official from Kottayam district of Kerala threatened to take his own life, citing pressure associated with the exercise. [» PAGE 5](#)

the BLOs are racing against time. While some States such as West Bengal have witnessed protests over 'excess workload', there have been some reports of suicides by BLOs over alleged work-related stress.

[CONTINUED ON](#)

» PAGE 10

Bollywood's beloved icon Dharmendra is no more

The Hindu Bureau

MUMBAI

Veteran actor Dharmendra Kewal Krishan Deol, affectionately known as Dharmendra, passed away in Mumbai on Monday.

The 89-year-old Bollywood legend had been in and out of Mumbai's Breach Candy hospital several days earlier this month. He was later discharged and continued his treatment at home.

On Monday, a police statement said that the actor passed away in the morning, and funeral arrangements were being made at the Shree Vile Parle Seva Samaj crematorium.

The actor is survived by his wives Prakash Kaur and Hema Malini, sons Sunny and Bobby Deol, and daughters Vijeta, Ajeeta, Esha and Ahana. Fans thronged the crematorium area causing traffic snarls.

Celebrities, including Salman Khan, Salim Khan, Shah Rukh Khan, Aamir Khan, Amitabh Bachchan, Jaya Bachchan, Abhishek Bachchan, Sanjay Dutt, Govinda, Shatrughan Sinha, Deepika Padukone, Ranveer Singh, Karan Johar, Vicky Kaushal, Shabana Azmi, Akshay Kumar, Kajol, Kareena Kapoor, Chinanjeevi, Saira Banu and others, were present at the crematorium.



DHARMENDRA (1935 - 2025)

than six decades, with over 300 films to his credit. Known to fans as Bollywood's "He-Man", "Garam Dharam", and the "Action King," he combined mass appeal with versatility, effortlessly moving between action dramas, comedies, and socially relevant films.

[CONTINUED ON](#)

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[RELATED REPORTS ON](#)

» PAGE 11

The sea beckons



Grand debut: Navy officials with Chief of the Army Staff General Upendra Dwivedi during the commissioning ceremony of INS Mahe, the first of Mahe-class anti-submarine warfare shallow water craft, in Mumbai on Monday. EMMANUEL YOGINI (REPORT ON PAGE 12)

Goa govt. does a U-turn on tiger presence in State

Jacob Koshy

NEW DELHI

The answer to whether tigers "reside" in Goa, depends on who is asking the question.

The Goa government, earlier this year, argued before a Supreme Court-appointed committee that there was "...no permanent presence of tigers" in the State.

However, in a separate matter concerning a dispute involving Goa, Karnataka and Maharashtra over sharing of water from the Mahadai river in Goa, it is the opposite.

"...The State of Goa states that that there is evidence to show that tigers in Goa are not merely transient animals, but are a resident population, and the forests around Chorla,



Mann and Kankumbi comprise a contiguous tiger landscape corridor, to the Bhimgad Wildlife Sanctuary in Karnataka to its south-east and to the Anshi Dandeli Tiger Reserve to its south that has around 35 tigers.

The latter appears in a 2018 report of the Mahadai Water Disputes Tribunal. "Thus, were the flow of Mahadai river to be impeded," Goa argued, "it would impact the prey base as well as tiger ecosystem."

Sanctuary proposal
The issue of tiger presence (or absence) in Goa has come to the fore following the Goa government challenging a July 2023 order of the Bombay High Court that directed the State

to declare the Mhadei sanctuary and other connected regions – as recommended by the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA), the nodal Central

body tasked with overseeing tiger conservation) – a 'tiger reserve' within three months.

Petition in SC

The Goa government filed a special leave petition (SLP) in the Supreme Court challenging this order.

The Goa government's core arguments in the SLP are that as per the NTCA guidelines, an area of 800-1,000 square kilometres would have to be declared an inviolate space for a tiger reserve.

The area already under protection in the State in the form of parks and sanctuaries added up to 745 sq. km. "Therefore, to declare an area larger than the already protected area, an inviolate space, would be an aberration."

Secondly, the area that would have to be declared a tiger reserve had a "huge population" of about 1,00,000 individuals spread across several villages. Given the paucity of alternative areas to settle them and the 'unwillingness' of this resident population, the move could translate to social unrest, the government said.

In terms of tiger presence, the government had argued that only three tigers were found through 'camera trapping' during the NTCA's tiger estimation survey of 2018. There was "no evidence" that these tigers were "residents" of the area; there were no cubs or young animals either, it said.

The area already under protection in the State in the form of parks and sanctuaries added up to 745 sq. km. "Therefore, to declare an area larger than the already protected area, an inviolate space, would be an aberration."

[CONTINUED ON](#)

» PAGE 10

SC to hear plea to stop cash donations to political parties

Krishnadas Rajagopal

NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday agreed to examine a petition to stop cash donations of even up to ₹2,000 to parties for the sake of transparency, and to bring every political contribution, no matter what the amount, under the income tax regime.

A Bench of Justices Vikram Nath and Sandeep Mehta issued notice on the plea that the Election Commission must not spare parties from disclosing even cash donations up to ₹2,000, and they should be made to divulge complete details of their donors.

"Political parties must disclose the name and all

Parties must disclose the name and all other particulars of the person paying any amount of money to it, and no amount can be received in cash so as to maintain transparency.

PETITION IN SC

other particulars of the person paying any amount of money to it and no amount can be received in cash so as to maintain transparency in the political funding," the petition said.

[CONTINUED ON](#)

» PAGE 10

raigned, besides the EC, the Union government, Central Board of Direct Taxes and 13 parties, including the BJP, Congress, Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam, Communist Party of India (Marxist), Trinamool Congress, Samajwadi Party, AAP, as respondents.

The petition, filed by Khem Singh Bhati, challenged the legality of clause (d) of Section 13A of the Income Tax Act, 1961. Section 13A is a special provision permitting tax exemption to political parties.

Clause (d) of the provision allows parties to accept donations worth ₹2,000 in cash.

[CONTINUED ON](#)

» PAGE 11



Faith rises in
every heart as a
new era
starts

Divya Bhavya Navya Ayodhya



First among the Saptapuris, Shri Ayodhya Dham, the sacred birthplace of
Maryada Purushottam Prabhu Shri Ram.

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Reinstatement of the Dharma Dhwaja

the 22x11-feet emblem of faith atop the temple's spire.



by
Narendra Modi
Prime Minister



In the august presence of

Anandiben Patel
Governor,
Uttar Pradesh

Dr. Mohanrao Bhagwat
Sarsanghchalak,
Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh

Yogi Adityanath
Chief Minister,
Uttar Pradesh

Mahant Nrityagopal Das
President, Shri Ram Janmabhoomi
Teerth Kshetra Trust

Keshav Prasad Maurya
Deputy Chief Minister,
Uttar Pradesh

Brajesh Pathak
Deputy Chief Minister,
Uttar Pradesh

Surya Pratap Shahi
Minister, Agriculture, Agricultural Education &
Agricultural Research, Uttar Pradesh

Jaiveer Singh
Minister, Tourism & Culture,
Uttar Pradesh

And other dignitaries

Date: 25th November, 2025 | Time: 12:00 Noon | Venue: Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Temple Complex, Shri Ayodhya Dham

Temple Highlights: Shri Ram Janmabhoomi : A three-storey main temple complex spread across 2.7 acres | Flag masts and kalash installed atop six temples in the parkota (dedicated to Bhagwan Shiv, Bhagwan Ganesh, Bhagwan Hanuman, Surya Dev, Maa Bhagwati, Maa Annapurna) and Sheshavatara | Temples in the Sapt Mandap dedicated to Maharishi Valmiki, Maharishi Vashishtha, Maharishi Vishwamitra, Maharishi Agastya, Ram devotee Nishadraj, Mata Shabari and Rishi Patni Ahilya | Sant Tulsidas Mandir, along with statues of Ram devotee Jatayu and squirrel | Panchvati spreads over 10 acres, with a 3.5 km boundary wall, trust office, guest house, auditorium and more | Comprehensive amenities for devotees, pilgrims and visitors

Kaam Damdaar-Double Engine Sarkar

LIVE TELECAST

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Information and Public Relations Department, U.P.



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CMOUttarpradesh

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Student's death: two teachers questioned

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Delhi Police on Monday interrogated two of the four teachers of St. Columba's School named in the FIR over the death by suicide of a Class 10 student. The other two have been called for questioning on Tuesday, an officer said. The deceased had named three of them in a note in his bag before taking the extreme step on November 18, alleging "mental harassment".

The officer added that they had examined two other teachers on Sunday.

whose names do not figure in the FIR or in the note.

A case has been registered under provisions of the BNS pertaining to abetment to suicide and common intention.

During the day, several parents, including those of the 16-year-old boy, staged a demonstration outside the school in Ashok Place demanding justice for the deceased and the arrest of the four teachers who were placed under temporary suspension last week.

(For those in distress, counselling is available at TeleMANAS-14416)

Timings DELHI		
TUESDAY, NOV. 25		
RISE 06:52	SET 17:25	
RISE 11:03	SET 21:33	
WEDNESDAY, NOV. 26		
RISE 06:52	SET 17:25	
RISE 11:41	SET 22:32	
THURSDAY, NOV. 27		
RISE 06:53	SET 17:24	
RISE 12:15	SET 23:32	

Delhi Weather	max	min
Delhi City	27	10
Safdarjung	27	10
Palam	24	11

Delhi Palam Today
26°C The weather will be dry. Day will be comfortable with light breeze. Night will be very cool and hazy. Pollution level will be very severe.

Delhi Palam Tomorrow
25°C Morning will be slight cold with shallow fog and mist. Day will be comfortable with severe pollution level. Night also will be very cool.

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THE HINDU
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CM appeals to people to take part in 3-day congregation

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Chief Minister Rekha Gupta appealed to Delhi residents to participate in a three-day congregation to commemorate the 350th martyrdom day of Guru Tegh Bahadur at the Red Fort complex, which began on Monday.

Vice-President C.P. Radhakrishnan and the CM offered prayers at Gurdwara Rakab Ganj Sahib.

The CM urged people to attend the event and embrace the guru's timeless messages of secularism, compassion, tolerance and truth in their daily lives. She said Guru Tegh Bahadur's "unparalleled sacrifice for truth and humanity" continues to inspire every citizen.

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The police registered two FIRs for various offences, including conspiracy against the state

The Delhi police on Monday arrested 22 people who took part in Sunday's demonstration at India Gate against the plummeting air quality and produced them before city courts, which remanded them in judicial custody.

Judicial Magistrate Sahil Monga sent 17 protesters, including 11 women, to jail for three days. Judicial Magistrate Aridaman Singh Cheema sent the remaining five – all students – to jail for two days while rejecting the plea of one of them seeking relief to appear for college exams scheduled for Tuesday.

According to the police, the protest turned tense on Sunday after some demonstrators allegedly retaliated with force as they were being removed from the scene. "The situation turned into a scuffle and some protesters used pepper spray on our personnel, which is unusual and rare," a senior officer said.

He added that the protesters assaulted the police team and manhandled women officers. Several personnel were injured and taken to RML Hospital for treatment, the officer said.

The police have also ac-

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• GURUGRAM 306, City Center, Sector 29 (Near Hotel Pillazio)
• WAZIRPUR A-5, Near Richi Rich Banquet (Opp. Shalimar Bagh)
• NOIDA, Nirula's Sec-2, Near Metro Station, Sec-15, Noida, UP
• LAJPAT NAGAR, 49, Main Ring Road, Adj. Haldi Ram, Near Moolchand Crossing

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BNSS Section 356 invoked for first time in Delhi

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Delhi Police has, for the first time, invoked the 'trial in absentia' provision of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha

Sanhita (BNSS) against a man accused of evading arrest after committing murder, an officer said.

Section 356 of the BNSS allows the court to proceed with the trial of a 'pro-

claimed offender' even in their absence. The provision was invoked against Jitendra Mehta, who is on the run after being booked for the murder of a 68-year-old man in north Delhi.



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Chandresh
Palanichamy

Research Scholar,
Biomedical Engineering,
VIT, Vellore



Ketan
Jajal

Founder & CEO,
Jajal Medical Services,
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Athira Elissa
Johnson

Senior Reporter, The Hindu
Moderator



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“
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जीवन साहस और कल्पणा
का प्रतीक था।
उनके शहीदी दिवस पर, मैं
महान् श्री गुरु तेग बहादुर
जी को नमन करता हूँ
और एक न्यायपूर्ण और
समावेशी समाज के उनके
विजय का स्मरण करता
हूँ।”
— नरेन्द्र मोदी

माननीय राष्ट्रपति श्रीमती द्वौपदी मुर्मुंजी कीर्तन समागम में शीथ नवाएंगी

मंगलवार, 25 नवंबर 2025

समागम के मुख्य बिंदु

श्री गुरु तेग बहादुर जी के जीवन
पर आधारित लाइट एंड साउंड शो

श्री गुरु तेग बहादुर जी
संग्रहालय

कीर्तन दरबार
और कवि दरबार

संगतों के लिए टेंट किटी एवं लंगर सेवा की व्यवस्था
समय - शाम 5:45 बजे से | स्थान - लाल किला मैदान, दिल्ली



IN BRIEF



One year on, Sambhal stays peaceful amid tight security

The police held flag marches and maintained vigil in Sambhal on Monday, marking the first anniversary of the violence that unfolded in the western Uttar Pradesh district last November when a court-ordered survey of a 16th-century Jama Masjid, allegedly the site of an older temple, triggered large-scale protests, leaving five persons dead. Police teams, 19 magistrates, units of the Rapid Action Force and two battalions of the Provincial Armed Constabulary were deployed in the district to maintain order, said a senior officer, adding that no untoward incident was reported during the day.

Gujarat police complete verification of 31,834 people

A Statewide audit of people once booked for 'anti-national' activities has given Gujarat police a clear picture of how many of them remain within reach of the law enforcement. The verification drive, covering three decades of cases, has now been completed, Director General of Police Vikas Sahay said on Monday. Police records showed 31,834 people had been booked over the last 30 years under laws dealing with terrorism, arms, narcotics, explosives, petroleum products and fake currency. In the verification that followed, 11,880 were found to be living at the addresses listed in the case files while 2,326 had died, Mr. Sahay said.

TVK leaders questioned by CBI in Karur stampede case

The Hindu Bureau

Tamilaga Vettiri Kazhagam (TVK) general secretary 'Bussy' Anand, general secretary (election campaign management) Aadhav Arjuna, and joint general secretary C.T.R. Nirmal Kumar appeared before the CBI in Tamil Nadu's Karur on Monday for questioning in connection with the September 27 stampede, which claimed 41 lives at a rally addressed by party founder and actor Vijay.

According to sources, the CBI questioned the TVK office-bearers until 8.15 p.m., seeking detailed accounts of crowd control measures, and the roles and responsibilities assigned on the day of the rally.

Pradesh Congress Committee (PCC) president Govind Singh Dotsara said the "voters with Congress ideology" were being removed from the rolls on the pretext of their absence, shifting or death. "In each Assembly segment, the names of 20,000 to 25,000 voters are being deleted," he said.

Talking to journalists at the PCC headquarters here, Mr. Dotsara said the

login identities of Booth Level Officers were being used at multiple locations for "arbitrary deletions and additions".

'Will expose conspiracy'

The party will shortly expose this conspiracy," Mr. Dotsara said. He alleged that 'absentee, shifted and dead' (ASD) marking was very low in the areas where the ruling BJP believes it has a strong vote bank.

Mr. Dotsara said AICC State in-charge Sukhjinder Singh Randhawa would assign new tasks to the District Congress Committee presidents and the party would deliberate on the strategy to monitor the Election Commission's actions. The PCC also launched a talent search campaign to select spokespersons, media panelists and publicity coordinators for the party.

With the CEO absent, his deputy met them and accepted their memorandum. However, on their way out of the office, the group launched an impromptu sit-in after a few

protesters alleged receiving a threat message for participating in the rally.

Kolkata Police and security staff personnel at the CEO's office evicted the protesters from the premises amid the commotion.

Earlier, demonstrators climbed atop the police barricade in front of the CEO's office and raised slogans against the Election Commission (EC).

The protesters also al-

leged that BLOs were falling sick and so far three officials died, two of them allegedly by suicide, due to work stress.

Similar protests have held at several places across West Bengal against the "unbearable work pressure". They have been demanding the extension of deadline for digitisation of enumeration forms, which is supposed to be completed by December 4. Door-to-door visits, and political pressure are also among the concerns raised by the BLOs in the last 20 days since the distribution of enumeration forms started on November 4.

A section of BLOs have raised concerns around the unavailability of high-speed Internet necessary for the digitisation of enumeration forms. Disgruntled BLOs also claim that the task of digitising thou-

sands of enumeration forms through the BLO mobile app has added to their mounting workload, and become especially unmanageable for the those who aren't tech-savvy.

'Met telecom officials'

CEO Manoj Kumar Agarwal on Monday said he met telecom officials and representatives of all service providers to ensure uninterrupted Internet connectivity for the digitisation work. "Connectivity issues can be there in a few places... We have told the Block Development Officers and District Election Officers that centralised spaces can be there with Wi-Fi connectivity," he said, adding that over 10 lakh enumeration forms have so far been identified as "uncollectable" because voters were not found in their registered addresses.

Shrabana Chatterjee
Moyuri Som

JAIPUR

The Opposition Congress in Rajasthan on Monday alleged that the names of a large number of voters were being deleted in all Assembly constituencies during the ongoing special intensive revision (SIR) of the electoral rolls. This was being done in the areas with a considerable support for the Congress, according to the party.

Pradesh Congress Committee (PCC) president Govind Singh Dotsara said the "voters with Congress ideology" were being removed from the rolls on the pretext of their absence, shifting or death. "In each Assembly segment, the names of 20,000 to 25,000 voters are being deleted," he said.

Talking to journalists at the PCC headquarters here, Mr. Dotsara said the

login identities of Booth Level Officers were being used at multiple locations for "arbitrary deletions and additions".

'Will expose conspiracy'

The party will shortly expose this conspiracy," Mr. Dotsara said. He alleged that 'absentee, shifted and dead' (ASD) marking was very low in the areas where the ruling BJP believes it has a strong vote bank.

Mr. Dotsara said AICC State in-charge Sukhjinder Singh Randhawa would assign new tasks to the District Congress Committee presidents and the party would deliberate on the strategy to monitor the Election Commission's actions. The PCC also launched a talent search campaign to select spokespersons, media panelists and publicity coordinators for the party.

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Earlier, demonstrators climbed atop the police barricade in front of the CEO's office and raised slogans against the Election Commission (EC).

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Similar protests have held at several places across West Bengal against the "unbearable work pressure". They have been demanding the extension of deadline for digitisation of enumeration forms, which is supposed to be completed by December 4. Door-to-door visits, and political pressure are also among the concerns raised by the BLOs in the last 20 days since the distribution of enumeration forms started on November 4.

A section of BLOs have raised concerns around the unavailability of high-speed Internet necessary for the digitisation of enumeration forms. Disgruntled BLOs also claim that the task of digitising thou-

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'Met telecom officials'

CEO Manoj Kumar Agarwal on Monday said he met telecom officials and representatives of all service providers to ensure uninterrupted Internet connectivity for the digitisation work. "Connectivity issues can be there in a few places... We have told the Block Development Officers and District Election Officers that centralised spaces can be there with Wi-Fi connectivity," he said, adding that over 10 lakh enumeration forms have so far been identified as "uncollectable" because voters were not found in their registered addresses.

Shrabana Chatterjee
Moyuri Som

KOLKATA

Booth Level Officers (BLOs) engaged in the ongoing special intensive revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in West Bengal clashed with police personnel outside the Chief Electoral Officer's (CEO) office on Monday during a protest against "excessive work pressure".

Members of the BLO Adhikar Raksha Committee marched from College Square in north Kolkata, carrying locks and fetters to symbolically close the main entrance of the building housing the CEO's office.

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WEST BENGAL

BLOs outside the CEO's office on Monday. DEBASISH BHADURI

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Six-year-old boy's ear bitten off by pitbull in Delhi; owner held

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

A six-year-old boy was severely injured after being mauled by a pet pitbull in north-west Delhi's Prem Nagar, the police said on Monday, adding that the owner has been arrested. A Municipal Corporation of Delhi official said the dog, which bit off the victim's right ear, was shifted to an animal birth control centre in Najafgarh, where it will be kept permanently.

An officer said they received a PCR call at 5.38 p.m. on Sunday about a child being attacked by a dog and rushed to hospital by his parents.

"The boy was playing outside his home in Vinay Enclave when the pitbull suddenly emerged from a neighbour's house and attacked him. The child suffered major injuries, in-

cluding the loss of his right ear," said the officer.

The officer added, "The owner was identified as Rajesh Pal, 50, a tailor, who lives nearby. During the attack, the child suffered major injuries, including the loss of his right ear, which the dog bit off."

Preliminary inquiry has revealed that the pitbull was brought home around one and a half years ago by Mr. Rajesh's son, Sachin, who is presently lodged in jail, said the officer.

The police have recorded the statement of the victim's father, Dinesh, 32. Based on the complaint and medical findings, a case under Sections 291 (negligent conduct with respect to animals) and 125(b) (causing grievous hurt) of Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita has been registered at Prem Nagar police station, said the police.

BLO threatens to end life in Kerala; officials come to aid

The officer is heard saying that he is facing severe stress and harsh working conditions as part of the SIR duties; two staff members from the village office have been assigned to assist him

The Hindu Bureau
KOTTAYAM

In yet another instance of a booth level officer (BLO) expressing his distress over the mounting workload from the special intensive revision (SIR), an official from the Poonjar grama panchayat in Kottayam district of Kerala threatened to take his own life, citing unbearable pressure associated with the exercise.

The official, identified as Antony Varghese, a BLO for booth number 110 in the Poonjar Assembly constituency, alleged that he was facing severe stress and harsh working conditions as part of SIR duties.

In an audio note shared in an official WhatsApp group, Mr. Varghese is



Helping hand: A Booth Level Officer (BLO) at a help desk helping voters fill up the enumeration forms. REPRESENTATIONAL PHOTO

heard saying that the workload involved in the SIR has pushed him to the brink. "If I commit suicide, this Election Commission and the SIR will be responsible," he says.

An employee with the Government Polytechnic College in Idukki, Mr. Varghese has been involved in the door-to-door verification process.

Revenue department officials on Monday reached out to Mr. Varghese. They informed him that he could be relieved from duty, but Mr. Varghese said he preferred to continue. "The entire department is ready to support him," deputy tahsildar, Niju Mon, said. Two staff members

from the Mundakkayam village office have been assigned to assist him.

On November 16, Aneesh George, a BLO from Kannur, died by suicide, reportedly due to pressure from special intensive revision duties.

CEO, Collector offer aid
Taking cognisance of the matter, Chief Electoral Officer Rathan U. Kelkar and District Collector Chethan Kumar Meena jointly held a videoconference with Mr. Varghese to address his grievances.

"During the interaction, Mr. Varghese conveyed his willingness to continue his duties as BLO," said the Collector.

(For those in distress, counselling is available at TeleMANAS-14416)

Chhattisgarh student kills self after alleging sexual harassment

The Hindu Bureau
RAJPUR

A 15-year-old girl in Chhattisgarh's Jashpur district died by suicide on Sunday after accusing the principal of a private school she was studying in of sexually harassing her, said the police.

She left a suicide note in which she has mentioned the term "bad touch" and that she was sexually assaulted by the school prin-

cipal, said Jashpur Senior Superintendent of Police Shashi Mohan Singh. The principal has been arrested.

"During search, a note was recovered from her according to which the school principal used to sexually harass her due to which she was ending her life," Mr. Singh said.

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TO ADVERTISE PLEASE CONTACT

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THE HINDU

India's National Newspaper

कार्यालय परियोजना प्रबन्धक, चूल्हा-18 कर्कटपुराण एवं विज्ञान सीरीजेन उत्तर प्रदेश जल निगम (नगरीय) (30 प्रभाग सरकार का उपकार) मकान सं.-108, बैठक विभाग मंड़ावा जोगा सं.-4, भाग-2 (निकट संघवाला साहित्य पालिका, वराहाखर आपाल पाल के नाम), रिल्ली रोड, सुनाराबाद-244103

E-mail: pm18mbd@gmail.com

पत्रांक - 3190/19/19/48

दिनांक :- 20.11.2025

अल्पकालीन ई-निविदा सूचना

उत्तर प्रदेश जल निगम (नगरीय), की ओर से अवधारणार्थी द्वारा Repair & Maintenance work of OBC Girls Hostel at Govt. K.G.K. Homeopathic Medical College, Moradabad अनुसारात लागत ₹30.12 लाख, हेतु दिनांक 09.12.2025 की अपाराह 16:30 बजे तक ई-निविदा एवं अपीलिंग जी जाती है। उत्तर प्रदेश जल निगम (नगरीय) की ओर से अवधारणार्थी द्वारा Repair & Maintenance work of OBC Girls Hostel at Govt. K.G.K. Homeopathic Medical College, Moradabad अनुसारात लागत ₹30.12 लाख, हेतु दिनांक 09.12.2025 की अपाराह 16:30 बजे तक ई-निविदा एवं अपीलिंग जी जाती है। उत्तर प्रदेश जल निगम (नगरीय) की ओर से अवधारणार्थी द्वारा Repair & Maintenance work of OBC Girls Hostel at Govt. K.G.K. Homeopathic Medical College, Moradabad अनुसारात लागत ₹30.12 लाख, हेतु दिनांक 09.12.2025 की अपाराह 16:30 बजे तक ई-निविदा एवं अपीलिंग जी जाती है। उत्तर प्रदेश जल निगम (नगरीय) की ओर से अवधारणार्थी द्वारा Repair & Maintenance work of OBC Girls Hostel at Govt. K.G.K. 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Labour and honour

Smooth execution of the Labour Codes is linked to tripartite consultations

The Centre's announcement to implement the four Labour Codes – they concern wages, industrial relations, social security and occupational safety, health and working conditions – has been heralded by the business and investment community as the biggest reform in a long time. Passed by Parliament between 2019 and 2020, the implementation of these Codes was delayed for multiple reasons. The Codes replace 29 laws that regulated employer-employee relations, and significantly reduce the compliance requirements for a company every year. The Centre has maintained that it will handhold the States to draft and adopt the Rules in accordance with the Codes – most States and Union Territories have published the draft Rules for the Codes. Free market advocates have always considered India's labour laws to be a hindrance to its growth potential. Under the Codes, worker-employer relations, social security mechanism and wage and aspects of emoluments will witness huge changes. India needs to generate employment for its growing youth population as it is estimated that 12 million people attain working age every year. This is a trend that will hold for several years. The Economic Survey of 2023-24 noted that there needs to be an average of nearly 78.5 lakh jobs created annually until 2030 in the non-farm sector to engage the rising workforce.

Despite the long delay in the implementation of the Codes, the concerns raised by labour unions have not been addressed in full. Labour representatives allege that the government ignored the pro-worker recommendations of the Second National Commission on Labour, (submitted in 2002) and, instead, accommodated all "pro employer" recommendations and made them a part of the Codes. Those issues are now redundant, but the nature of work is undergoing rapid transformation. Considering the uncertainties due to wars, trade disruptions and climatic challenges, enhancing both agriculture and industrial productivity is necessary and ensuring a healthy worker-employer relationship is key to this. With gig and platform works and artificial intelligence disrupting conservative definitions of work, wage and social security, the Government should take the steps needed to reform the labour sector wisely. The Indian Labour Conference (ILC), which has met 46 times between 1940 and 2015, has not been convened since then. Prime Minister Narendra Modi had promised that labour laws would be changed only after wider tripartite consultations. So, it becomes imperative that the Government conducts the 47th session of the ILC on the Labour Codes to ensure their smooth implementation. In the process, States should also be consulted along with employers and employees.

Missing 'Ubuntu'

The U.S. boycott of the G-20 summit in Johannesburg was impolitic

The G-20 leaders' summit in Johannesburg, the first ever held in an African country, was unique in many positive, and some not-so-positive ways. The summit has an added voice as the African Union was made a member during India's G20 Presidency in 2023. As a result, the deliberations and the declaration seemed imbued by the spirit of the "Global South", as they listed the multiple challenges the world faces including conflicts, deepening inequality and increasing economic uncertainty. In particular, the nations gathered called for a "just, comprehensive, and lasting peace" in "Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Occupied Palestinian Territory [and] Ukraine", invoking the UN charter. Prime Minister Narendra Modi spoke at all three sessions of the G-20, suggesting six initiatives that India could lead in order to address some of those issues, particularly on the need to "reconsider" the parameters of global development. These initiatives included a Traditional Knowledge Repository, a G20-Africa Skills Multiplier Initiative (where India proposed to train a million people across Africa), a Global Healthcare Response Team, an Initiative on Countering the Drug-Terror Nexus, an Open Satellite Data Partnership" to share agriculture, fishing and disaster-related information, and a "G20 Critical Minerals Circularity initiative". The government asserted that it had a role in drafting the declaration, but would have been disappointed by the brief condemnation of terrorism when compared to the 2023 New Delhi declaration, given the Delhi blast and the Pahalgam attack.

The leaders present spoke volubly about the need for bolstering the G-20's role in managing global challenges, but were silent on the absence of the most important dignitary – U.S. President Donald Trump did not just skip the Summit, but the U.S. government also boycotted it, sending only a diplomat as an observer. This is the first time that the U.S., that has cited tensions with South Africa over "alleged discrimination" against "White minority farmers", has walked away from the summit of the biggest economies. Aside from the irony of a "boycott" against South Africa, which suffered apartheid under the Afrikaner-led regime, the U.S.'s decision also raises questions over its commitment to the G-20 even as it takes over its presidency for 2026. The absence of the leader of the largest economy and the lack of universal criticism of the decision run counter to the hope and hype of the G-20 finally representing a more democratic world order over the last few years. The spirit of 'Ubuntu' or "I am because we are", referred to in this year's declaration, must be heeded by the very powers that would seek to side-line the grouping today.

But the Queen has no such veto. She must sign her own death-warrant if the two Houses unanimously send it up to her. It is a fiction of the past to ascribe to her legislative power (*The English Constitution*, Walter Bagehot, 1865).

The Supreme Court of India has given its opinion on 11 out of the 14 questions on which the President of India had sought its advice under Article 143 of the Constitution. The issue behind these questions is the role to be played by the Governor of a State while deciding on the Bills passed by the legislative Assemblies as in the provisions of Article 200 of the Constitution.

The mode of appointment and exercise of discretionary powers by the Governor have engaged the attention of the political executive, at the Union and State levels, and constitutional experts. After seven-and-a-half decades, it is time to analyse how the discharge of gubernatorial responsibilities has given rise to conflicts and litigation.

The focus points

The two major constitutional questions which came up before the Court in the Tamil Nadu case and the subsequent Presidential reference were, first, the existence of discretionary power for the Governor while assenting to, withholding assent from and in reserving a Bill for the consideration of the President, and, second, the time limit within which a Governor or the President has to act on a Bill passed by the legislature.

In the Court's opinion, the Governor has discretion in the three courses of action available when a Bill is presented and no time-line can be prescribed. However, the Court has a limited power of judicial review in glaring cases of inaction when the delay is prolonged, unexplained and indefinite.

Here, it is pertinent to note that when a Bill which has been withheld and sent to legislature, the Governor has to give assent as soon as possible, after it is resubmitted.

In the Government of India Act, 1935, both the Governor-General and the Governor had discretion (Sections 32 and 75, respectively) in assenting, withholding and returning Bills. In the draft Article 175, discretion was conferred on the Governor for returning a Bill with a message to a unicameral legislature. The words 'discretion' and the 'single house' in the draft Article were removed after debates in the Constituent Assembly.

The Court was of the opinion that prior to the insertion of the Tenth Schedule in 1985 in the



R. Mohan
is a former officer of the Indian Revenue Service

Constitution, it was a realistic possibility that Bills could be passed without the support of the Council of Ministers. The Court implies, that after the anti-defection law, members of the party cannot act against the party whip.

Hence, the Court has taken the view that a scenario where the Council of Ministers would tender aid and advice to the effect that the Governor must return a Bill for reconsideration or reserve it for the consideration of the President is not conceivable.

This view, however, does not take into consideration a situation when a coalition government of two parties, A and B, get a Bill passed in the Assembly.

When the Bill goes for assent, there is a political change and party B forms a coalition government with party C. As a part of the new political adjustment, party B agrees not to press the Bill. The new Ministry will naturally advise the Governor to send back the Bill to the legislature. Similar scenarios have been mentioned by the constitutional advisor, B.N. Rau in his note to the Constituent Assembly. These make it abundantly clear that there is no need to assume that there is implied discretion in Article 200.

On aid and advice

Another situation mentioned in the opinion of the Court for assuming that there is implied discretion for the Governor in Article 200 for protecting and defending the Constitution is that "if there is no discretion, then even if advice is tendered contrary to the written text of the Constitution, the Governor will be bound by such advice".

Three questions arise here. First, given that the members of the Council of Ministers take oath to owe allegiance to the Constitution, why will they tender such an advice? Second, if such an unconstitutional advice is tendered to the Governor, is she/he impeded from sending a report to the Union under Article 356, for which there is no need for the aid and advice of the Council of Ministers? Third, does the President have any discretionary power, if such advice is tendered by the Union cabinet?

The Sarkaria Commission report stated that the discretion is available only under the second proviso to Article 200 and that it is quite narrow. The present advisory, on the other hand, has widened the scope of gubernatorial discretion and made it non-justiciable. If the power of assent, withholding and sending messages (the advisory states that there cannot be withholding simpliciter) fall in the realm of discretion and are

not subject to judicial review, the consequence will be a form of gubernatorial governance in the States.

The Court has adumbrated that the Governor is not an employee of the Union (*Hargovind Pant vs Raghubil Tilak Dr. And Others* (1979 AIR 1109). However, none of the modes of appointment of the Governors, recommended by the Sarkaria, Venkatachaliah and Punchhi Commissions have been seriously considered.

Sorabjee's observation

Soli Sorabjee, in 1985, made a sharply critical observation that an unhealthy practice has grown from offering the post of Governor as a consolation prize for 'burnt-out' politicians or as a stepping stone for those still burning with political ambition. Given this backdrop, there is a likelihood of friction when the Union and the States are ruled by different political parties. It is to be noted that those who are now critical of the role of the Governors, had earlier ignored the well-meaning recommendations on the mode of appointment of Governors by three commissions on Centre-State relations.

Having judicially determined time lines for deciding on Bills passed by the legislature arose when States approached the Court citing long delays at the level of Governors. Citing instances of delay in the cases reserved for consideration of the President, former Chief Minister of Karnataka Ramakrishna Hegde has said: "The President had yet to give assent to as many as 74 Bills referred to him by different State Governors. Of these, two had been pending for seven years, three for six years, two for five years, seven for three years and 58 for the past one year... after making the Karnataka government wait for six years, the Home Ministry wrote to the State Government that its Educational Bill, 1983, was 'under examination'" (*Mainstream*, June 8, 1991).

The three commissions had also recommended timelines. In a polity, where smooth working relations are to be ensured between the Union and the States, why not think of a consensus and amend Article 200 introducing time lines? The ruling party of yesteryears is in the opposition today and it can be vice-versa.

The advisory opinion of the learned judges has upheld the position in the judgment of the Tamil Nadu case. Even though the judgment does not merge in the opinion, the latter has substantial persuasive value. Will the future be happier if the non-justiciable discretion without specific time lines is available for exercise of gubernatorial functions under Article 200?

The amplitude of gubernatorial discretion

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The advisory by the top court has widened the scope of gubernatorial discretion and made it non-justiciable

Society must reclaim respectful, open dialogue



Justice N. Anand Venkatesh
is Judge, Madras High Court

ignoring their own. Such hypocrisy corrodes discourse and erodes trust, transforming civic conversation into performances of self-justification where convenience trumps consistency. Philosopher Jay Garfield warns that polarisation destroys civil discourse which is the foundation of democracy. To rebuild, he urges us to seek dialogue across divides with openness and humility, viewing opponents as fellow humans, not enemies. Only through respectful conversation can we address the complex challenges of our time.

Reclaim genuine dialogue

The crisis we face is more than political. It is existential. When neutrality is mocked and moderation punished, when only the loudest voices are heard, our collective capacity to grow and innovate fades. The remedy lies in a humble return to respectful engagement – accepting that no truth is certain without risk and that every position, including neutrality, carries moral weight. Genuine dialogue must be reclaimed, refusing the destructive ease of polarisation. Without this, the very foundation of meaningful democratic life is at stake.

The legislative process becomes dysfunctional as polarisation leads to deadlock or superficial rubber stamp decisions. Judicial autonomy is questioned, with courts seen as biased factions rather than impartial arbiters. Leaders are viewed as faction heads, fractured from the broader population's needs. Public discourse devolves into hostile rhetoric rather than reasoned debate, further harming social cohesion and democratic norms.

Beyond politics, polarisation impacts individual well-being and social integration. Chronic stress and anxiety related to political

hostility rise. Social networks shrink as communities segregate along ideological lines, eroding the cooperative spirit needed for societal progress. Workplace dynamics reflect polarisation, leading to discrimination and conflict.

The online environment worsens this, with misinformation campaigns, emotional manipulation and divisive content as norms. Hate crimes and political violence have increased in polarised contexts, underscoring the danger when group loyalty overtakes democratic principles. Research shows that rising connectivity through social media paradoxically drives polarisation by fostering homophily – i.e., people bonding with similar views by repelling opposing groups and thus widening opinion gaps.

Defend neutrality

To counter these trends, society must reclaim respectful, open dialogue. This means defending neutrality and balanced judgment as moral imperatives, embracing complexity rather than binary choices. Genuine engagement requires seeing opponents as fellow humans, acknowledging multiple viewpoints with humility. Only by fostering understanding across divides can democratic governance and social trust be restored.

Choosing understanding over discord and reason over rage is not just idealistic but necessary. The middle path offers a way to navigate turbulent times with courage and integrity. It demands listening deeply, admitting imperfections and valuing balance as essential for mature democracy. Protecting neutrality and civil discourse shields society from polarisation's corrosive effects and ignites hope for peaceful coexistence and progress.

The middle path of understanding over discord and reason over rage is necessary in today's turbulent world

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Many blocs, scant results

There are umpteen international groups and bodies with the white elephant, the United Nations, topping the list of those unable to draw the line on burning issues. Top leaders gather, flash toothy grins, adopt resolutions and release some press statements before dispersing. The follow-up action almost always misses the target. The United States, with its dollar strength, manipulates international happenings in its favour. India too coins catchy slogans such as "one earth, one family, one future" which mean nothing

to the West. The West is only interested in continuing its hegemony. The world needs results. The West's narrow line should be rebutted. **Govardhana Myneedu**, Vijayawada, Andhra Pradesh

In a world riven by war, inequality and mistrust, it is jarring to note the existence of many blocs. Each claims to solve global problems, but their proliferation only fragments efforts. Amid these exclusive clubs, only one truly universal institution still stands – the United Nations. It was conceived as the bedrock of global peace and

What the peace plan is
The Ukraine 'peace plan' is less a resolution and more a

multilateral cooperation, but its role seems increasingly sidelined. If we strengthen and reform the UN – giving it real power and relevance – perhaps we would not need so many competing groups. A reformed UN could serve as the single inclusive platform to address poverty, climate change, war and global justice. The multiplicity of summits only gives us the illusion of action. **T. Kailash Ditya**, Hyderabad

capitulation blueprint. That Ukraine should surrender territory and wager on Russia's goodwill not to advance further, and look to the prospect of Moscow's return to the G-8, is a tilt toward Russian interests. In truth, this mirrors shifting geopolitics around the war itself. Europe's industrial capacity to keep Ukraine armed is eroding under the weight of sustained commitments. The U.S., after two years of political fatigue and domestic preoccupations, has lost interest. It is now a conflict defined by material exhaustion. Under war fatigue, any peace plan

would be an escape hatch for weary actors in the war. Peace extracted from weakness seldom endures. It merely pauses conflict. **R. Narayan**, Navi Mumbai

Dharmendra
The passing of veteran actor Dharmendra has left millions of cinema lovers in deep sorrow. A timeless icon of Indian cinema, Dharmendra was not just an actor but an emotion for generations. Dharmendra won hearts with his effortless charm, powerful performances and unmatched versatility. From action and drama to

romance and comedy, he excelled in every genre, leaving behind a legacy that will inspire actors. **Rukma Sharma**, Jalandhar, Punjab

Called the 'He-Man of Bollywood', Dharmendra was one of India's most iconic actors. With his natural acting and powerful dialogue delivery, he created unforgettable characterisations. We will miss a beloved figure in the Indian film world. **Deepika Kataria**, Chandigarh

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

Bridging India's numeracy gap

The National Education Policy 2020 rightly identifies Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN) as the cornerstone of all future learning. The NIPUN Bharat Mission has translated this policy intent into action by focusing on learning outcomes rather than just inputs. Foundational learning outcomes – stagnant for decades – have shown measurable improvement, as confirmed by government as well as independent surveys.

Despite these gains, numeracy continues to lag behind literacy. The Annual State of Education Report 2024 report shows that while 48.7% of Class 5 students can read fluently, only 30.7% can solve a basic division problem – an 18% point gap. No State reports higher numeracy than literacy outcomes. This situation makes it essential to examine numeracy more closely on the path to achieving foundational learning.

Integrated learning
The root of the numeracy problem lies in the cumulative nature of mathematics. Unlike language learning, where partial comprehension allows some progress, math is hierarchical and builds on itself. A missed concept in the lower grades, such as place value, can make future concepts like addition and decimals inaccessible. As a result, once gaps form, they tend to widen over time.

Traditional syllabus-driven teaching worsens the issue, as it advances without ensuring that students have grasped earlier concepts. Research and field experience from Teaching at the Right Level, an approach developed by the NGO Pratham, show that instruction must be aligned with a child's learning level rather than the curriculum. Without remedial interventions, grade-level teaching simply bypasses most learners, deepening existing disparities.

This gap is also evident in the disconnect between school



Jatin Goyal

A civil servant presently serving in the Union Territory of Dadra Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu. Views are personal

learning and real-life application. A study by the Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab shows that students who perform well on classroom math assessments often struggle to apply that knowledge in real-life market situations. Conversely, children engaged in real-world tasks, such as working in a shop, often find it difficult to transfer those skills into classroom-based math problems. This two-way disconnect underscores the need for integrated learning that brings real-life problem-solving into classrooms.

The practical consequences of the numeracy gap are significant. Students who lack foundational numeracy skills struggle in both math and science – subjects which record far higher failure rate than others – in board exams. Many adolescents exit school even before reaching the board exam stage, not because of a lack of access or interest, but because persistent learning gaps make classroom instruction incomprehensible, especially in middle and secondary school. The dread of math is therefore real, and results in closing the doors of higher education for many who can't pass Class 10 board exams or drop out earlier.

A multi-pronged response
Addressing this challenge calls for a multi-pronged response that builds on NIPUN's gains. The most urgent step is to extend interventions up to Class 8, given that about 70% of Class 5 and more than 50% of Class 8 students are still unable to perform basic division, as per the ASER 2024 report. Limiting foundational interventions to Class 3 is inadequate when upper primary children continue to miss out, many having lost crucial primary years due to COVID-19 disruptions. Experiences from the Union Territory of Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu, where extending FLN interventions into middle grades significantly improved outcomes as shown in

the Parakh Rashtriya Survekshan 2024, confirm the value of such an approach.

Alongside this extension, it is equally important to move beyond "foundational" skills and introduce what may be called FLN+ skills – fractions, decimals, percentages, ratios, and integers – since these are critical for board exam success and later academic progression. ASER 2024's finding that nearly 70% of Class 5 students cannot solve division suggests that an overwhelming majority also lack higher-level skills, such as adding simple fractions (for example, $2/3 + 1/2$). This must change through a concerted effort.

Pedagogy, too, must evolve, especially beyond the NIPUN hours: child-friendly, activity-based methods already used for FLN should be adapted for higher-level concepts, ensuring teaching aligns with students' actual learning levels rather than rigid grade-based syllabi. Finally, the classroom must connect more meaningfully with the outside world. By embedding literacy and numeracy in real-life contexts and encouraging everyday problem-solving, schools can make learning not only more relevant but also more enduring.

In conclusion, India's numeracy gap is both widespread and deep, intensifying as children progress through school. Its causes lie in the cumulative nature of mathematics and instructional approaches that fail to meet students where they are. The consequences – poor learning outcomes, board exam failures, and high dropout rates – threaten India's educational and economic future. The NIPUN Bharat Mission has already shown that foundational skills can improve at scale with focused effort. The next step is to build on these gains and extend success to upper primary levels and to FLN+ skills, especially in math. Doing so is not just an academic priority but a social and economic one – with direct implications for enrolment, employability, and equity.

Strengthening middle-grade support, introducing Foundational Literacy and Numeracy+ skills, and making math more connected to everyday life can transform India's early gains into lasting numeracy progress

The race for investments

Investors are flocking to Andhra Pradesh, triggering regional battles

STATE OF PLAY

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Even as Tamil Nadu and Karnataka accuse Andhra Pradesh of pursuing a 'race to the bottom,' investors are still gravitating towards the State. At the CII Partnership Summit 2025 alone, Andhra Pradesh signed 613 Memoranda of Understanding committing a total investment of ₹13.25 lakh crore.

Some leaders in Karnataka and Tamil Nadu have, in the past, criticised the Chandrababu Naidu-led Andhra Pradesh for offering land at extremely low prices along with other heavy incentives to attract industries. These Ministers contend that Andhra Pradesh has triggered an unhealthy competition among the States by going to great lengths to garner investments, while being unmindful of the negative impact that this is likely to have on the economy.

The spat between Karnataka and Tamil Nadu with Andhra Pradesh began when Google announced a \$15 billion investment to set up a hyper-scale AI data centre in Visakhapatnam. Karnataka Minister Priyank Kharge dismissed as "baseless" reports that said that Google had chosen Andhra over Karnataka and added that the massive incentive package promised by the Naidu government to Google would result in an economic disaster. In response, Andhra Pradesh IT Minister, Nara Lokesh, said that the Karnataka government should think more about efficiency and fixing its problems instead of mocking Andhra Pradesh.

Mr. Lokesh has been focused on attracting IT companies and global capability

centres for which he brought in the LIFT (Land Incentive For Tech hubs) Policy, under which land is being leased out at just 99 paise per acre.

A few days ago, the South Korean footwear manufacturer, Hwaseung, announced that it would establish a non-leather footwear manufacturing unit at Kuppam in Chittoor district by investing nearly ₹900 crore. As Hwaseung had initially shown interest in setting up the unit in Tamil Nadu, State Industries Minister T.R.B. Rajaa commented on the development on social media. He said, "Investment promotion is not a regular everyday game. It's about balancing the State's need for certain sectors, jobs that will get created, incentives being given according to the area in which the investment is anchored etc. While some governments have the luxury of huge tracts of arid lands, others have high value land that can't be casually given away without assessing the outcome of incentives vis-a-vis the value of the jobs being created. We will not join the race to the bottom, of offering unrealistic packages".

Meanwhile, former president of the BJP in Tamil Nadu, K. Anna-malai, blamed M.K. Stalin and Mr. Rajaa for projects shifting to Andhra Pradesh.

Responding to these allegations, Mr. Naidu said in a press meet at the CII Summit that States should compete in a

federal setup. He said all the investments finalised at the CII Summit were "serious," driving home the message that the Andhra government is doing its due diligence and not leaving entrepreneurs to fend for themselves after the signing of MoUs. Top officials in the government have been assigned the job of following up on each one of the proposals.

Karan Adani, the MD of Adani Ports & SEZ Ltd., has promised to invest ₹1 lakh crore in Andhra Pradesh in the next 10 years. GMR Group Chairman G. Mallikarjuna Rao has announced his plan to develop an aerotropolis at the Bhogapuram International Airport, which, he says, will be the world's biggest aircraft maintenance, repair, and overhaul facility. Anand Mahindra, Chairman of Mahindra and Mahindra Group, called Mr. Naidu "an unstoppable force of nature". Some captains of Indian industry, present at the CII Summit, said that Mr. Naidu is more a CEO than a Chief Minister.

They cited his track record in mobilising marquee investments, which began with bringing Bill Gates to set up the Microsoft India Development Centre in Hyderabad in the late 1990s.

Government sources say 346 MoUs were signed for an investment of approximately ₹4.55 lakh crore during the CII Partnership Summit in 2016; 583 MoUs for ₹8.19 lakh crore worth of investments were signed in 2017; and 537 MoUs for ₹2.05 lakh crore worth of investments were signed in 2018. The government claims to have signed 613 MoUs for a total investment of ₹13.26 lakh crore in 2025.

These statements and developments vindicate the government's claim of doing its best to attract investments.

Widely quoted WHO norm of 1 doctor per 1,000 people is not official

The benchmark was repeatedly used by the government to compare doctor availability in India over the last decade

DATA POINT

Devanshi Bihani

The Indian government of ten cites the World Health Organization (WHO)'s "benchmark" of one doctor for every 1,000 people. However, this is not a standard officially prescribed by the WHO.

Parliament Question and Answer records show that until at least 2010, the government maintained that the WHO had not prescribed any specific standard for the doctor-population ratio. But answers from 2015 and as recently as 2024 show otherwise. Replies in both these years cite the 1:1,000 ratio.

In both replies, the government used this benchmark to compare doctor availability in India. Since relying solely on registered allopathic doctors pushed the doctor-population ratio above the 1:1,000 benchmark, the government opted to include AYUSH practitioners as well, lowering the final ratio. Notably, while calculating the ratio for allopathic doctors, the government used only 80% of them, as only this proportion can be considered "available". However, when it came to AYUSH doctors, they did not apply the availability factor.

Chart 1 shows these doctor-population ratio calculations sourced from various Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha replies.

Setting these discrepancies aside, the ratio itself is questionable. The WHO, in a written response to *The Hindu*, clarified that it "does not provide recommendations for health worker population ratios at country level". The agency does not make such recommendations because ratios should be determined based on a country's health labour market dynamics and individual needs, it said.

Many experts have confirmed this. "There has never been any norm by the WHO for the doctor-population ratio," said public health expert Dr. Chandrakant La-

hariya, a former staff member of the WHO. The number, he explained, was initially referenced as a WHO-recommended norm in some academic papers without attribution to any source within the WHO. Subsequently, it was cross-cited without verification and used by Parliament in its responses too.

Dr. Kiran Kumbhar, a public health expert and a historian of medicine and healthcare in India, said that there is "absolutely no indication anywhere in the WHO's documents about this recommendation". According to Dr. Kumbhar's article in *The India Forum*, the earliest official reference to the 1:1,000 figure appears in the Medical Council of India's "Vision 2015" report, released in 2011. The document stated, based on expert consultations, that the targeted doctor population ratio would be 1:1,000 and projected that India could reach this by 2031.

While the WHO did not refer to the 1:1,000 ratio in its response, the global body stated that there are some global benchmarks used to monitor global health worker needs, such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) composite index threshold, which is the most recent one. "It consists of the estimated number of skilled health workers needed to reach the minimum proportion of achievement of high coverage, defined as 80% or above for 12 selected health indicators linked to the SDGs," the WHO explained. The latest figure for that benchmark is 4.45 doctors, nurses, and midwives per 1,000 population, it said.

Health systems researcher Siddhesh Zadey, co-founder of the Association for Socially Applicable Research India, explained the origins of this composite figure. "First, in 2006, they said the minimum number should be 2.25 per 1,000 and then revised it to 4.45 later," he said. Mr. Zadey explained that many misrepresented the composite figure, assuming that within it, a specific portion would be doctors and the rest nurses and

midwives. "However, the WHO was clear that the combined group had to be 2.25; they never stated that within that, there is a specific distribution," he said.

Mr. Zadey argued that separate figures for doctors are often cited to justify the need for more medical colleges. "In the last 10 years, we have seen that this number has become political. It is being weaponised by the AYUSH side of the health workforce, which is pitching that the target can be reached if they are included," he said.

Dr. Lahariya argued that while composite figures are useful in assessing the overall performance, these have limited relevance because there is inequitable distribution. "Within a country, there can be States that have achieved varying ratios per thousand population," he said.

The WHO response stated that the latest estimates for the composite and individual figures can be accessed from the National Health Workforce Accounts Data Portal. Chart 2 plots the estimated number of doctors per 1,000 population and Chart 3 plots the estimated number of doctors, nurses and midwives per 1,000 population (the composite figure) using the latest data for countries where they are available.

With 0.7 doctors per 1,000 people, India ranked 118 out of 181 countries in Chart 2. With a composite figure of 3.06 per 1,000 people – behind the 4.45 mark cited by the WHO – India ranked 122 of the 181 countries in Chart 3.

Dr. Kumbhar argued that India has always had a sufficient number of doctors; very few public health experts had ever claimed there was a paucity. It is only recently, after the 1:1,000 ratio came into the picture, that questions are being raised.

The real crisis is not the average number, Mr. Zadey said. "We know that we have a huge rural-urban disparity. In rural areas, we are nowhere close to the ideal composite threshold."

WHO set the norm?

The data was sourced from the National Health Workforce Accounts Data Portal and Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha replies

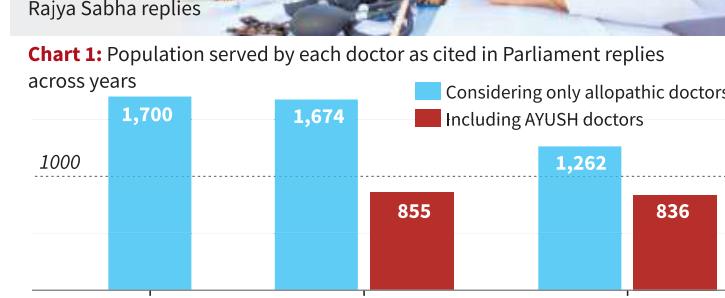
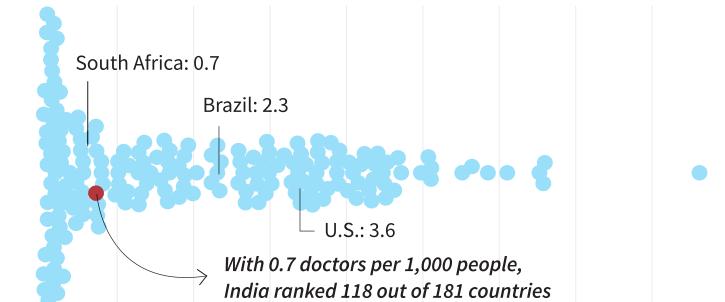
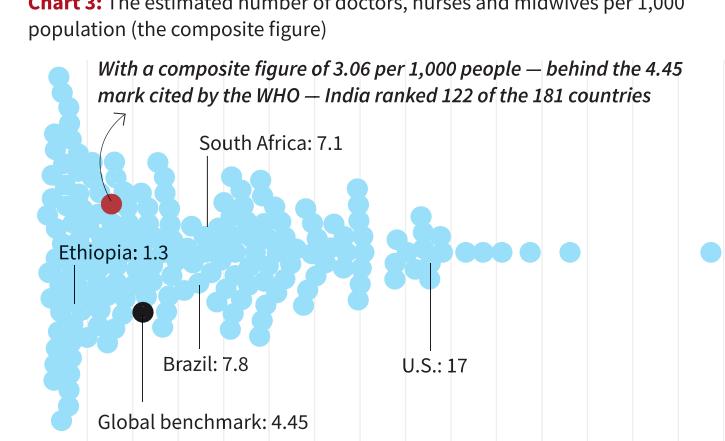


Chart 2: The estimated number of doctors per 1,000 population. Each circle corresponds to a country. Only countries with such data were considered



With a composite figure of 3.06 per 1,000 people – behind the 4.45 mark cited by the WHO – India ranked 122 of the 181 countries



FROM THE ARCHIVES

The Hindu

FIFTY YEARS AGO NOVEMBER 25, 1975

Ike and Kennedy 'knew of CIA plots'

Washington, Nov. 24: A key figure in the investigation of the Central Intelligence Agency has said he believes that both Presidents Dwight Eisenhower and John Kennedy were aware of assassination plots of foreign leaders, especially the Cuban Prime Minister, Mr. Fidel Castro.

Mr. David Belin, former Executive Director of the CIA Commission investigation headed by the Vice-President Mr. Nelson Rockefeller, said that since the then head of the CIA, Mr. Allen Dulles, was the brother of then Secretary of State, Mr. John Foster Dulles, during the Eisenhower years, and because Mr. Robert Kennedy was the Attorney-General during his brother's Administration, he "assumed" the Presidents were aware of the plots.

"The Presidents could read between the lines," Mr. Belin said on television, because they were "not naive".

Mr. Belin added the 347-page report issued last Thursday by the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence appeared to be "a thorough job" but he felt it went "easy on past Presidents and their knowledge of assassination plots".

"There is evidence in conflict about their knowledge because they were in sophisticated Washington, not the hinterlands," he said.

Mr. Belin, who has served as a senior member of the Warren Commission which investigated the assassination of President Kennedy, called for a Congressional enquiry into the report.

He said he thought the probe would bear out the Commission finding that Lee Harvey Oswald alone killed President Kennedy and that Jack Ruby also was acting alone when he killed Oswald.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO NOVEMBER 25, 1925

Egyptian politics

Cairo, Nov. 24: All Egyptian provinces, with one or two exceptions, have sent the letters to King Fuad declaring that they unite with the nation in its desire for the revival of representative parliamentary life. If this is not granted it will cause unrest which the provinces know does not accord with His Majesty's wishes. Opposition groups are protesting against the intention of the Ministry to promulgate a new electoral law declaring that the old parliament must stand.

Text & Context

THE HINDU

NEWS IN NUMBERS

Amount pledged by the EIB for African renewables projects

2.3 In \$ billion. The European Investment Bank (EIB) is pledging more than two billion euros (\$2.3 billion) for financing renewable energy projects on the African continent over the next two years. The projects will include hydroelectric, solar and wind power plants. REUTERS

Increase in India's marine sector exports from April to October

16.18 In per cent. India's marine sector exports rose to \$4.87 billion during April-October this fiscal mainly on account of healthy growth in non-U.S. markets, including China, Vietnam, Russia, Canada and the U.K., according to Commerce Ministry data. PTI

Time granted by Mozambique to firms to build LNG facilities

30 years. Mozambique has granted its top state-owned companies, including national oil firm ENH, a 30-year concession to build and operate natural gas facilities at the Port of Beira and the smaller Inhassoro site, the government said on Monday. REUTERS

Number of teachers to be recruited by the Tripura government

1,733 Tripura Chief Minister Manik Saha said that the State government has initiated the process to recruit 1,733 teachers across various categories to boost the education ecosystem. Around 5,000 people have been appointed on a contractual basis. PTI

Persons booked for involvement in cybercrime in Delhi

95 The Delhi Police has detained 381 people, booked 95 suspects in organised cyber fraud cases and registered 24 FIRs in the Central Delhi district under 'Operation CyHawk' — one of its largest crackdowns on cybercrime — an official said. PTI

COMPILED BY THE HINDU DATA TEAM

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What does the SC's advisory opinion imply?

What were the questions raised by the Presidential reference as a result of a judgment delivered in April 2025? What were the key points delivered by the Supreme Court in its opinion? Should Governors act on the aid and advice of the Council of Ministers?

EXPLAINER

Rangarajan.R

The story so far:

The Supreme Court has provided its opinion on a Presidential reference made under Article 143. In its opinion, it has largely negated the decision of a two-judge Bench that was delivered in April 2025.

What was the Presidential reference?

The current reference is the result of a two-judge Bench judgment in *State of Tamil Nadu versus Governor of Tamil Nadu* in April 2025, that had specified a timeline of three months for Governors and the President to act on Bills passed by State legislatures. The court held that decisions by Governors and the President on such Bills are subject to judicial review. It had exercised its extraordinary power under Article 142 and granted 'deemed assent' to Bills passed by Tamil Nadu assembly that were not assented to by the Governor.

The present reference had raised 14 questions, primarily surrounding the interpretation of Articles 200 and 201, for the court's opinion. These questions deal with the authority of the courts to prescribe timelines when they are not specified in the Constitution. The government had questioned whether the actions of Governors and the President can be made justiciable at a stage prior to the enactment of a Bill into a law. The reference also sought an opinion on the extent of powers that can be exercised by the Supreme Court under Article 142.

What is the current opinion?

A five-judge Bench of the top Court delivered its opinion on the questions raised. It stated that this reference was a 'functional reference', that strikes at the root of day-to-day functioning of constitutional functionaries and the interplay between State legislature, Governor and the President. Key points of



The Supreme Court of India. GETTY IMAGES

the opinion are summarised below.

First, the Governor has three constitutional options under Article 200 when a Bill passed by State legislature is presented for his/her assent, namely to assent, or reserve the Bill for consideration of the President, or withhold assent and return the Bill to legislature with comments. Second, the Governor enjoys discretion in choosing from these three options and is not bound by the aid and advice of the Council of Ministers. Third, the discharge of functions by the Governor under Article 200 is not justiciable but in case of glaring circumstances of prolonged and unexplained inaction, the court can issue a limited mandamus for the Governor to discharge his/her function on Bills presented. Fourth, in the absence of

constitutionally prescribed time limits, the court cannot judicially prescribe timelines for action by the President or Governor. Fifth, the decisions of the President and Governor under Articles 201 and 200 respectively are not justiciable before a Bill is enacted into a law. Finally, the powers of the Supreme Court under Article 142 cannot substitute the powers vested on the President/Governor under the Constitution. Hence, there is no allowance for the concept of 'deemed assent' of Bills.

What are the issues?

The Sarkaria Commission (1987), had opined that it is only the reservation of Bills for consideration of the President, that too under rare cases of patent

unconstitutionality, that can be implied as a discretionary power of the Governor. The Supreme Court in various cases including in *Shamsher Singh* (1974) and *Nabam Rebia* (2016), had held that the Governors should act on the aid and advice of the Council of Ministers. However, in the present opinion, the court has interpreted these cases to conclude that actions under Article 200, with respect to a Bill presented for assent, fall under the discretionary powers of the Governor. This has the potential to derail the legislative intent of popularly elected State governments.

With respect to time limits, the Punchhi Commission (2010), had recommended that the Governor should take a decision with respect to a Bill presented for his/her assent within a period of six months. The court in its own judgment in the *K. M. Singh* case (2020), had stipulated a time limit of three months for Speakers to decide on disqualification petitions though no time limit has been prescribed in the Constitution. The verdict of the division bench in the *State of Tamil Nadu* case to provide time limits to Governors and the President was a purposive and progressive interpretation of the Constitution. The current opinion has negated this position.

What can be the way forward?

The underlying disease that has plagued our federal set up has been the politicisation of the gubernatorial post. The Governor acts as an appointee of the Centre for maintaining unity and integrity of the nation. However, federalism is also a basic feature of our Constitution. This opinion should not become an alibi for the Governor's office to thwart the policies of popularly elected houses in the States. The Governors should display responsible urgency in providing assent to Bills passed by State legislatures.

Rangarajan.R is a former IAS officer and author of 'Courseware on Polity Simplified'. He currently trains at 'Officers IAS Academy'. Views expressed are personal.

THE GIST

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Why do infant deaths persist in tribal-dominated Melghat?

How have officials responded to the Bombay High Court's statements?

Snehal Mutha

The story so far:

The Bombay High Court, on November 12, pulled up the Maharashtra and Union governments for an "extremely casual" approach to the disturbing number of infant deaths due to malnutrition in the tribal-dominated region of Melghat in Amravati. During the hearing, a petitioner claimed that from June 2025, 65 infants aged between zero and six months had died due to malnutrition in Melghat, while more than 220 children were in the Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) category, out of which 50% may die if no help is provided.

What is the situation in Melghat?

The issue of infant and maternal deaths due to malnutrition and lack of maternal healthcare has always persisted in Melghat, home to Korku tribal

communities, despite three decades of government interventions. Fatalities have fluctuated over the past decade. According to data from the Amravati Zilla Parishad, from April 2024 to March 2025, 96 infants died, and in the last seven months of this year, 61 children have died. Officials from the Zilla Parishad office, however, state that most of these deaths are not just because of malnutrition but other underlying causes such as anaemia, sickle cell disease, pneumonia, delays in treatment due to lack of connectivity, and others. "All these deaths are not because of malnutrition but other issues. We are running a hot food scheme in the Melghat areas, providing eggs and bananas four times a week. We have set up the village child development centre (VCDC) in all gram panchayats to monitor SAM cases," said Amravati ZP Chief Executive Officer, Sanjita Mohapatra, adding that peripheral issues still needed to be addressed. The petitioner argued that even though the

cause of death has been recorded as pneumonia or other causes, malnutrition is also a reason.

Maharashtra's Women and Child Welfare Department Minister stated that Poshan tracker data recorded 1,82,443 malnourished children across the State. The Indian Institute of Population Sciences noted that Maharashtra continues to perform poorly on child nutrition, with 35% of children under five stunted and 35% underweight.

What are the challenges?

Peripheral issues that the State government point to include lack of proper roads to reach a hospital in time, inadequate electricity supply to homes, lack of primary healthcare centres, the prevalence of substance abuse and more. According to experts working in Melghat, multiple government departments that execute programmes operate in silos, resulting in inconsistent supplement

delivery, irregular monitoring, and weak coordination to sustain policies.

Finding and retaining doctors, including paediatricians, gynaecologists, and other hospital staff members, remains a major challenge as the absconding rate (absent from work) is high. Ms. Mohapatra says that even though salary and incentives have increased, the mindset of doctors remain unchanged. She also pointed out that the Infant Mortality Rate (IMR), which is a key indicator of child health, has improved in Melghat to 16.5 while Maharashtra's IMR is 15 as per the Sample Registration System data of 2024-25. Intergenerational malnutrition presents another challenge, as women often enter pregnancy severely underweight and anaemic, leading to low-birth-weight babies, who then have weakened immunity and are vulnerable to infections.

What are expert-approved solutions?

The eradication of malnutrition is not limited to providing mid-day meals or food supplies, say experts. It also involves creating a well-oiled healthcare system, where nutrition is provided for both mothers and children; creating a cadre of ASHA workers with a strong knowledge of health; caring for co-morbidities through health and nutrition programmes; promoting community-centred behavioural change, and developing civic and health infrastructure.

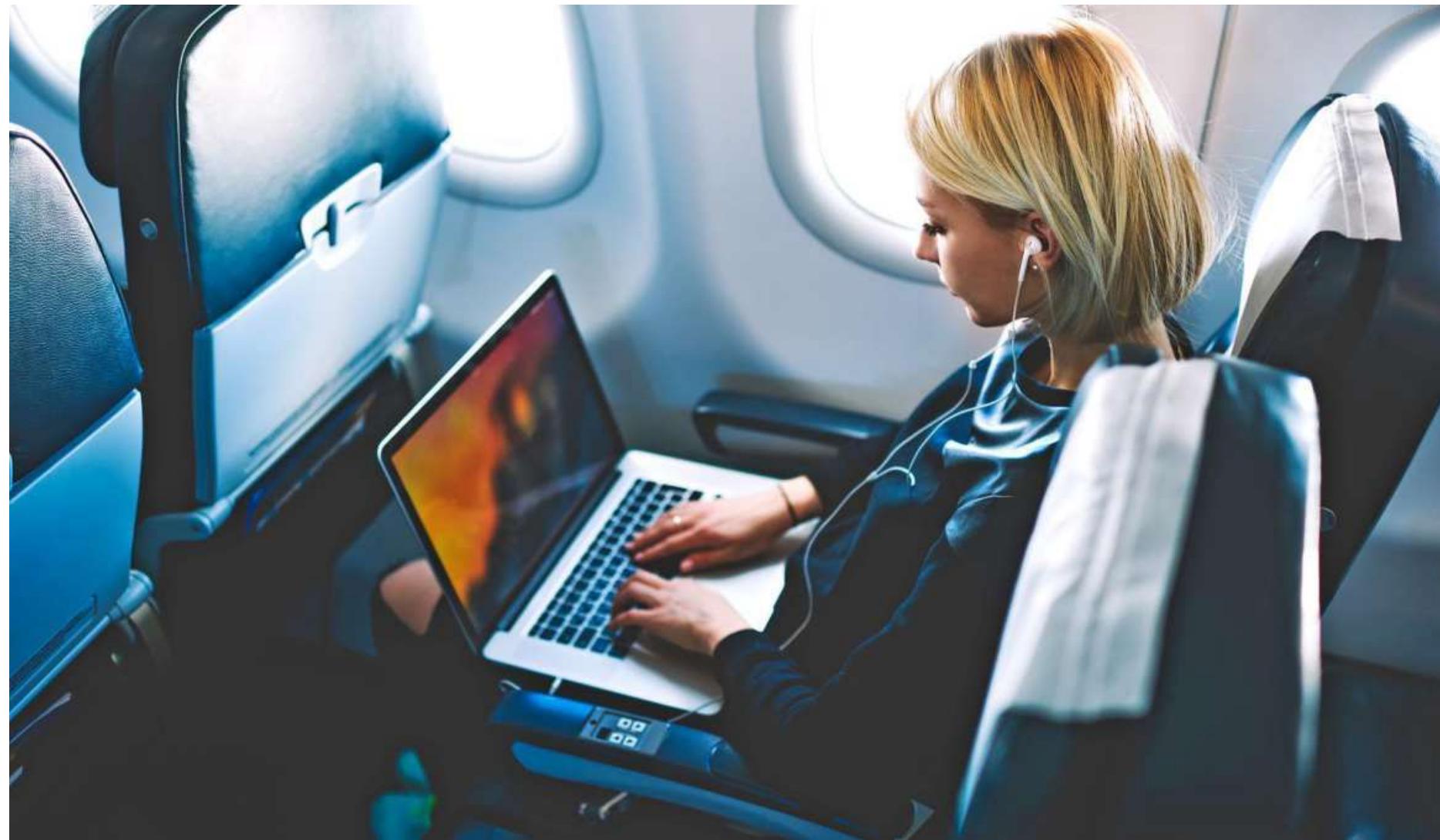
THE GIST

The issue of infant and maternal deaths due to malnutrition and lack of maternal healthcare has always persisted in Melghat, home to Korku tribal communities, despite three decades of government interventions.

Peripheral issues that the State government point to include lack of proper roads to reach a hospital in time, inadequate electricity supply to homes, lack of primary healthcare centres, the prevalence of substance abuse and more.

The eradication of malnutrition is not limited to providing mid-day meals or food supplies say officials.

BUILDING BLOCKS



GETTY IMAGES

How are passengers able to access the Internet on aeroplanes?

In-flight Internet has become a standard service on commercial flights, utilising air-to-ground and satellite systems to meet growing passenger demand for connectivity while navigating technical and regulatory challenges

Vasudevan Mukunth

Passenger Internet on aeroplanes used to be rare in the 2010s but has become almost commonplace today. On most flights, the basic idea is that the whole aeroplane is treated like a flying Wi-Fi router that connects to the rest of the Internet through a long backhaul link. This means your phone or laptop never talks directly to the ground. Instead it talks to a Wi-Fi access point inside the cabin, which then sends your data out of the aircraft via radio links.

How is the backhaul setup?

The backhaul link these days comes in two main forms: air-to-ground (ATG) and via satellite. In the ATG system, the aeroplane connects to special cellular-like towers on the ground. These towers have antennae pointing up at the sky. The plane's antennae – often mounted on the underside – maintains a radio link with whichever tower is currently in range ('radio link' just means they send and receive electromagnetic signals in the radio frequency range, 3-3,000,000,000 kHz). As the plane flies, the ATG system hands off the connection from one tower to the next, similar to how your phone switches between cell towers if you're on a call in a moving vehicle.

Obviously this arrangement works well over land, where there's a dense coverage of towers, but fails over oceans, deserts, and in polar areas – all places with fewer or no towers. This is where satellites help.

Satellite systems are more flexible because they don't care whether an

aeroplane is over land or water. In this system, the aeroplane uses a dish or phased-array antenna, usually inside a bespoke hump-shaped structure on top of the fuselage, that's pointed towards the sky. This antenna will transmit data to a satellite in orbit, which will relay the data to a ground station connected to the regular Internet.

Historically, these satellites have been in geostationary orbit, which is a circular orbit 35,786 km above sea level. This means, even at the speed of light, there's a noticeable data latency. A signal round-trip time of several hundred milliseconds is common. Newer systems use satellite constellations that are located in low-earth orbit, that is, 150-2,000 km above sea level. Since these satellites are much closer to ground stations, the latency is lower. Sometimes they also allow for higher bandwidth if the aeroplane's antennae can track fast-moving satellites and hand off between them.

How are connections provided to users?

Inside the aeroplane, the connectivity network resembles that in a small office. There's a central server or router, a satellite or ATG modem, and several Wi-Fi access points distributed throughout the cabin. When you connect, your device joins this local Wi-Fi network. A captive portal page appears in your browser where you either pay, log in with a frequent-flyer account or accept some terms of use. Once you're authenticated, the onboard network will start forwarding your traffic over the ATG or satellite link.

The airline or provider can shape or in many ways filter this traffic, and often does. For instance, providers may block high-bitrate video streaming or VoIP calls, force images to be compressed, and aggressively cache web pages to load faster over the constrained data link.

The in-flight bandwidth is almost always lower than home broadband connections and it's also shared among everyone on board. If a single satellite beam is serving multiple aircraft at once, they may all be competing for the same capacity. This is why performance varies so much between flights, routes, times of day, and providers. More sophisticated networks try to manage this challenge by dynamically allocating bandwidth and upgrading to higher-throughput satellites or satellite constellations. Even then the basic constraints of limited spectrum, distance, and shared use remain.

Don't signals interfere with operations?

When cabin crew ask you to switch your phone off for take-off and landing and to use 'airplane mode' the rest of the time, they're mainly trying to eliminate lots of uncontrolled radio transmitters inside the cabin. A phone whose mobile (that is, cellular) radio is on does several things that are awkward for both aviation and telecom regulators. It periodically 'shouts' loudly in radio terms, scans across multiple bands to find towers, and maintains a connection. In a cabin with a couple hundred phones, that creates a messy blast of radio noise at unpredictable times and frequencies – much like a noisy playground. In the

worst-case scenario, some of that energy could be very close to the frequencies aeroplane radios, sensors and navigation beacons use.

While contemporary aeroplanes are well-shielded and the actual risk is very low, regulators prefer a conservative approach that minimises known unknowns.

Further, a plane full of phones talking directly to towers on the ground still moves quickly and is visible to many towers at once. These quirks can confuse handover algorithms and overuse capacity in the cellular network. This is why telecommunications rules in many places explicitly forbid phones from connecting to terrestrial mobile networks at cruising altitude, and 'airplane mode' is a simple way to comply.

To its advantage, passenger Internet uses equipment that's part of the aircraft's certified systems. The Wi-Fi access points inside the cabin and the satellite or ATG radios that link the aeroplane to the outside world are all installed and tested together with the avionics. The engineers who design them also pick frequencies that are well separated from the bands that critical onboard systems use and design the antennae and cabling to minimise signal 'leaks'. They're also expected to prove (through testing) that none of these systems can fail in a way that also destabilises the aeroplane.

Taken together the in-flight Internet apparatus addresses the radio interference risks differently from how individual cellphones do, quelling regulators' anxieties while allowing you to stay online.

THE DAILY QUIZ

Bollywood actor Dharmendra passed away on Monday. Here is a quiz on one of the most well-known, successful actors in Hindi cinema

Sindhu Nagaraj

QUESTION 1

For several of his on-screen roles in Hindi films, what was Dharmendra fondly called?

QUESTION 2

This 1962 Hindi war-drama film proved to be a major critical and commercial success for Dharmendra. The film had a superhero song, sung by Mohammed Rafi, 'Kar Chale Ham Fida'. Name the film.

QUESTION 3

In which film in 1971 (considered as Raj Kapoor's magnum opus) did Dharmendra play a supporting role? This film attained a cult status in the

following years.

QUESTION 4

Vijay Anand's romantic thriller *Blackmail* was an unsuccessful venture, critically and commercially, but reception later improved, with many calling it one of Anand's most underrated works. Which song from the film featuring Dharmendra and Rakhee was a chartbuster and remains popular in modern culture?

QUESTION 5

When Dharmendra received the Filmfare Lifetime Achievement Award, which actor remarked, "Whenever I get to meet with God Almighty, I will set before him my only complaint—why did you not make me as handsome as Dharmendra"?



Visual question:
Identify this film from the image. Which is the song associated with the image?

Questions and Answers to the previous day's daily quiz: 1. Salilda went underground here after arrest warrants were issued for his support to the peasant movement. **Ans: Sunderban**

2. This composition was inspired by Mozart's 40th Symphony. **Ans: 'Itna Na Mujhse Tu Pyar Badha'** for the film *Chhaya*

3. Salida became a household name in Kerala for his superb work in this film. **Ans: Chemmeen**

4. In this song in *Half Ticket*, Kishore Kumar croons in both male and female voices. **Ans: 'Aake Seedhi Lagi Dil Pe'**

5. This popular filmmaker once remarked 'He can play almost any instrument he lays his hands on, from the tabla to the sarod, from the piano to the piccolo'. **Ans: Raj Kapoor**

Visual: Name this Bimal Roy classic. **Ans: Do Bigha Zameen**

Early Birds: Siddhartha Viswanathan| Sunil Madhavan| Sudhir Thapa| Soumendra Banerjee| Balakrishnan Narayan



FROM THE ARCHIVES

Know your English

S. Upendran

What does 'to have egg on one's face mean'? (N. C. Veerachari, Hyderabad)

This is an informal expression mainly used in British English. When you have egg on your face, you are made to look foolish or feel embarrassed because of something that you have done. For example, the latest scandal has left the President with egg on his face. Rahul went around telling everyone that he would win the tournament. He lost in the first round. Now he has egg on his face. Gopa went around telling everyone that Sunita would definitely marry him. A week ago, she ran away with another man. Poor Gopa has egg on his face.

What is the meaning of 'do not look a gift horse in the mouth'? (M. Ratnaji Rao, Vishakapatnam)

This idiomatic expression means do not try to find fault with something that has been given to you as a gift. In other words, don't complain about a gift that you have received. Here are a few examples. My friend Mohan complained about the second-hand cycle that his aunt had bought him. I told him not to look a gift horse in the mouth. Don't complain about the house that your father-in-law has bought for your wife. You shouldn't look a gift horse in the mouth. Bala always complains about the gifts I give him. He shouldn't look a gift horse in the mouth.

What is the difference between 'breakfast' and 'tiffin'? (Somasundara, Vijayanagar, Mysore)

'Tiffin' is a word that is seldom used by native speakers of English. In fact, some dictionaries do not even include this word. Even within India, this word seems to be more popular in the South than in the North. Dictionaries define 'tiffin' as 'a light meal – lunch'. In India however, a tiffin refers to a light meal which can be eaten at any time of the day. For example, we have hotels serving tiffin early in the morning. One often hears a person saying that he had a 'light tiffin' early in the evening. 'Breakfast', on the other hand, is the first meal of the day and it is always eaten in the morning.

Is it correct to say 'Even in the twilight years of his life, he worked like a Trojan horse'? (Thomas Eapen, Red Hills, Hyderabad)

What the writer probably meant to say was '...he worked like a Trojan' and not a 'Trojan horse'. There is a big difference in meaning between the two words. When you say that someone works like a Trojan it means he works really hard. For example, our new Chairman works like a Trojan. Unlike the word Trojan, the word 'Trojan horse' has a very negative meaning. A 'Trojan horse' is a person or a thing that enters something secretly in order to attack it. The union members suspect the Management of using Rahul as a Trojan horse to break the strike.

During the war with Troy, the Greeks built a gigantic wooden horse and hid some soldiers inside it. The unsuspecting Trojans dragged the horse into the city of Troy. At night, the Greek soldiers who were hiding inside the horse opened the gates to the city of Troy. The Greek army entered the city and burnt it.

Published in *The Hindu* on October 6, 1998.

Word of the day

Filibuster:

a legislator who gives long speeches in an effort to delay or obstruct legislation that they oppose; a tactic for delaying or obstructing legislation by making long speeches; obstruct deliberately by delaying

Usage: They engaged in a filibuster that lasted for over a month.

Pronunciation: newsth.live/filibusterpro

International Phonetic Alphabet: /fɪlɪbʊstə(r)/

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

From Page One**Goa tops in digitisation of SIR forms, Kerala lags**

In Kerala, a BLO, who complained of stress, was offered to quit SIR duties. However, he has expressed willingness to continue.

A correspondent from *The Hindu* visited a tehsil office in Bulandshahr district of Uttar Pradesh and saw BLOs swarm a camp being run by district authorities to monitor the implementation of the SIR. Most were seeking clarifications from senior officials on uploading of documents.

"How are we supposed to fill so many forms in such a short span of time. I am a teacher. Do I complete the syllabus or fill these forms? I am 55-years-old and do not have the technological wherewithal to understand all this," an anguished Manju Devi told *The Hindu*.

She said she was confused with the process as forms were being distributed only to those who had voted in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections. "What is the point of conducting the exercise then? When we upload the data, sometimes it throws up similar names," she said.

Bollywood icon Dharmendra no more

Prime Minister Narendra Modi wrote on X that Dharmendra's demise "marks the end of an era in Indian cinema", calling him an iconic actor admired for his versatility, simplicity, and warmth.

He offered condolences to the actor's family, friends, and fans, concluding with 'Om Shanti'.

In her condolence message, President Droupadi Murmu said Dharmendra's demise is "a great loss to Indian cinema", remembering him as one of the most popular actors whose legacy will inspire generations.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah called Dharmendra's passing "an irreparable loss to Indian cinema", praising his six-decade-long career and the ability to bring every character to life. He remembered Dharmendra's humble beginnings and said his art will keep him alive in the hearts of millions.

Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis said he was "shocked" by Dharmendra's passing, calling him the 'He-Man of Bollywood' who ruled hearts with hits such as *Sholay*, *Dharam Veer*, *Chupke Chupke*, and more.

He noted Dharmendra's record of nine hits in a single year and said his dialogues remain unforgettable. Mr. Fadnavis termed the loss "irreparable" and prayed for strength for the actor's family and fans. Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta said Indian cinema has "lost an immortal icon."

Goa does a U-turn on tiger presence in State

"The protected area is only a corridor whereby the tigers transit from Maharashtra to Karnataka or vice versa and the area of Mhadei is only a route, which is used by tigers to transit," the State argued in its petition. "Such 'transitory presence' of tigers in Mhadei was due to very few deer (as prey), and thus, declaring Mhadei sanctuary as a reserve.. would not serve any significant purpose," it said.

The Supreme Court, this September, directed a Central Empowered Committee of the Union Environment Ministry to hear all the "stakeholders" in the matter and submit a report in "six weeks". The Committee has reportedly sought an extension to file this.

The case traces back to 2011, when the Centre and the NTCA made multiple requests to the State of Goa to notify Mhadei Wildlife Sanctuary (WLS) and certain other adjacent areas as a tiger reserve, but this did not happen. In January 2021, four tigers were found poisoned following which the Goa Foundation, a non-profit, filed a petition for the region to be declared a tiger reserve. Doing so puts the onus on the State to improve protection measures for conservation of animals.

SC to hear plea against cash donations to parties

"But no amount should be received in cash to maintain transparency in political funding," the petition said.

The petitioner argued Section 13A(d) provided a loophole – a well-endowed anonymous contributor could divide a bulk donation to cash amounts up to ₹2,000 each and use multiple fronts to pay a party, especially with digital payments in vogue.

"Section 13A(d) of the Income Tax Act is violative of Article 19(1)(a) of the Constitution in as much as receipt of a huge amount of money in cash purportedly below ₹2,000 violates the right to information of the voters about the source of funds of the political parties. The voters have the right to information of all the amounts received by the political parties to enable them to cast their votes with full knowledge of the donors and their antecedents," it contended.

The Bench agreed to list the case after two or three weeks.

The petitioner also sought a mandamus to the EC to scrutinise Form 24A contribution reports of recognised national and regional political parties, and require them to deposit the amount received by way of contributions for which the address and/or PAN number were not furnished.

Wangchuk can join plea against NSA detention: SC

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday allowed climate activist Sonam Wangchuk to join his wife, Gitanjali J. Angmo, in challenging his detention under the National Security Act (NSA) following violent protests on September 24 in Leh.

Appearing before a Bench headed by Justice Aravind Kumar, Solicitor-General Tushar Mehta, for the government, sought time to respond to a rejoinder filed by Ms. Angmo, represented by advocate Sarvam Ritam Khare.

Mr. Khare said that since Mr. Wangchuk was himself the detainee, he should have a chance in court. The Bench agreed and adjourned the case to December 8.

The court was earlier scheduled to hear a separate application filed by Ms. Angmo alleging that the Home Ministry was unhappy with Mr. Wangchuk's participation in efforts to address the government on issues of Statehood and Sixth Schedule safeguards for Ladakh. She had argued that the detention of her husband was motivated by "malicious intent".

Justice Surya Kant takes oath as 53rd Chief Justice

All eyes on the SIR case and pendency; he is seen as a judge who leans more towards gently nudging disputes to a resolution over time rather than taking a confrontational approach

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

Justice Surya Kant took oath as the 53rd Chief Justice of India at the Rashtrapati Bhawan on Monday.

President Droupadi Murmu swore in Justice Kant merely days after Justice Kant, as a member of the 16th Presidential Reference Bench, advised her that neither she nor the State Governors, while dealing with State Bills, are bound by timelines "imposed" by the Supreme Court as in the April 8 judgment in the Tamil Nadu Governor case.

Justice Kant took the oath of office in Hindi.

Both Chief Justice Kant and his immediate predecessor, Justice B.R. Gavai, was recently lauded by Solicitor General Tushar Mehta for bringing "Indianness" in the courts. Mr. Mehta, in his address, highlighted that their judgment did not refer to foreign precedents of law and drew their reasonings from Indian case laws and legal principles in their verdicts.



President Droupadi Murmu administers the oath of office to Justice Surya Kant as the 53rd Chief Justice of India at Rashtrapati Bhawan.

Chief Justice Kant was appointed to the Supreme Court on the same day as Justice Gavai, on May 24, 2019.

After the oath ceremony, in an act of camaraderie and respect for the office, Justice Gavai served the official vehicle designated for the Chief Justice of India for Chief Justice Kant, ensuring that his successor's maiden journey to the Supreme Court as CJI was in the official car itself.

The Chief Justice is seen as a judge who leans more towards gently nudging disputes to a resolution over time rather than taking a confrontational approach.

Justice (as he was then) Kant had resolved the farmers' agitation from the Bench by prodding both sides – the protesting farmers and the Union government – to the negotiating table at a critical point when matters were spiralling with farmers' leaders on an indefinite strike on the borders of Delhi.

Close watch on SIR
Chief Justice Kant's tenure would be closely watched for his handling of the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) case. So far, the judi-

cial interventions of his Bench have made the SIR procedure accessible to citizens. But it is yet to take up the basic issue of whether the exercise itself is constitutional or not. Meanwhile, the SIR has expanded from Bihar to its second phase to 12 States and Union Territories and covering 51 crore people.

On Friday, the rupee plunged 98 paise to close at its lifetime low of 89.66 against the U.S. dollar due to a huge demand for the U.S. currency in the domestic foreign exchange market amid widespread selling pressure in local and global equities and trade-related uncertainties. However, the rupee opened at 89.46 against the dollar before rising to 89.17, up 49 paise from its previous close.

"The rupee continues its free fall in relation to the dollar. It is now about to breach the 90 rupees to the USD low. Does the PM recall what he himself had said in July 2013," Congress communication chief Jairam Ramesh said in a post on X. He also shared the 2013 video in which Mr. Modi had mocked the UPA government over falling value of the rupee.

In letter to Chief Ministers of three States, Maoists offer to surrender by February 15

Shubhomoy Sikdar
RAIPUR

The Maharashtra-Madhya Pradesh-Chhattisgarh (MMC) special zonal committee of the banned Communist Party of India (Maoist) has purportedly written a letter to the Chief Ministers of three States offering to renounce weapons and accept the government's rehabilitation programme by February 15, 2026. They have, however, urged the State governments to halt the security forces' anti-Naxal operations till the date set by them.

"We, the MMC Special Zonal Committee, also wish to renounce the weapon and accept the government's rehabilitation and Poomaramgam scheme. However, we request the governments of all three States to give us time. Since

Chhattisgarh Deputy CM Vijay Sharma says the request will be considered if the group gives a concrete proposal

our party adheres to the principles of democratic centralism, it will take some time for us to collectively reach this decision," says the letter addressed to Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis, Chhattisgarh CM Vishnu Deo Sai, Chhattisgarh Home Minister and Deputy CM Vijay Sharma, and Madhya Pradesh CM Mohan Yadav.

Pause activities
In the letter issued in the name of MMC zone spokesperson Anant and dated November 22, the Maoists have offered to pause their activities as well.

The MMC has purportedly requested the government to play its contents on the radio for the next few days so that this message can reach their colleagues as soon as possible.

Reacting to the letter, Chhattisgarh Deputy Chief Minister Vijay Sharma said that the Maoists need to make a concrete offer and also questioned the deadline mentioned in the letter.

"I have seen the letter and also listened to the audio [that has purportedly surfaced alongside the letter]. It does not take this long, and nobody has so much time. They should submit a concrete proposal," he said.

He added that the government was willing to co-operate if a concrete proposal is received within a timeline of 10 to 15 days.

Bengal CM writes to CEC on poll body's initiatives

The Hindu Bureau
KOLKATA

Raising questions on certain initiatives issued by the Election Commission (EC), West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Monday wrote another letter to Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Gyanesh Kumar and asked whether such measures were undertaken at "the behest of a political party to serve vested interests".

Ms. Banerjee's letter raised objections on two crucial points – Request for Proposal raised by the Chief Electoral Officer's office for hiring data entry operators and software developers for a period of one year, and the proposal to set up polling stations inside private housing complexes. In an earlier letter dated November 20, Ms. Banerjee had urged Mr. Kumar to halt the SIR.

IN BRIEF**Delhi HC seeks Centre's reply on Christian Michel's plea**

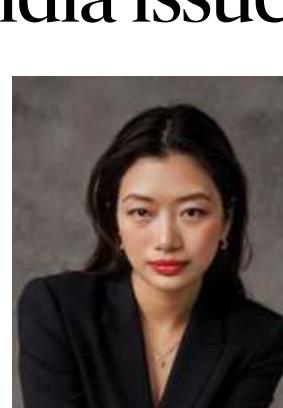
The Delhi High Court on Monday sought responses from the Union government on a plea by Christian Michel James, an alleged middleman in ₹3,600-crore AgustaWestland VVIP chopper scam case, challenging a provision of the India-UAE extradition treaty. A Bench of Justices Vivek Chaudhary and Manoj Jain sought response from the Centre to file their objections regarding maintainability of Mr. Michel's petition. Mr. Michel has contested Article 17, which allows India to prosecute an extradited person not only for the offence for which extradition was granted but also for related offences.

Rabri moves Delhi court seeking transfer of case

Former Bihar Chief Minister Rabri Devi on Monday moved to a Delhi court to seek transfer of multiple cases filed against her and her family from the judge who had framed charges against them in the alleged IRCTC scam case. In her application submitted in the court of Principal District and Sessions Judge of the Rouse Avenue Courts, Ms. Devi sought transfer of four cases pending before special Judge Vishal Gogoi. The former Chief Minister has accused him of being biased and conducting the trials against her and her family with a premeditated mind. Judge Gogoi is now dealing with the alleged scam, cash-for-jobs case and the money laundering proceedings associated with the Yadav family.

RJD issues notices to Bhojpuri singers for 'offensive' songs

The Rashtriya Janata Dal has issued notices to as many as 32 Bhojpuri singers asking them why legal action should not be taken against them for their offensive songs released during the election period. Prime Minister Narendra Modi and NDA leaders too had taken a jibe over these songs played during poll meetings in Bihar warning people of "return of jungle raj". "The RJD has issued notices to as many as 32 Bhojpuri and other dialect singers for songs taking the names of the party and its leaders, including Tejaswi Yadav, without permission to defame the party and its leaders during the election. If a fair response is not given, the party will take legal actions against them," said an RJD leader and spokesperson requesting anonymity.



migration and airlines staff were "unprofessional and rude", they laughed and mocked calling Arunachal Pradesh a Chinese territory.

Sources in the External Affairs Ministry said that at a time when both sides are working to improve ties, such actions by the Chinese side introduce unnecessary obstructions to the process.

Prema Thongdok, a principal regulatory consultant working in financial services in London, told *The Hindu* that she was detained at the Shanghai airport for 18 hours, and im-

Passenger's ordeal
Ms. Thongdok was flying from London to Japan, transiting via Shanghai and was booked on a China Eastern Airlines flight. She has been residing and working in the United Kingdom for the past 14 years.

"I was travelling from London (Gatwick), United Kingdom to Japan, with a scheduled three-hour transit in Shanghai. Prior to my journey, I had verified with the Chinese Embassy that a transit of less than 24 hours does not require any transit visa... However, upon arrival in Shanghai around 6 a.m. on November 21, immigration officers refused to allow my transit and declared my Indian passport invalid solely because my place of birth is Arunachal Pradesh. They repeatedly insisted that Arunachal Pradesh is part of China," Ms. Thongdok said, adding that she was subjected to harassment, verbal intimidation, and degrading comments.

Ms. Thongdok was ultimately escorted by Indian officials to a flight late in the evening at 10.20 p.m.

Congress hits out at Modi over 'free fall' of rupee

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Congress on Monday targeted Prime Minister Narendra Modi over the rupee's downward slide compared with the U.S. dollar and recalled Mr. Modi's 2013 remarks on the issue when the Congress-led United Progressive Alliance (UPA) was in power.

On Friday, the rupee plunged 98 paise to close at its lifetime low of 89.66 against the U.S. dollar due to a huge demand for the U.S. currency in the domestic foreign exchange market amid widespread selling pressure in local and global equities and trade-related uncertainties. However, the rupee opened at 89.46 against the dollar before rising to 89.17, up 49 paise from its previous close.

"The rupee continues its free fall in relation to the dollar. It is now about to breach the 90 rupees to the USD low. Does the PM recall what he himself had said in July 2013," Congress communication chief Jairam Ramesh said in a post on X. He also shared the 2013 video in which Mr. Modi had mocked the UPA government over falling value of the rupee.



Last respects: Hema Malini and daughter Esha Deol leave the crematorium after the funeral on Monday. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT



Act of love: A fan mourns outside the Shree Vile Parle Seva Samaj crematorium in Mumbai. AP



Star veterans: Amitabh Bachchan and Dharmendra on the sets of a television reality show in Mumbai in 2015. PTI



Special recognition: The then President Pratibha Patil presenting the Padma Bhushan to the actor in 2012. PTI

Dashing everyman with the heart of a poet

Dharmendra's rugged charm stood out from the tragic-romantic heroes of earlier decades and the brooding, angry young men who came after him; he believed that truth did not need a technique to convey itself, inspiring a generation of mass entertainers in Hindi and South Indian cinema; despite being repeatedly overlooked by popular film awards, he was later honoured with Padma Bhushan

OBITUARY

Anuj Kumar

The heartbeat of Hindi cinema's golden era, who turned raw instinct into cinematic immortality, Dharmendra passed away in Mumbai on Monday due to age-related ailments at 89.

Tempering fire with vulnerability, Dharmendra embodied a paradoxical masculinity being the He-Man who could shed a tear and the village avenger who recited poetry, thereby humanising the archetype of the Hindi film hero. Dharmendra's swagger, his appeal, wasn't manufactured – it was organic, unbreakable, and enduring.

His rugged charm and effortless masculinity stood out from the tragic-romantic heroes of earlier decades and the brooding, angry young men who emerged after him. Yet, his physical strength was always balanced by a deep emotional sincerity that shone through his expressive eyes.

Dharmendra played some of the most loved characters in Hindi cinema. The unflinching idealist engineer in *Satyakam*, the sensitive poet in *Anupama*, the wronged truck driver in *Pratigya* seeking justice for his sister, the romantic protector in *Jugnu*, the reluctant saviour in *Mera Gaon Mera Desh*, the loyal friend in *Sholay*, and the prankster professor in *Chupke Chupke*, Dharmendra was perhaps the most adaptable icon of popular Hindi cinema.

Over six decades and 300 films, his ability to deliver one clean hit per decade underscores his longevity. Between 1966 and 1975, he delivered a dozen consecutive hits. Despite the high flop count in the third half of his career, Dharmendra's pull powered many average films to profitability, especially in rural markets, making him Bollywood's most commercially resilient star.

Dharmendra's stardom was built and sustained in the heartland, where his films ran for silver jubilees in single-screen theatres long after they faded from Metros.

Born Dharam Singh Deol on December 8, 1935, in



ILLUSTRATION: SAAI

QQ Indian cinema will never be the same, but it will stay strong as if to pay tribute to his life and journey... Here's to you Dharamji. You were, and always will be, a class act

ANIL KAPOOR

QQ He is and will always be a bona fide Legend of Indian Cinema... defining and richly present in the pages of cinema history... but mostly he was the best human being... he was so loved by everyone in our industry

KARAN JOHAR

QQ Farewell, my friend. I will always remember your golden heart and the moments we shared. Rest in peace, Dharamji. My deepest condolences to his family

RAJINIKANTH

QQ The passing of Dharmendra marks the end of a cinematic era. A legend whose warmth and artistry will live on forever. My deepest condolences to his family and loved ones

MOHANLAL

his maternal village Nasrali in Ludhiana district to a Punjabi Jat family, Dharmendra grew up in the nearby town of Sahnewal, where his father, Kewal Kishan Singh Deol, was a school headmaster, and Dangon, his ancestral village in Ludhiana. Dharmendra always celebrated his roots. He would talk about the days when he worked as a tube well operator and tilled the fields.

That's why his unpolished Punjabi-inflected Hindi felt like a neighbour crooning *Main Jat Yamla Pagla Deewana* (*Pratigya*), not a star performing. Still, in another universe, he could be a refined gentleman pouring his heart on paper with *Pal Pal Dil Ke Paas Tum Rehti Ho* (*Blackmail*).

Sheer passion

Discovered through an acting contest run by the *Filmfare* magazine, Dharmendra willed his way into films through sheer passion and perseverance. His story symbolised hope for countless dreamers who

longed to make it big in Bollywood.

Though he was a life-long devotee of Dilip Kumar and saw him as a guiding light, there was no method to Dharmendra's acting.

Instinctive and unstudied, he believed that truth didn't need a technique to convey itself, inspiring a generation of mass entertainers in Hindi and South Indian cinema.

When he stood against the corrupt and spoke out against injustice, the public knew Dharmendra would go the whole hog. When he asks Basanti not to dance in front of the dogs, he means it. When he decides to jump off the water tank, the audience knows this guy can very well do it. With Dharmendra, there were no half measures; he would not hold back his punches.

After a sedate start with Arjun Hangorani's *Dil Bhi Tera Hum Bhi Tere* (1960), he was noticed in Bimal Roy's *Bandini* (1963) in a small but crucial

role. However, it was when he blended action with romance in O.P. Ray's *Phool Aur Pathar* (1966) that Dharmendra made heads turn and hearts skip a beat. His shirtless presence and electric chemistry with Meena Kumari reversed the idea of male gaze as women sighed and men aspired to be like him.

He emerged as a village stud who could be a soulmate, an unpolished gem who won't flirt but declare his love. Later, his boisterous real-life romance with Hema Malini, amplified his irresistible appeal. Over the years, their defiant

love story became a symbol of the bond between the north and the south, with Hema Malini winning consecutive elections from Mathura.

Despite the strong image of "Garam Dharm", his comic flair remained unmatched. Even in his testosterone-fuelled films, his comic timing stands out for the way he employs his machismo to subvert expectations, creating humour through contrast, understatement, and impeccable rhythm.

While his image is synonymous with mainstream extravaganzas like Nasir

Hussain's *Yaadon Ki Baaraat* (1973), Ramesh Sippy's *Sholay* (1975), Manmohan Desai's *Dharam Veer* (1977), and Anil Sharma's *Hukumat* (1987), his early and mid-career trajectory was profoundly shaped by collaborations with Bengali masters who made Bollywood their home.

Impressed by the honesty that his eyes exuded, Bimal Roy wanted to cast him in *Parakh* (1960) but by then, Dharmendra had returned to his village. When the opportunity for the role of a compassionate prison doctor, who falls in love with the inmate, in *Bandini* (1963) arose, the legendary filmmaker remembered the boy from Punjab. A message was sent, and Dharmendra's life changed. The actor never forgot Roy's contribution to his career. When he bought his first car, he wanted to take Roy for a spin. Somehow it

didn't work out, and in the meantime, Roy passed away. Dharmendra would relate this lost opportunity to make his mentor proud with great pain.

A bankable hero'
Besides Roy, directors with their roots in intellectual and literary traditions including, Hrishikesh Mukherjee, Dular Guha, Asit Sen, and Pramod Chakravarty, played a pivotal role in transforming Dharmendra into a versatile performer. Their influence helped him navigate the competitive 1970s landscape, where stars like Rajesh Khanna and Amitabh Bachchan threatened to eclipse him. It cemented his status as a bankable hero across genres and streams.

Though he informally invested in some of his films in the 1970s, in the 1980s, he launched a production house named after his daughter, Vijeta, to launch the careers of his sons, Sunny and Bobby Deol.

He was repeatedly sub-

jected to moral scrutiny for reportedly converting to Islam for a brief period to marry Hema Malini without divorcing his first wife. His struggle with liquor and descent to B-grade cinema with a series of duds took away some of the sheen from a sterling career. There was a time in the 1990s when he prioritised quantity over quality and was reduced to a one-note, ageing action sensation, hammering up bombastic dialogues.

Political stint
There was a time when his residence in Mumbai was seen as their own by the farmers of North India. However, his stint in politics, when he was elected as a BJP MP from Bikaner, was short-lived and left him and the electorate disappointed. In recent years, he had become a subject for memes and crass mimicry, but his star power remained undiminished.

Repeatedly ignored at popular film awards, the Padma Bhushan would say in jest that someone who was never considered for the best actor award was deemed suitable for lifetime achievement awards.

In 2001, when he developed a back problem and had to spend a lot of time in the hospital's loneliness, Dharmendra turned to poetry. In later years, he would often come up with impromptu verses to reflect on the deeper meanings of human existence.

Never keen on self-promotion, he consistently radiated warmth and humility, reminding people of his pedigree as a performer, with notable performances alongside a new generation of filmmakers. Sriram Raghavan rekindled his action-romance days with *Johnny Gaddar* (2007), and Anurag Basu touched his emotional core in *Life in... Metro* (2007). Karan Johar's *Rocky Aur Rani Kii Prem Kahani* (2023), where he channelled his impish charm, was his last hurrah, and in Sriram's upcoming *Ikkis*, Dharmendra still has one more ace up his sleeve.

The emotional outpouring that we have seen in the past fortnight proves what he would say about himself. "Dharmendra wasn't the best actor, nor was he the biggest star, but he was the most loved."

Iconic films

SATYAKAM (1969): Dharmendra plays an incorrigible idealist in Gandhian mould in what is considered one of his finest roles in Indian cinema. It won the National Film Award for Best Feature Film in Hindi that year.



Dharmendra plays the role of Raka, who is Seeta's love interest. This film solidified the couple as a favourite pair with fans. Both Dharmendra and Hema Malini starred in more than two dozen movies, including *Seeta Aur Geeta*.

MERA GAON MERA DESH (1971): A film about a reformed petty criminal, Ajit (Dharmendra), who falls in love with a girl, Anju (Asha Parekh), and must protect the village from the ruthless dacoit Jabbar Singh (Vinod Khanna).

SEETA AUR GEETA (1972): This comedy drama is about two separated identical twins Seeta and Geeta (Hema Malini) who meet years later and swap places.

SHOLAY (1975): In this classic, Dharmendra's playful, emotional and heartfelt on his sleeves Veeru was the perfect foil to Amitabh Bachchan's Jai, who would lower his guards only around his friend. Veeru was the fighter and Jai his perfect wingman.



CHUPKE CHUPKE (1975): Dharmendra plays botany professor Parimal Tripathi, who falls in love with Sharmila Tagore's Sulekha. It is one of Dharmendra's most endearing performances. Bachchan teamed up with Dharmendra again in the film that also featured Om Prakash and Jaya Bhaduri.

POPULAR SONGS

Aaj Mausam Bada Beimaan Hai: Dharmendra romances Mumtaz in this 1973 romantic number sung by Mohammed Rafi, who gave voice to some of the best songs in the actor's career. As a hat tip to Dharmendra's youth, a version of this song also featured in Karan Johar's 2023 film *Rocky Aur Rani Kii Prem Kahani*, where Dharmendra romances Shabana Azmi.

Main Jat Yamla Pagla: From the 1975 film *Pratigya*, which stars Dharmendra, Hema Malini, Ajit, Jagdeep, and Mukri in lead roles. The song is sung by Rafi and music is given by Laxmikant-Pyarelal.

Pal Pal Dil Ke Paas: Sung by Kishore Kumar, this beautiful number from the 1973 film *Blackmail* features Rakhee's character reading the letter of her lover, played by Dharmendra.

Hum Bewafa Hargiz Na: They: Kishore Kumar crooned this melancholic number for Dharmendra and Zeenat Aman's 1978 bilingual Indo-American film *Shalimar*.



CM YK

M ND-NDE

IN BRIEF



Zubeen death: date extended for submitting probe report

The one-man commission probing the death of singer Zubeen Garg has extended the date for recording statements and submission of evidence till December 12, officials said on Monday. The commission, headed by Justice Soumitra Saikia, had begun recording statements and receiving evidence in connection with the incident from November 3. The earlier deadline was November 21, but it has now been extended, the commission's member-secretary Aroop Pathak said. In a notice issued on Friday, Mr. Pathak stated that all having knowledge of the facts and circumstances relating to the above incident can submit their statements by way of a duly notarised affidavit till December 12 from 10.30 a.m. to 4 p.m. on all days except Sundays.

Probe ordered after Afghan plane lands on wrong runway

A safety breach occurred at the Indira Gandhi International Airport on Sunday when a flight from Kabul landed on the wrong runway, just after another aircraft had taken off. Officials said the aircraft of the Ariana Afghan Airlines was cleared to land on runway 29L, which is reserved for arrivals. However, it mistakenly touched down on the adjacent runway 29R, designated only for departures. Air India flight AI-2243 to Riyadh had taken off from the same strip moments earlier, sources said. The Directorate General of Civil Aviation has opened an inquiry to determine whether the lapse was caused by equipment malfunction, pilot error, or miscommunication with the control tower.

Editors Guild of India elects office-bearers for 2025-26

The Editors Guild of India (EGI) has announced its new office-bearers for the 2025-26 term, with *Hardnews* Editor Sanjay Kapoor elected as its president, *The Hindu businessline*'s former Editor Raghavan Srinivasan as general secretary, and *Thumbprint NE* Editor-in-Chief Teresa Rehman as treasurer. The announcement was made by the EGI election committee with Rajdeep Sardesai, Consulting Editor with *India Today*, as its convenor, and Vijay Naik, Consulting Editor of Sakal Media Group, as the member.

SC to examine plea on policy for wrongful imprisonment

The Supreme Court on Monday decided to examine a plea for the formulation of a uniform, national framework that recognises the right to compensation for unjust and arbitrary imprisonment, which culminated in discharge or acquittal. A Bench headed by Justice Vikram Nath issued notice to the Union government on the petition filed by Jawaharlal Sharma, represented by advocate Neha Rath, to recommend appropriate yardsticks for monetary relief, as well as counselling, livelihood assistance, and social reintegration. The petition sought a dedicated compensation fund to ensure timely and effective relief to such victims. "Arbitrary and prolonged imprisonment of citizens amounts to state-inflicted injustice...," the petition argued.

Navy gets 'silent hunter', 80% home-grown Mahe

Army chief General Upendra Dwivedi launches warship, says 'true strength' of the armed forces lies in 'synergy'; adds that Army, Navy and Air Force form 'the trinity of India's strategic strength'

The Hindu Bureau
MUMBAI

INS Mahe, India's first Mahe-class anti-submarine warfare shallow watercraft, was commissioned at the Naval Dockyard by General Upendra Dwivedi, Chief of the Army Staff, on Monday.

With over 80% indigenous components, the ship is another step in the Indian Navy's efforts towards achieving self-reliance, the Navy said. The induction was done after long, rigorous trials for over two years, officials said. Due to its stealth and unyielding readiness, INS Mahe's motto is 'Silent Hunters'.

This was the first time an Army chief presided over the commissioning of a naval warship. General Dwivedi said that the true strength of the Indian armed forces lay in synergy among the three services.

"In the age of multi-domain operations, the country's ability to act in concert from the depths of the ocean to the highest frontier will determine the security influence of the In-



INS Mahe, the Mahe-class anti-submarine warfare shallow watercraft at the Naval Dockyard in Mumbai. EMMANUEL YOGINI

dian Republic," he said, adding that Operation Sindoors showcased the seamless harmony between the services.

Major transformation
The Army chief noted that the force is undergoing a major transformation, with jointness and integration serving as key pillars.

"As said by Helen Keller, alone we can do so little. Together we can do so much. So, as a soldier, we are standing among seafarers... The sea, land, and the skies from a single continuum of national security influence of the In-

dia. And together, the Army, Navy and Air Force form the trinity of India's strategic strength," General Dwivedi said.

INS Mahe, the lead ship of eight vessels in its class, has been designed and built by Cochin Shipyard Limited.

It will form the first line of coastal defence, integrating seamlessly with larger surface combatants, submarines, and aviation assets to maintain constant vigilance over India's maritime areas of operation.

"Today's ceremony not only marks the induction

of a potent new platform to a maritime order of battle, but also reaffirms our nation's increasing capability to design, construct, and field complex combatants with indigenous technology.

This commissioning will significantly augment the Indian Navy's capability to ensure near-sea dominance, strengthen the coastal security grid and safeguard our maritime interests across the vast expanse of our littorals," General Dwivedi said.

Listing out the abilities of the warship, a government statement said, "The ship's combat suite blends multiple systems into a compact yet potent network. She is specially designed to undertake anti-submarine operations in coastal and shallow waters. Fitted with advanced weapons, sensors, and communication systems enabling it to detect, track, and neutralise sub-surface threats with precision, the ship can sustain prolonged operations in shallow waters and features technologically advanced machinery and control systems."



Gavi, UNICEF ink deal to provide easy access to malaria vaccine

Bindu Shajan Perappadan
NEW DELHI

Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance and United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) have announced a new agreement that it will make the R21/Matrix-M malaria vaccines significantly more accessible and affordable, paving the way for protecting more children.

The deal, executed by

UNICEF, is expected to generate up to \$90 million in savings for Gavi and countries, equivalent to more than 30 million additional doses – enabling full vaccination of nearly seven million more children against malaria over the next five years. It is financed by Gavi through an advance payment, enabled by the innovative International Finance Facility for Immunisation (IFFIm) mechanism.

The lower price of the vaccine – at \$2.99 per dose – is anticipated to take effect in approximately one year.

Gavi facilitates and finances the procurement, logistics, market shaping and integration of malaria vaccines into national immunisation programmes. To date, over 40 million doses of malaria vaccines

R21/Matrix-M was co-developed by the University of Oxford and Serum Institute of India. AP

have been delivered through the Gavi malaria vaccination programme and are now part of routine immunisation in 24 African countries that together represent more than 70% of the world's malaria burden.

UNICEF is the world's largest buyer of vaccines, delivering nearly three billion doses every year.

Prequalified vaccines

The WHO has prequalified two malaria vaccines to date: R21/Matrix-M (co-de

Assam govt. set to table report on 1983 poll violence

The Hindu Bureau
GUWAHATI

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said an unofficial judicial panel report on the election-related violence in 1983 would be tabled before the 126-member State Assembly.

The report of Justice (retired) T.U. Mehta, constituted by a civil society group, will be tabled along with the official Tribhuvan Prasad Tewary Commission on Monday when the House sits for a five-day session.

The Mehta Commission was set up by the Assam Rajiv Freedom Fighters Association to examine the Nellie massacre and other incidents of violence related to the election in 1983 during the anti-infiltration Assam Agitation (1979-1985), which culminated in the signing of the Assam Accord in 1985.

Press Club concerned over some clauses of Data Protection Act

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Press Club of India (PCI) said on Monday that the "ambiguity and open-ended scope" of certain clauses of the Digital Personal Data Protection (DPDP) Act, 2023, "escalates the potential for weaponisation of the law manifold".

Expressing "anguish" over the manner in which the DPDP Rules were notified recently, the PCI said it, along with 22 other press bodies, had submitted a Joint Memorandum in June 2025 to the Electronics and Information Technology Ministry in an attempt to engage with the Centre on the law.

The intention of submitting the Joint Memorandum was two-fold. The first was to engage with the government in the most constructive and democratic manner to help it

come out with a model code of implementation (Rules) that did not strangle the functioning of journalists and media organisations in the world's largest democracy," it said.

"The second was to demonstrate that some of the Sections of the DPDP Act, 2023, were riddled with serious ambiguities due to their sweeping definitions and scope. The loosely drafted sections open up numerous possibilities of weaponisation of the law with the purpose of curtailing press freedom," it said.

"We at no stage asked for repealing the law. We are quite aware of the necessity of a law for protecting personal data of citizens in the digital age," it said, adding that the press bodies had submitted a set of 35 questions in August for seeking clarification about the application of certain sections.

India braces for disruption of air travel after Ethiopia's Hayli Gubbi volcano erupts

Jagriti Chandra
NEW DELHI

India is bracing for potential disruption to air travel with volcanic ash from Sunday's eruption of Ethiopia's Hayli Gubbi volcano forecast to drift towards mainland India.

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has issued advisories urging airlines to strictly steer clear of affected altitudes and regions to ensure flight safety as volcanic ash can harm aircraft engines due to its abrasive, glass-like particles that melt at high temperatures. When ash is ingested, it can melt on hot engine components, harden into a glass-like substance, and stick to turbine blades. Airlines have also been advised to report any suspected impact of ash on engine performance or



Ash clouds from the Hayli Gubbi volcanic eruption (in photo) has entered the Indian subcontinent from western Rajasthan. AP

cabin smoke or odour.

Airports too have been told to inspect runways for contamination and suspend or restrict flight operations, if need be.

Large plumes of smoke were initially visible over Ethiopia though the volcanic eruption stopped. After travelling over Yemen and Oman, ash clouds entered the Indian subconti-

nent from western Rajasthan on Monday and were moving north-eastwards.

Over the course of the night, they are expected to sweep across central parts of the country and cross Delhi close to midnight, and travel over parts of Uttar Pradesh, parts of Bihar and in the North East over Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh.

FAITH

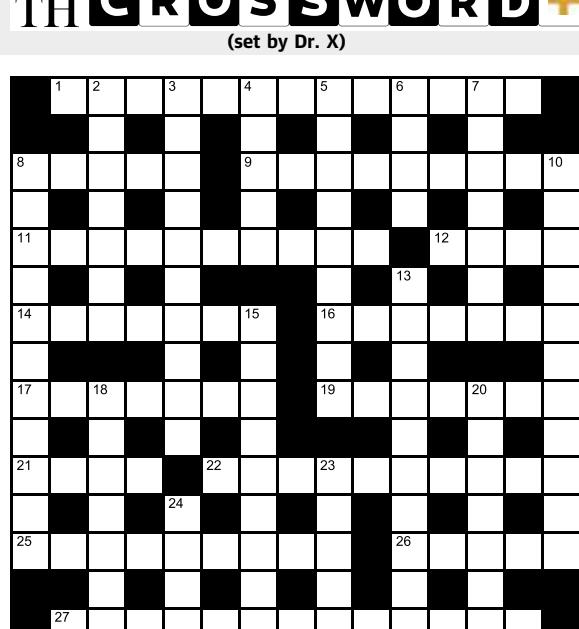
Krishna's affirmation

Krishna's promise in the Bhagavad Gita is a beautiful reminder of the Lord's care for His devotees, said Swami Mitrandaaji. The verse, 'Ananyash chintayanto mam ye janaḥ paryupasate tesham nityabhyuktanam yoga kṣhemam vahamyaham,' translates to, "The persons who worship Me, and ever devoted to Me – to them I carry what they lack and for them I preserve what they already have." Krishna highlights that those who are single-pointedly devoted to Him, putting consistent effort to reach Him, will have their needs taken care of. 'Yoga' and 'kṣhema' refer to acquiring and preserving, respectively. The Lord promises to provide what is needed and protect what is already acquired.

Reflecting on our lives, we see that anxiety and tension often revolve around acquiring what we lack and preserving what we have gained. This constant striving and grasping can distract us from focusing on the Lord. Krishna's message is clear: surrender these intense desires and He will take care of everything.

A beautiful example is Swami Tapovan Maharaj's experience in the Himalayas. Stranded in a dilapidated village, he was visited by three highwaymen. Finding only a copy of the Bhagavad Gita and very simple clothes, they looked around once again, let things be and then turned around and offered him some food that they had with them. Tapovan Maharaj realised that the Lord had come in the guise of the three men who made a living by thievery, merely to feed him. This is but one illustration of the promise by Lord Krishna to His devotees. No matter where they are, or what they are going through,

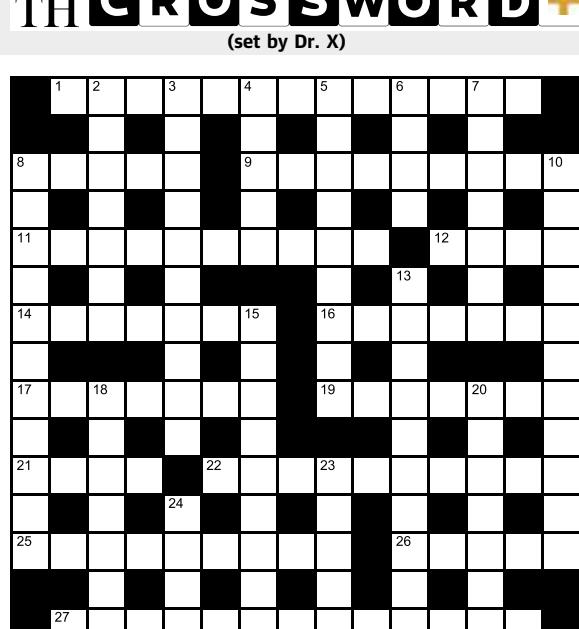
TH CROSSWORD + 14648



- Across
1 Rebellous men stabbed during poll - a shocking way to die? (13)
8 Water discharge from her gum wound, not good (5)
9 Cash, ring and gem at centre stolen by outlaws (9)
11 Dynamic English icon taking lecture relating to revival of traditional style (10)
12 Test about scientifically classified groups (4)

CM YK

Solve this puzzle online and access more puzzles at <https://crossword.thehindu.com>



- Across
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CM YK

SUDOKU



DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

Solution to previous puzzle

F	A	T	H	O	M	M	O	S	A	I	C
L	A	V	P	L	E	E	N	T	A	N	T
T	A	I	N	T	E	E	N	T	A	N	T
A	I	N	T	E	E	N	T	A	N	T	T
T	A	I	N	E	E	N	T	A	N	T	T
B	R	A	I	N	E	E	N	T	A	N	T
R	A	I	N	E	E	N	T	A	N	T	T
I	N	E	E	N	T	A	N	T	A	N	T
N	E	E	N	T	A	N	T	A	N	T	T
A	N	T	A	N	T	A	N	T	A	N	T
N	E	E	N	T	A	N	T	A	N	T	T
E	N	T	A	N	T	A	N	T	A	N	T

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

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

IN BRIEF

**Rupee gains 50 paise against U.S. Dollar as RBI steps in**

The rupee on Monday appreciated 50 paise to settle at 89.16 against the U.S. dollar as compared with its Friday's close of 89.66, its historic low. "The rupee gained the most among the Asian currencies on likely intervention from the central bank and MSCI index rebalancing related flows. However, the trend and bias remain weak amid foreign fund outflows, widening trade deficit and stronger dollar index against major currencies," said Dilip Parmar of HDFC Securities.

Singapore firm Sembcorp said to plan IPO of Indian unit

Singapore's Temasek-backed Sembcorp Industries has started talks over an initial public offering of its India unit in Mumbai and appointed three investment banks, including Citi and HSBC, three sources familiar with the matter said. Talks are at an early stage and no decision has been made on the size of the offering. The move marks Sembcorp's second attempt to list its India business after withdrawing a draft prospectus in 2019 to inject new equity. REUTERS

SBI Ventures plans ₹2,000 cr. climate-focussed fund

SBI Ventures, an alternative asset manager promoted by State Bank of India (SBI), intends to raise ₹2,000 crore for its third climate-focused fund to invest in start-ups. It will help unlock green growth, a new financial opportunity, SBI Ventures Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer Prem Prabhakar said at an event in New Delhi. Domestic and global investors will be roped in for the fund, and the roadshow will start early next year, he said. PTI

SC to quash Sandesaras' fraud cases on payment of ₹5,100 cr. by Dec. 17**Krishnadas Rajagopal**

NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court (SC) directed quashing all criminal proceedings against the fugitive Sandesara brothers in the Sterling Biotech bank fraud case, if they deposit ₹5,100 crore as a 'full and final payment' to lender banks.

"If the petitioners (Sandesara brothers) are ready to deposit the amount as settled in the one-time settlement (OTS), and public money comes back to lender banks, the continuation of the criminal proceedings would not serve any useful purpose," said a Bench headed by J.K. Maheshwari, taking a pragmatic approach.



The SC clarified the directions in the case shall not be treated as a precedent.

'Anti pilot-poaching plan in India's interest'**Jagriti Chandra**

NEW DELHI

Policies that support pilot retention and prevent their poaching by foreign carriers is in "national interest" as aviation is a catalyst for economic development and the country's "soft power", Air India CEO Campbell Wilson said.

"It is not just a turnaround of Air India. It's an investment being made in critical, economic, and catalytic infrastructure. And, anything from a policy perspective that can facilitate this, I think is in the national interest," Mr. Wilson said in response to a question from *The Hindu* on whether the airline supported measures such as a six-

Campbell Wilson
month notice period for pilots to stop them from joining international players amid hectic expansion in regions like Saudi Arabia and the UAE that lure pilots with tax-free salaries.

Recently, IndiGo CEO Pieter Elbers said it would be "disturbing" to lose Indian pilots to foreign airlines.

Grahaa gets nod for nano satellite launch**The Hindu Bureau**

BENGALURU

Grahaa Space, a Bengaluru-based spacetech startup, obtained authorisation from Indian National Space Promotion and Authorisation Centre (IN-SPACe) to launch its maiden nano satellite mission called Solaras S2, as technology demonstration by the end of November.

The launch will happen from Alcântara Space Center (CEA) in Brazil through the Hanbit-Nano launch vehicle developed by Korea-based Innospace, according to the company.

"Solaras S2 mission will qualify our nano satellite bus and platform and allow us to assess the perfor-

criminal proceedings against the brothers would become operative only on the full and final payment of ₹5,100 crore on or before December 17, 2025.

The Bench directed the amount to be deposited with the Supreme Court Registry and kept in a short-term and interest-bearing fixed deposit account with a nationalised bank till disbursement among the lender banks.

The order recorded the amount of defalcation in the FIR was ₹5,383 crore. The OTS, with respect to the petitioners' Indian firms, with the banks was for ₹3,826 crore and for foreign firms, being guarantor, was for ₹2,935 crore, bringing the total sum to

₹6,761 crore.

"Out of the said amount, the petitioners voluntarily deposited a fraction of the total amount, which comes to around ₹3,507.63 crore, leaving the remaining dues to ₹3,253.37 crore," the court observed.

The lender banks initiated proceedings under Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, 2016 and recoveries of ₹1,192 crore were made. However, of the total OTS amount, the unpaid balance came to ₹2,061.37 crore.

The turning point in the case came when the Solicitor General, representing the government and the probe agencies, submitted a demand for ₹5,100 crore and the brothers agreed to pay the amount.

Anti pilot-poaching plan in India's interest'**The Hindu Bureau**

BENGALURU

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"Solaras S2 mission will qualify our nano satellite bus and platform and allow us to assess the perfor-

The launch will happen from Alcântara Space Center (CEA) located in Brazil

mance. It is a focused technical step that confirms our readiness for the next phase," said Ramesh Kumar V, founder and CEO, Grahaa Space. This progress has been possible with the support of IIIT incubation centre at IITIIT Trivandrum and IN-SPACe.

"The upcoming missions scheduled for early 2026 with Skyroot will qualify the communications module, gather geo-spatial data from the optical payload and establish inter-satellite links."

'Oct. demand pick-up points to a resilient growth outlook'

Concerns persist about the heightened exuberance in global equity markets, raising questions about its sustainability and its implications for financial stability, officials write in RBI Bulletin

Lalatendu Mishra

MUMBAI

A further pick-up in demand conditions witnessed in October 2025 points towards a resilient growth outlook, Reserve Bank of India (RBI) officials wrote in the November edition of RBI Bulletin released on Monday.

They said despite continued global headwinds, Indian economy showed signs of a further pick up in momentum.

"Available high-frequency indicators for October suggest a robust expansion in both manufacturing and services activities, supported by festive season demand and the ongoing positive impact of the GST reforms," they wrote in the article 'State of the Economy'.

Stating that headline inflation had moderated and fallen to a historic low in October and remained below the target rate, they said it was significantly



Food 'chain': The deflation in the food group deepened on account of a decline in the prices of vegetables, pulses and spices. FILE PHOTO

helped by favourable supply-side factors, including the prospects of a good kharif season and the reduction of GST rates.

Inflation moderation

Headline CPI inflation, moderated to 0.3% in October 2025 from 1.4% in September.

The fall in inflation was driven by the deepening of deflation in food prices and impact of the GST rate cut on goods and services prices, amid large favourable base effects, they wrote. The deflation in the

food group deepened on account of a decline in the prices of vegetables, pulses and spices. Inflation in sub-groups such as cereals, meat and fish, milk and products, eggs, oils and fats, fruits, prepared meals, and non-alcoholic beverages moderated, they added.

The external sector's capacity to absorb shocks has also improved over time, building resilience amid global trade policy uncertainties," they emphasised in the article.

Pointing to the World

Bank's Financial Sector Assessment (FSA) report of October 2025, they said the improved macroeconomic frameworks and outcomes had not only enhanced the ability of financial institutions to support the macroeconomy, but also allowed the Reserve Bank to better calibrate regulatory measures, improve the efficiency of financial intermediation, and augment the flow of credit to the broader economy.

The fiscal, monetary, and regulatory measures undertaken so far this year should pave the way for a virtuous cycle of higher private investment, productivity, and growth, leading to long-term economic resilience, the officials wrote.

"Concerns persist about the heightened exuberance in global equity markets, raising questions about its sustainability and its implications for financial stability," they said.

Private sector reported 8% YoY sales growth in Q2**The Hindu Bureau**

MUMBAI

Listed private non-financial companies reported 8% year-on-year (YoY) sales income growth during Q2 FY26 from 5.5% growth seen in the previous quarter and 5.4% growth in Q2 FY25, as per data released by the RBI on Monday. The growth was led by improvement in sales growth across all the major sectors.

Sales of 1,775 listed private manufacturing companies rose 8.5% YoY during Q2FY26 compared with 5.3% in the previous quarter, mainly driven by higher sales growth in automobiles, food products, electrical machinery and chemicals industries.

IT companies recorded a rise of 7.8% YoY in their sales during Q2FY26 from 6% in the previous quarter.

Sales of non-IT services companies recorded a double-digit growth of 10.6% in Q2FY26 compared with 7.5% growth in the previous quarter, primarily due to higher sales growth recorded by wholesale and retail trade companies. Manufacturing companies' expenses on raw material rose 9% YoY during Q2FY26 in consonance with their sales growth; raw material to sales ratio increased to 55.9% from 54.1% in the previous quarter.

Staff cost of manufacturing, IT and non-IT services companies rose by 9.2%, 6% and 8.9%, respectively during Q2FY26, higher than the previous quarter.

MARKETS**MARKET WATCH**

	MONDAY	% CHANGE
Sensex	84,901	-0.39
US Dollar	89.16	0.55
Gold	1,25,400	-0.55
Brent oil	62.87	-

NIFTY 50

	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Enter	2399.20	-23.10
Adani Ports	1485.90	6.10
Apollo Hosp	7354.50	-36.50
Asian Paints	2879.20	2.60
Axis Bank	1269.00	-6.80
Bajaj Auto	9007.50	115.50
Bajaj Finance	2030.80	-21.60
Bharti Airtel	994.00	-10.10
Bharti Elec	403.80	-12.55
Bharti Airtel	2152.10	-10.60
Cipla	1504.00	-7.80
Coat India	372.55	-5.65
Dr Reddys Lab	1226.20	-17.70
Eicher Motors	7258.50	124.00
Etemal Ltd.	301.00	-0.95
Grasim Ind	2688.70	-46.10
HCL Tech	1610.40	2.40
ICICI Bank	999.15	1.10
HDFC Life	761.65	-2.35
Hindalco	774.65	-3.05
Hind Unilever	2424.20	-9.50
ITC	403.55	-4.30
Jio Financial Servic- es Ltd.	299.85	-3.70
JSW Steel	1106.00	-34.30
Kotak Bank	2087.30	-0.50
L&T	4013.30	-11.60
M&M	3690.80	-58.80
Maruti Suzuki	15958.00	-19.00
Max Healthcare	1155.80	-25.30
NestleIndia	1269.20	-11.50
NTPC	323.45	-3.20
ONGC	245.75	-1.20
PowerGrid Corp	275.80	-1.80
Reliance Ind	1535.90	-10.70
SBI Life	2014.80	-7.70
State Bank	970.60	-2.00
Shriram Finance	828.20	4.90
Sun Pharma	1780.80	1.10
TataConsumerPro- duct	1186.00	2.90
Tata Steel	165.36	-2.64
TCS	3141.20	-9.40
Tech Mahindra	1494.70	33.20
Titan	3874.30	-29.90
Tata Motors PV	358.30	-3.95
Trent Ltd.	4310.90	-48.20
UltraTech Cement	11584.00	-145.00
Wipro	247.27	2.78

Afghanistan offers tax exemption to investors

Afghanistan Industry and Commerce Minister Alhaj Nooruddin Azizi on Monday said his government is ready to offer five years of tax breaks to firms investing in new sectors. PTI

THE HINDU Best Places to Work 2026

POWERED BY WorkL

What does it take to be India's best place to work?

Find answers from

**Stuart Duncan**Head of Commercial,
WorkL for Businessin conversation with **Ayisha Beevi (WorkL Marketing)**

Join the free webinar to learn how your workplace can be recognised as one of the Best Places to Work, including:

- The entry process and requirements
- What previous winners did to

PORT SUDAN

Sudan's top general rejects 'Quad' ceasefire proposal citing UAE role



Sudan's Army chief Abdel Fattah al-Burhan said on Sunday the truce plan sent by U.S. envoy Massad Boulos on behalf of Saudi Arabia, Egypt and the United Arab Emirates was the "worst yet" and unacceptable. He accused Mr. Boulos of parroting talking points from Abu Dhabi, which has been accused of arming the RSF. AFP

SYDNEY

Australian politician prompts fury with burqa antics in Parliament



A far-right Australian politician sparked outrage on Monday after donning a burqa at the country's Parliament, in a display that other lawmakers slammed as "racist". Pauline Hanson, belonging to the anti-immigration One Nation party, was seeking to introduce a bill in the Senate that would ban full face coverings. AFP

BEIJING

Xi, Trump speak over phone, discuss bilateral ties, Taiwan



Chinese leader Xi Jinping and U.S. President Donald Trump spoke on bilateral cooperation and the issue of Taiwan in a phone call on Monday, Beijing's official media said. Mr. Trump praised "extremely strong" ties in a social media post after the call. He confirmed a visit to China in April and that Mr. Xi will come to Washington in 2026. AFP

ISLAMABAD

Ruling PML-N sweeps by-elections in Pakistan, initial results suggest



The ruling Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) swept the by-elections on Sunday, winning 12 out of 13 seats, according to unofficial results. Polls were held for six National Assembly (NA) seats and seven seats in Punjab's Provincial Assembly. All NA seats were in Punjab except one in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. PTI

U.S. and Ukraine working on 'refined' peace framework to end Russia war

Both countries seek to narrow differences over the Trump plan in Geneva talks; the U.S. President's proposal is viewed as tilted in Russia's favour; European officials welcome progress in talks; Kremlin says nothing has been officially conveyed to it

Reuters

KYIV/GENEVA

The United States and Ukraine sought on Monday to narrow the gaps in a peace plan to end the war with Russia after agreeing to modify a U.S. proposal that Kyiv and its European allies saw as a Kremlin wish list.

Washington and Kyiv said in a joint statement they had drafted a "refined peace framework" after talks in Geneva on Sunday. Though no specifics were given, the talks received a cautious welcome from some of Ukraine's allies.

European officials said on Monday they were comforted by the outcome of discussions on proposals that they had viewed as tilted in Russia's favour.

"The negotiations were a step forward, but there are still major issues which remain to be resolved," Finnish President Alexander Stubb wrote on social platform X about Sunday's meeting.

Ukraine's delegation to the talks with U.S. officials



Oneding plight: A Russian drone strike killed four and wounded 17 in Kharkiv, Ukraine on Sunday. AFP

in Switzerland was returning home on Monday to report back, President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said.

U.S. President Donald Trump hinted at new progress.

"It is really possible that big progress is being made in Peace Talks between Russia and Ukraine???" Don't believe it until you see it, but something good just may be happening," Mr. Trump wrote on Truth Social.

German Chancellor Friedrich Merz welcomed the "interim result" of the talks, saying the U.S. proposal "has now been mod-

ified in significant parts." He cautioned, however: "It was possible to clear up some questions, but we also know that there won't be peace in Ukraine overnight."

The U.S. blindsided Kyiv and European countries with a 28-point peace plan last week, giving Ukraine until Thursday to agree to a framework to end Europe's deadliest war since World War II.

British Prime Minister Keir Starmer said more work needed to be done. "Everybody is absolutely focused on what we need to get out of this, and that is a just and lasting peace."

The Geneva meeting offered some hope for Kyiv. "Diplomacy has been rein-

vigorated, and that's good. Very good," Mr. Zelenskyy said late on Sunday.

"We all continue working with partners, especially the United States, to look for compromises that will strengthen but not weaken us," Mr. Zelenskyy said via video link from a separate meeting of Ukraine's allies in Sweden.

German Foreign Minister Johannes Wadephul said U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio "made decisive positive contributions to ensuring that this plan can be accepted by both the European and Ukrainian sides."

Mr. Rubio said on Sunday the talks were "very worthwhile" and constituted the most productive day in "a very long time." "I feel very optimistic that we can get something done," Mr. Rubio said.

Meanwhile, Ukraine's second-largest city Kharkiv was hit by what officials said was a massive drone attack that killed four people and wounded 17 on Sunday.

(With inputs from The Associated Press)

Canada plans citizenship rejig; Indian-origin families to benefit from new rules

Press Trust of India

OTTAWA



Bill C-3, an Act to amend the Citizenship Act (2025), has received royal assent.

Canada has moved closer toward modernising citizenship-by-descent law, after a Bill to amend the act received royal assent, in a move that is likely to affect thousands of Indian-origin families.

Bill C-3, an Act to amend the Citizenship Act (2025), has received royal assent.

This represents an important milestone in making the Citizenship Act more inclusive, while maintaining the value of Canadian citizenship, said a news release issued by the Canadian government on Friday.

"Once the new law comes into force, Canadian citizenship will be provided to people born before the Bill comes into force, who would have been citizens if not for the first-generation limit or other outdated rules of past legislation", the news release said.

The first-generation limit to Canadian citizenship by descent was introduced in 2009. It means that a child born or adopted outside Canada is not a Cana-

children born or adopted abroad. It will provide citizenship to people who were excluded by previous laws, and it will set clear rules for the future that reflect how modern families live. These changes will strengthen and protect Canadian citizenship," Canada's Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Lena Metlege Diab said.

Unconstitutional

On December 19, 2023, the Ontario Superior Court of Justice declared that key parts of the Citizenship Act relating to the first-generation limit to citizenship by descent were unconstitutional.

The Government of Canada did not appeal the ruling, as it agreed the law had unacceptable outcomes for children of Canadians who were born outside the country.

By updating the Citizenship Act to reflect the global mobility of modern Canadian families, the federal government has made access to citizenship more fair and reasonable," said Don Chapman, Founder of the Lost Canadians.

Israeli military sacks several generals over Oct. 7 attack

Agence France-Presse

JERUSALEM

Israel's military announced the dismissal of three generals and disciplinary actions against several other senior officers over their failure to prevent the October 7 assault by Hamas, the deadliest attack in the country's history resulting in 1,221 deaths.

The move comes two weeks after Israeli military chief Eyal Zamir called for a "systemic investigation" into the failures that led to the onslaught, even as the government stalled on setting up an inquiry panel despite public pressure.

The list of generals fired included three divisional commanders, one of whom was then serving as the military intelligence chief. A military statement released on Sunday said they bore responsibility for the armed forces' failure to prevent the attack launched by Hamas from the Gaza Strip in 2023.

It remains to be seen how or if Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu might also be pinned with blame for having a role in the inability to prevent the onslaught.

Israel's retaliatory assault on Gaza has killed at least 69,756 people.

कार्यालय जिला परिषद (पंचायती राज प्रकाश) जैसलमेर
क्रमांक - पंसप्प/रेखा/ई-निविदा/2025/691
ई-निविदा सुनाना 02/2025-26

जिला जैसलमेर में नवाचित पंचायत समिति भोहनानाथ (भवन लागत 230.00 लाख) के निर्माण कार्य हेतु इच्छुक संवेदकों से जीएसटी पंजीकृत एवं बी-प्रीमी या उच्चतर श्रेणी में पंचायती राज विभाग, राजस्थान विभाग एवं राजस्थान उपक्रम में पंजीकृत कर्मी एवं संवेदकों से निर्माण कार्य हेतु ई-प्रॉक्रार्सेट पैरेल www.sppp.rajasthan.gov.in के माध्यम से अंतिमान्तर निविदा आमंत्रित की जाती है। जिसकी विवरण जानकारी रखेकार्यालय पर भीउपलब्ध है।

NIB No. - ZJM2526A0008
BID No. - ZJM2526WSOB00017
राज.संस्कारी/सी/25/14472

PONDICHERRY UNIVERSITY
(A Central University – Accredited "A+" Grade by NAAC)
PH.D. ADMISSIONS 2026-27
ENTRANCE EXAMINATION CATEGORY

Online applications are invited for admission to Ph.D. Programmes in various disciplines under entrance examination category.

ELIGIBILITY
Only those candidates who have studied under 10+2+3+2 pattern of education (or 10+2+5+) and qualified for the Master's Degree in the subject concerned or in an allied subject and have qualifications as prescribed by the regulations for the subject concerned under all the Schools/ Departments/ Centres of Humanities and Social Sciences, Management, Commerce, Science, Education, Fine Arts and Languages and such other disciplines of Pondicherry University, or a degree accepted as equivalent by the University securing a minimum of 55% marks (or equivalent grade) are eligible to apply.

Final Year PG students are also eligible to apply.
DOCTORAL PROGRAMMES AT UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENTS

For details including courses offered, eligibility and reservation policy, please refer Information Brochure in the University website [https://www.pondiuni.edu.in](http://www.pondiuni.edu.in).

APPLICATION PROCEDURE
Application form is to be submitted online through the University website www.pondiuni.edu.in by following the instructions given therein.

MODE OF SELECTION
Based on the marks obtained in the entrance examination and the Interview conducted by the concerned Departments/Centres

APPLICATION FEE

Name of the Course	Application fee (per Course) in Rupees		
SC*/ST*	PH**/ Transgender**	Others	
Ph.D	750	Nil	1500

* subject to submission of relevant certificate.
** subject to submission of relevant certificate from Govt. Medical Officer. Use separate application for each programme. Payment of Application fee can be made only through online mode

Any claim based on wrong information, wrong course code, centre code, category OBC/SC/ST/EWS/Gen, etc. will not be entertained at a later stage.

IMPORTANT DATES

Online Registration starts on 19th November 2025
Last Date for Online Registration on 30th December 2025

REGISTRAR (I/C)

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NATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING
GREATER HYDERABAD MUNICIPAL CORPORATION
O/o The Superintending Engineer (Projects-C,N&EZ), GHMC, Hyderabad
Tender Notice No. 09/SE (P-C,N&EZ)/GHMC/2025-26
Dated: 24.11.2025

Tender No.	Name of Work	IBM Value
1.	Construction of Patigadda ROB-Deposit work	Rs. 30.05 Crores
2.	Construction of RK Puram ROB-Deposit work	Rs. 26.18 Crores
	Total:	Rs.56.23 Crores

S.No. Events:

Date and Time
1. Start date 27-11-2025 from 04.00 PM
2. Pre-Bid Meeting 04-12-2025 at 03.00 PM Location: O/o Chief Engineer (Projects), GHMC, 6th Floor, GHMC Head Office Tank Bund, Hyderabad
3. Last Date & Time for Receipts of Bids 12-12-2025 upto 03.00 PM
4. Opening of Technical bid 12-12-2025 after 04.00 PM
5. Opening of Price bid 15-12-2025 after 04.00 PM

Note: The Bidders are advised to visit www.tender.telangana.gov.in to download Bid Document and EPC project Tender Drawings. Any Queries can be addressed to seprojrectsne2@gmail.com Address of the officer concerned Sri P. Mohan Reddy, SE(P-C,N&EZ), 9989930369. Superintendent Engineer (P-C,N&EZ), Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation, Tank Bund Road, Hyderabad. Further details can be seen at e Procurement <https://tender.telangana.gov.in>. Sd/-Superintendent Engineer, DIPR R.O.No.11273-PP/CL/ADVT/1/2025-26 Dt: 24.11.2025 (Projects-C,N&EZ) GHMC

BRIEF TENDER NOTIFICATION (Through KPP Portal only)

KPCL invites tenders through "e" Procurement Portal <https://kpcl.karnatakata.gov.in> for the following works:

BELLARY THERMAL POWER STATION

1) Tender No. KPCL/2025-26/PS/WORK_INDENT3479/CALL-2 Dated: 14.11.2025 Upgradation / replacement of existing spark gap HEA ignition system by Thyristor based Ignition system for HFOILDO oil elevation - Unit-2/BTPS. EMD: Rs.10,30,235/- Last date and time for receipt of tender: 10.12.2025 at 16.00 Hrs. Further details can be obtained from the office of the Executive Engineer (I&C), Mobile: 094482 90737.

2) Tender No. KPCL/2025-26/PS/WORK_INDENT682 Dated: 13.11.2025 Servicing of one no. coal crushers (ring granulator) and modification of vibrating grizzly including spares of Unit-2. Total tender amount: Rs.84,65,000/- EMD: Rs.1,70,000/- Last date for submission of bids: 27.11.2025 at 17.30 Hrs. Further details can be obtained from the office of the Executive Engineer (CHP) Mechanical-1, BTPL, KPCL, Kudathini-581352, Bellary Dist. Mobile: 094482 90756.

3) Tender No. KPCL/2024-25/PM/WORK_INDENT2512/CALL-4 Dated: 14.11.2025 Supply, Installation and commissioning of Air compressor at different location of CHP/RTPS. Approx. amount put to tender (Exclusive of GST): Rs.10,40,000/- EMD: Rs.26,000/- Last date for submission of tender: 29.11.2025 up to 17.30 Hrs. Further details can be obtained from the office of the Executive Engineer (CHP) M-2 , Mobile: 094482 90758.

4) Tender No. KPCL/2024-25/PS/WORK_INDENT3692 Dated: 18.11.2025 Design, Supply, Erection, Testing and Commissioning of Two set of Activated Carbon Filter (ACF) and Weak Acid Cation (WAC) for existing DM plant-2 on Turn key basis. EMD: Rs.24,75,000/- Last date for submission of tender: 17.12.2025 up to 16.00 Hrs. Further details can be obtained from the office of the Executive Engineer (CAM-2), Mobile: 094482 30627.

5) Tender No. KPCL/2024-25/OW/WORK_INDENT3663 Dated: 13.11.2025 Construction of vehicle parking shelter near DG House-2 at RTPS. Class of contractor: Valid KPWD registered Class IV and above Contractors. Amount put to tender (Exclusive of GST): Rs.23.11 Lakhs. Further details can be obtained from the office of the Executive Engineer (PCM-2), KPCL, RTPS, Shaktinagar-584170. Raichur Dist. Mobile: 94495 96582.

For detailed information regarding eligibility criteria, terms and conditions, application procedure etc. log

NO COMPULSION

I am happy to bat wherever the team wants me: Washington



RITU RAJ KONWAR

Washington Sundar, who played at No. 3 in Kolkata, batted at No. 8 at Guwahati. "I am happy to bat wherever the team wants me to. That way, it's much more exciting. This is a team game. Many strategies go into the game depending on the conditions and the opposition. It is very tactical at times," Washington said.

IN HINDSIGHT

I would rather get caught on the boundary than get out defending'



RITU RAJ KONWAR

Marco Jansen, who made 93 and took six wickets, said he rued missing a century after chopping the ball onto the stumps while trying to guide the ball in the slip region. "I've never been in the 90s in First Class cricket, so I was nervous. The next time I'd rather get caught on the boundary than defending or trying to push for a one".

ON TOP OF THE WORLD

India women clinch second straight Kabaddi World Cup



SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

The Indian women's kabaddi team on Monday secured its second consecutive World Cup title with a 35-28 win over Taiwan in Dhaka. India emerged on top in a tournament involving 11 countries. India had beaten Iran 33-21 to enter the summit clash. Taiwan, on the other hand, defeated hosts Bangladesh 25-18 in the semifinals.

INSPIRATIONAL

PM Modi hails the Indian blind women's team's T20 WC triumph



AFP

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday congratulated the Indian cricket team which won the T20 Blind Women's World Cup. "Congratulations to the Indian Blind women's team for creating history! This is a shining example of hard work and determination. This feat will inspire generations to come," he posted on X.

Pedestrian India implodes as Jansen breathes fire

The left-arm pacer's six-wicket haul helps the Proteas bowl out the host for 201; Washington and Kuldeep battle it out but South Africa holds the upper hand; Bavuma doesn't enforce the follow-on

SA IN INDIA

S. Dipak Ragav
GUWAHATI

Kuldeep Yadav, on day two, called the pitch at the ACA stadium a "road" after South Africa amassed 489. A day later, though, India's batters made the 22-yard strip look far more menacing than it actually was.

A 45-minute passage of play on either side of the tea interval on the morning of day three on Monday pushed India into an abyss as South Africa tightened its vice-like grip on the second and final Test.

For the second day in succession, it was Marco Jansen who starred for the visitors, scalping six wickets (19.5-5-48-6) to help bowl out India for 201.

Despite a healthy 288-run lead, Temba Bavuma did not enforce the follow-on. South Africa went to stumps on 26 for no loss in its second essay and is ahead by 314.

Double act

Jansen, whose quickfire 93 in the first innings swelled the Proteas' total, made full use of his height to bounce out the Indian batters.

Resuming at nine for no loss, the home team needed to mix caution and aggression to secure a positive outcome in this fixture and level the series. Instead, India imploded, losing six wickets for 27 runs in 11.1 overs, going from 95 for one to 122 for seven.

The hosts, though, started positively with openers Yashasvi Jaiswal and K.L. Rahul adding 65 in quick time. Jaiswal wasted no time in attacking the spinners and brought out the sweep, collecting two



Lettin' it rip: Jansen troubled the Indian batters with his bounce. RITU RAJ KONWAR

SCOREBOARD**SOUTH AFRICA — 1ST INNINGS**

489 in 151.1 overs.

INDIA — 1ST INNINGS

Yashasvi Jaiswal c Jansen b Harmer 58 (97b, 7x4, 1x6), K.L. Rahul c Markram b Maharaj 22 (63b, 2x4), B. Sai Sudharsan c Rickleton b Harmer 15 (40b, 2x4), Dhruv Jurel c Maharaj b Jansen 0 (11b), Rishabh Pant c Verreyne b Jansen 7 (8b, 1x6), Ravindra Jadeja c Markram b Jansen 6 (18b), Nitish Kumar c Markram b Jansen 10 (18b, 1x4), Washington Sundar c Markram b Harmer 48

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Jansen 19.5-5-48-6, Mulder 10-5-14-0, Maharaj 15-1-39-1, Harmer 27-6-64-3, Markram 10-1-26-0, Muthusamy 2-0-2-0.

SOUTH AFRICA — 2ND INNINGS

1-65 (Rahul, 21.3 overs), 2-95 (Jaiswal, 32.2), 3-96 (Sai Sudharsan, 34.3), 4-102 (Jurel, 35.3), 5-105 (Pant, 37.2), 6-119 (Nitish, 41.4), 7-122 (Jadeja, 43.3), 8-194 (Washington, 78.1), 9-194 (Kuldeep, 81.5).

INDIA BOWLING

Burman 3-0-13-0, Siraj 3-1-8-0, Jadeja 1-0-2-0, Kuldeep 1-0-2-0.

SOUTH AFRICA BOWLING

Jansen 19.5-5-48-6, Mulder 10-5-14-0, Maharaj 15-1-39-1, Harmer 27-6-64-3, Markram 10-1-26-0, Muthusamy 2-0-2-0.

SCORING**SOUTH AFRICA — 1ST INNINGS**

489 in 151.1 overs.

INDIA — 1ST INNINGS

Yashasvi Jaiswal c Jansen b Harmer 58 (97b, 7x4, 1x6), K.L. Rahul c Markram b Maharaj 22 (63b, 2x4), B. Sai Sudharsan c Rickleton b Harmer 15 (40b, 2x4), Dhruv Jurel c Maharaj b Jansen 0 (11b), Rishabh Pant c Verreyne b Jansen 7 (8b, 1x6), Ravindra Jadeja c Markram b Jansen 6 (18b), Nitish Kumar c Markram b Jansen 10 (18b, 1x4), Washington Sundar c Markram b Harmer 48

FALL OF WICKETS**SOUTH AFRICA — 2ND INNINGS****INDIA BOWLING****SOUTH AFRICA BOWLING****SCORING****SOUTH AFRICA — 2ND INNINGS**

IN BRIEF



Pranjali claims 25m pistol gold, her third medal

India's Pranjali Prashant Dhumal clinched gold in the women's 25m pistol, her third medal, in the Deaflympics in Tokyo on Monday. She had earlier won gold in the mixed pistol with Abhinav Deshwal, and silver in air pistol. Mosina Halyna of Ukraine won silver and Jeon Jiwon of Korea took bronze. Anuya Prasad was fourth. Pranjali had qualified for final with a new qualification world record 573/600.

Ansh, Shaina reign supreme at junior National badminton

Ansh Negi and Shaina Manimuthu emerged as the boys' and girls' singles champions at the Yonex Sunrise 48th junior National badminton, which concluded in Itanagar on Monday.

The results: **Singles: Boys:** Ansh Negi bt Suryaksh Rawat 18-21, 22-20, 21-11; **Girls:** Shaina Manimuthu bt Tanoo Chandra 17-21, 22-20, 21-13; **Doubles:** **Boys:** A.R. Sumith & C. Lalrumsanga bt Bhargav Ram & Visva Tej Gobburu 21-13, 21-12; **Girls:** K. Vennala & U. Reshika 21-16, 21-9; **Mixed doubles:** Vansh Dev & Angel Punera bt Bhavya Chhabra & Vishakha Toppu 22-20, 21-19.



TGF to conduct a nationwide EWS golf Talent Hunt

The Golf Foundation (TGF) will conduct the third edition of its nationwide EWS (Economically Weaker Section) Talent Hunt 2025-26, a grassroots golf-identification initiative that covers children belonging to families whose income is less than ₹8 lakh per annum. TGF will hold on-range talent identification camps in 36 cities across India. Across range, school programmes, TGF aims to screen 1,500 to 1,800 children. Those shortlisted will join twice-a-week training sessions at regional golf facilities until the first week of January 2026 before the final selection round. The 30-odd shortlisted finalists will enter TGF's long-term pathway, where ₹3.5 lakh to ₹5 lakh will be allocated per kid per annum from an overall yearly budget of approximately ₹2 crore.

Champions League schedule

Ajax vs Benfica; Galatasaray vs Union St.-Gilloise (both matches at 11.15 p.m. on Wednesday).
Bodo/Glimt vs Juventus; Dortmund vs Villarreal; Chelsea vs Barcelona; Manchester City vs Bayer Leverkusen; Marseille vs Newcastle United; Napoli vs FK Qarabag; Slavia Prague vs Athletic Club. (all matches at 1.30 a.m. on Wednesday).

LIVE TELECAST

India vs South Africa: 2nd Test, day 4, Star Sports 2 & Jio Hotstar, 9 a.m.
Chess World Cup: FIDE YouTube channel, 3 p.m.
Champions League: Sony Sports Ten 2, 3 & LIV, 11.15 p.m. & 1.15 a.m. (Wednesday).

AIFF adopts constitution as per SC order

Sports Bureau
KOLKATA

The All India Football Federation (AIFF) formally adopted the contentious Article 25.3 (c) and (d) of its Constitution as approved by the Supreme Court of India, with an overwhelming majority in a Special General Meeting organised for the purpose on Monday.

According to Article, an office bearer in the executive committee of the AIFF cannot hold a position as an office bearer in a member-State association. In the previous meeting held on October 12, the AIFF left adopted the constitution without the two clauses, a decision on which was pending in the Supreme

Court. The SGM on Monday saw an attendance of 27 member associations, out of which 24 voted for the adoption of the clauses. Two associations - the Indian Football Association (Bengal) and the Goa FA - suggested a review petition in the apex court to reconsider the decision. The Football Association of Odisha has asked for a week's time to deliberate on the issue internally.

"With this, what began in 2017 (when the hearing for the new constitution started in the SC) has finally ended. I am relieved that AIFF has a constitution that fulfils all the requirements of the honourable Supreme Court, FIFA and the AFC," said the AIFF president Kalyan Chaubey.

Aleix Febas fired the host ahead before Dean Huissen levelled for the league leader, with Bellingham stabbing home from close range after Alvaro Rodriguez blasted Elche back in front. The result moved Madrid one point ahead of

Cobolli's comeback win leads Italy to a three-peat

He defeats Munar in a thrilling match to secure an unassailable lead after Berrettini gets the better of Busta; the host makes light of the absence of World No. 1 Sinner and Musetti

DAVIS CUP

Agence France-Presse
BOLOGNA

Italy claimed a third Davis Cup in as many years on Sunday after beating Spain 2-0 in front of delighted home fans in Bologna.

Flavio Cobolli sparked loud celebrations by coming back from a set down to beat Jaume Munar 1-6, 7-6 (5), 7-5 and ensure that Italy retained the title.

Matteo Berrettini had earlier cruised to a 6-3, 6-4 win over Pablo Carreno Busta, setting Filippo Volandri's team up for victory without the doubles match needing to be played.

"This was my dream, we're a really united team, and we tried to recreate the spirit of the Italy team that won the (football) World Cup in 2006," said Cobolli.

"I'm really proud of everyone and our brilliant fans are also part of this team. I've been repeating for three days but it's the best day of my life."

Simone Bolelli and Andrea Vavassori haven't been employed in a doubles contest in northern Italy as the hosts won the Davis Cup without losing a match.

It's an impressive feat by Italy who competed without their two highest-



Cup of joy: The Italian team rose to the occasion to quell the Spanish challenge in the finale. AFP

ranked players in superstar Jannik Sinner and Lorenzo Musetti.

Both players sit in the top 10 of the men's world rankings and were major absences for the tournament, especially as they chose not to take part in the title defence on home soil.

"It doesn't matter who goes out there for us, we have a deep squad and we have a lot of great lads who play great tennis," said Berrettini.

Spain too were missing their top player in world number one Carlos Alcaraz, but the six-time Grand Slam winner would have

played had he not suffered a hamstring injury during his ATP Finals showdown



This was my dream, we're a really united team, and we tried to recreate the spirit of the Italy team that won the (football) World Cup in 2006

- COBOLLI

with Sinner a week ago.

Earlier on Sunday, the head of the International Tennis Federation insisted that top players were not snubbing the competition.

"There's this false feeling out there that top players don't represent their nation.

"That's not true," David Haggerty told reporters

ahead of the final.

"Some of those top players that played in the qualifier round or the second qualifier round didn't make it to the finals. And so we had many top players that have played."

American Taylor Fritz, Australian Alex de Minaur, Dane Holger Rune and Norwegian Casper Ruud - all in the top 20 of the men's rankings - featured in the early rounds of the competition without managing to reach the finals with their respective nations.

The results:
Italy bt Spain 2-0 (Matteo Berrettini bt Pablo Carreno Busta 6-3, 6-4; Flavio Cobolli bt Jaume Munar 1-6, 7-6(5), 7-5).

better, reaching the final of the Malaysia Masters in May but failing to capitalise on that momentum since then.

Prannoy last played here in 2019 while Srikanth has won twice, both wins coming in the tournament's previous avatar as a Grand Prix Gold event. The spotlight, however, will be on the likes of Kiran George, Priyanshu Rajawat, Meiraba Maisnam and Mithun Manjunath. Singapore's Jia Heng Jason Teh, with a couple of Super 300 titles this year, will be looking to add another as the top seed.

Among the women, former world champion Nozomi Okuhara is on a comeback trail and will be hoping to end the season on a high, while the Indian hopes rest on the likes of Tanvi Sharma, Anmol Kharb and Unnati Hooda.

In women's doubles, the pair of Gayatri Gopichand and Treesa Jolly is back to defend its title, the top-seeded Indian pair looking to win its first World Tour title this year after a series of early exits.



Veteran: Prannoy, who has been battling injuries, will still be the top-ranked Indian in the fray. FILE PHOTO: SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

India's next-generation hopes to shine at Syed Modi badminton

Uthra Ganeshan
LUCKNOW

K. Srikanth and H.S. Prannoy will be hoping to turn around their fortunes and end the season on a high when the Syed Modi India International 2025 begins here on Tuesday, even as the next crop of Indian shuttlers will be looking to prove themselves and earn crucial ranking points.

With no top-20 player and only a smattering of foreign entries, the BWF Super 300 tournament, with an enhanced prize purse of \$240,000, has seen a spate of withdrawals, including that of Dane Viktor Axelsen and Malaysia's Sholeh Aidil, defending champion and recently crowned Australian Open winner Lakshya Sen and Ayush Shetty among the men and P.V. Sindhu among the women.

Prannoy, who has been battling injuries and health concerns, has not managed to go beyond the second round in 15 outings in 2025 but will still be the top-ranked Indian in the fray. Srikanth has fared

Medvedev, Bopanna to team up for WTL's India debut

Sports Bureau
BENGALURU



Medvedev and Bopanna. AFP & FILE PHOTO: K. MURALI KUMAR

World No. 13 and 2021 US Open champion Daniil Medvedev headlines the player field for the World Tennis League (WTL) exhibition tennis tournament set to be held in Bengaluru from December 17-20.

On Monday, the League unveiled the team compositions, and players like Denis Shapovalov (Canada), Ukraine's Elina Svitolina, Aussie Nick Kyrgios, Frenchman Gael Monfils and Spain's Paula Badosa are set to feature.

Missing from the roster that was earlier announced is Elina Rybakina, the 2022 Wimbledon champion, who won the season-ending WTA Finals earlier this

month in Riyadh.

The teams: **Game Changers**

Falcons: Daniil Medvedev, Rohan Bopanna, Magda Linette, Sahaja Yamalapalli; **VB Realty Hawks:**

Denis Shapovalov, Yuki Bhambri, Elina Svitolina, Maaya Rajeshwaran Revathi.

Aussie Mavericks Kites: Nick Kyrgios, Dhakshinewar Suresh, Marta Kosťuk, Ankita Raina.

AOS Eagles: Gael Monfils, Sumit Nagal, Paula Badosa, Shravilli Bhandipati.

The competition, this time around too, will be tough with Australia, seven-time champion Germany and the Netherlands among others vying for the honours.

How shotstoppers Prinedeep and Bikramjit inspire each other

HOCKEY

K. Keerthivasan
CHENNAI



Bikramjit, and Prinedeep. K. KEERTHIVASAN

Prinedeep Singh and Bikramjit Singh are two confident young goalkeepers eager to showcase their talents and help India go the distance in the FIH junior men's World Cup beginning on November 28 in Chennai and Madurai. India last won the title in 2016 in Lucknow.

In the last two editions in 2021 and 2023, India finished a disappointing fourth.

The competition, this time around too, will be tough with Australia, seven-time champion Germany and the Netherlands among others vying for the honours.

Under head coach and former India 'keeper P.R. Sreejesh, who has been a pillar of strength for the Indian senior team, the two 21-year-olds have been learning a lot.

Prinedeep and Bikramjit said Sreejesh breaks down the basics of goalkeeping so well, and that they have benefitted a lot

from his style.

"He (Sreejesh) tells us about our mistakes in detail. He knows how much pressure there is on the goalkeeper.

Sreejesh factor

"He has brought a lot of changes in technique in the way we position ourselves and save the aerial shots and ground shots," they said.

Though Prinedeep and Bikramjit are fierce competitors, they share a professional bond, having been together in the Indian junior team for two previous tournaments: the 2025 Sultan of Johor Cup (where India bagged a silver) and the 2024 junior Asia Cup (where India won the gold). "We are roommates here. For us, the team comes first. We talk

about each other's mistakes, and it's been really helpful," they said.

Bikramjit was noticed after his wonderful performance in the 2024-25 Hockey India League (HIL) where he was adjudged the best goalkeeper of the tournament, playing for Hyderabad Toofans.

Handling pressure "It was great. Playing in HIL taught us how to handle the pressure," he said.

For Prinedeep and Bikramjit are fierce competitors, they share a professional bond, having been together in the Indian junior team for two previous tournaments: the 2025 Sultan of Johor Cup (where India bagged a silver) and the 2024 junior Asia Cup (where India won the gold). "We are roommates here. For us, the team comes first. We talk

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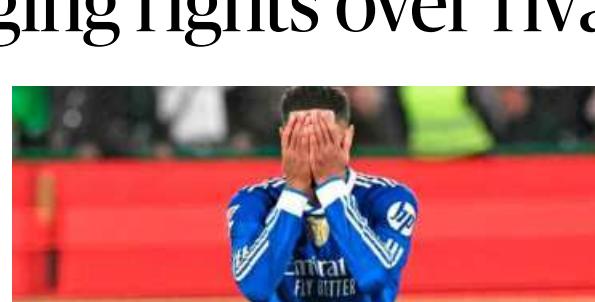
Bikramjit was noticed after his wonderful performance in the 2024-25 Hockey India League (HIL) where he was adjudged the best goalkeeper of the tournament, playing for Hyderabad Toofans.

Now, they want the junior World Cup to be in India. "We have to win and keep the trophy," Prinedeep and Bikramjit said.

Madrid escapes with a draw; AC Milan gets bragging rights over rival Inter

EURO LEAGUES

Agence France-Presse
ELCHE



Saving face: Bellingham's late goal helped Madrid get a point at Elche. AFP

Jude Bellingham struck late on to secure Real Madrid a 2-2 draw at Elche on Sunday, taking his team top of LaLiga by a point.

Xabi Alonso's side struggled against its mid-table opponent in an entertaining battle in which Madrid twice came from behind.

Aleix Febas fired the host ahead before Dean

Huijsen levelled for the league leader, with Bellingham stabbing home from close range after Alvaro Rodriguez blasted Elche back in front. The result moved Madrid one point ahead of

Roma as AC Milan beat Inter Milan 1-0 in a thrilling derby. Milan's win prevented its city rival from going joint top of Serie A.

That left Roma as the sole leader after Gian Piero Gasperini's side won 3-1 at Cremonese earlier,

penalty as AC Milan beat Inter Milan 1-0 in a thrilling derby. Milan's win prevented its city rival from going joint top of Serie A.

Top results: **LaLiga:** Getafe 0 lost to Atletico 1 (Duarte 82-0g); Elche 2 (Febas 53, Rodriguez 84) drew with Real Madrid 2 (Huijsen 78, Bellingham 87).

Serie A: Inter Milan 0 lost to AC

RSPB to meet Navy in Nehru hockey final

Sports Bureau
NEW DELHI

Washington and the whirlwind rollercoaster

The left-hander has batted at five different slots in his last seven Test innings, despite which he has scored 297 runs at 59.4. He has batted with batters, he has batted with all-rounders, he has batted with bowlers and sometimes, like in the Delhi Test against WI, he hasn't batted at all



RITU RAJ KONWAR

R. Kaushik
GUWAHATI

Being the ultimate, quintessential team man isn't always a virtue. Ask Rahul Dravid. Or V.V.S. Laxman. Or K.L. Rahul. Or Washington Sundar now, more than anyone else.

Not that any one of this quartet will admit so in public, of course. That too is the lot of the team man.

Dravid was the original crisis man of Indian cricket. Need a Test opener? 'Rahul's the guy.' Need someone to keep wickets in 50-overs cricket to add depth and stability and balance leading into a World Cup? 'Ermm Rahul, can you do the job?' Rahul could do it, needless to say. And do it very well, too. He didn't like doing it, but he didn't complain, he didn't bemoan his fate. He just got down to business, in typical no-fuss fashion.

Like his batting partner in that epochal stand at Eden Gardens against Australia in 2001, Laxman had never opened the batting in any grade of cricket, at any level, then he was thrust up the order in his third Test series, in West Indies in 1997. He made a half-century in his first appearance, backed it up with a couple of more solid knocks and produced a blazing, other-worldly 167 in Sydney in January 2000 but just one Test failure later, he was jettisoned as a 'makeshift' opener - never mind who made him that.

To his credit, Laxman bounced back in stellar fashion to end up with an excellent, delightfully entertaining Test career, but that was despite the system, not because of it.

Multiple roles

Following in his fellow Bengalurean's footsteps, Rahul too has been employed in multiple roles because of his 'versatility'. He began his Test career at No. 6 - where he had never batted previously - in Melbourne in 2014 before moving up to No. 3 in the second innings and to the opener's slot in the next game in Sydney, where he produced his maiden century. For the next decade, he batted in various positions. He became a white-ball wicketkeeper - he still holds that role in the 50-over format - and was even the designated Test stumper for two matches in South Africa in 2023-24. Just about the only thing Rahul hasn't done, yet, is keep wicket to his own bowling.

Which brings us to Washington, an accidental Test debutant in January 2021 because India were struggling to put 11 fit men on the park for the deciding Test against Australia in Brisbane. More than half the team that started the series in Adelaide was unavailable for the fourth Test at the Gabba - skipper Virat Kohli had returned home on paternity leave while Mohammed Shami, Ravindra Jadeja, R. Ashwin, Hanuma Vihari and Jasprit Bumrah had all picked up tour-ending injuries.

Washington wasn't in the original Test

party, travelling with the extended squad as a 'net bowler', until he had to perform be pressed into service at the Gabba. He had a Test to remember, both for the fact that he was part of the group that created history by consigning Australia to their first loss at the Gabba in more than three decades and that he played a significant hand in the three-wicket series-clinching victory.

In the first innings with India well behind the eight-ball, he made a flowing 62 in a century stand with Shardul Thakur, then produced a crucial 22 in a tense run-chase while displaying nerves of steel. He played in three of India's next four Tests, at home against England in February-March 2021, with unbeaten efforts of 85 and 96 bookending two ducks, but was then put out to pasture for the next three and a half years for no discernible reason.

He was still a bit player in white-ball internationals, and when he did return to the Test fold, it was under interesting - for want of a better word - circumstances. Having finally earned a top-order berth in the Tamil Nadu team, the left-hander made 152 against Delhi in October last year, immediately after which he was drafted into the Test side for the second game of a three-match series against New Zealand. Interesting why? Because he was picked primarily as an off-spinner to counter the plethora of Kiwi left-handers.

Washington responded with 11 wickets for the game and scored 18 not out and 21 from Nos. 9 and 6 respectively. Welcome back, Washy. Strap in for a whirlwind rollercoaster. And don't even think about starting to feel comfortable, because we have so many plans for you. So, so many.

He was sometimes a batter who could bowl competent off-break, at others an off-spinner who could produce mellifluous runs down the order. In his first 21 Test innings, he batted at



Washington... the Gabba flashback. FILE PHOTO

No. 6 once, at No. 7 six times, at No. 8 11 times and at No. 9 thrice. In that phase, he had four half-centuries and four other scores of more than 25. Then came the second innings of the fourth Test at Old Trafford in July and a fresh challenge.

Rishabh Pant had broken his right foot in the first innings after inside-edging a Chris Woakes reverse sweep. After retiring hurt, he did come back the next day to complete a brave half-century but by the time of the second innings, he could barely put any weight on the foot; he'd only bat if needed. Trailing by 311 after the first innings and with more than five sessions to bat out, India were rocked by Woakes, losing their first two wickets without a run on the board. Rahual and skipper Shubman Gill put on 188 for the third wicket when the former was dismissed some 40 minutes into the final day's play.

At 188 for three, India had their work cut out. They also needed a new No. 5. So out came Washington, tall and poised and unflappable, compact and assured and technically near perfect.

For five hours, he hardly put a foot wrong.

He never lapsed in concentration, he tried nothing fancy. He didn't even so much as look at the scoreboard. He lost his captain just before lunch and should have lost Ravindra Jadeja too, first ball, had Joe Root at first slip not put down a regulation offering. After that let-off, Jadeja also put his head down. The two left-handers first frustrated and then drove England ragged, both bringing up respective centuries and securing an honourable draw as the hosts allowed their emotions to get the better of them during an ugly final passage when they behaved with petulance and lack of grace.

That unbeaten 101 ought to have been the clincher. Instead, in the next Test at the Oval, Washington batted at No. 8 in the final innings and No. 9 in the second (because Akash Deep came in as a nightwatchman), when he scored a pivotal 53 in a series-squaring seven-run heist. His next four innings have been at No. 7 (nine not out), No. 3 (29), No. 3 (31) and now No. 8 in the first innings of the Guwahati Test against South Africa, when he made an attractive, impeccable 48.

What all of this means is that in his last seven Test innings, Washington has batted at five different slots, despite which he has scored 297 runs at 59.4. He has batted with batters, he has batted with all-rounders, he has batted with bowlers and sometimes, like in the Delhi Test against WI, he hasn't batted at all.

Washington had a Test debut to remember, both for the fact that he was part of the group that created history by consigning Australia to their first loss at the Gabba in more than three decades and that he played a significant hand in the three-wicket series-clinching victory.

In his first 21 Test innings, he batted at No. 6 once, at No. 7 six times, at No. 8 11 times and at No. 9 thrice. In that phase, he had four half-centuries and four other scores of more than 25.

Hopefully soon, he will be recognised for what he is and be allowed to grow into a role befitting his abilities because this up-and-down-the-batting-order philosophy isn't sustainable in the long run.

Maybe the 26-year-old is being politically correct, but what other choice does he have? Even if he has good reason to do so, can he question why he hasn't been eased off the No. 3 position despite playing out 174 deliveries in Kolkata where no one else in the Indian camp apart from Rahual (125) faced even 75? He can wonder, but whom can he ask why Nitish Kumar, despite his right-handedness in a left-heavy line-up, is occupying a slot above him despite the Andhra lad's modest recent returns which are in stark contrast with Washington's unquestioned consistency? If Washington has admirably chosen to go with the flow and not quibble like he is entitled to, then more power to him because wallowing in self-pity is of little help. Hopefully soon, he will be recognised for what he is and be allowed to grow into a role befitting his abilities because this up-and-down-the-batting-order philosophy isn't sustainable in the long run.

Even with the ball, there seems to be little constancy to thinking. In Ahmedabad against West Indies, he bowled just 10 overs in the game last month, which ramped up to 36 in Delhi in the next Test. In Kolkata last week, he got just one over in the first innings and none in the second, ostensibly because South Africa had a string of right-hand batters. But Washington's drift away from the right-handers has been a massive strength in his second coming, so why not give it a chance to express itself for more than six deliveries? Too many questions, too few answers. The good thing is that Washington isn't the one who's asking any of those. Just as well, did you say?

THE GIST

Washington had a Test debut to remember, both for the fact that he was part of the group that created history by consigning Australia to their first loss at the Gabba in more than three decades and that he played a significant hand in the three-wicket series-clinching victory.

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SCIENCE

Where does road dust settle in India's efforts to clean its air?

Dust pollution is mainly caused by unscientific practices during the development of roads and maintenance; the collected dust is typically discarded in landfills or on the roadsides, from where the wind easily carries it back into the cities, rendering the entire process of sweeping ineffective

Charu Tyagi
Swagata Dey

Road dust mainly comprises PM₁₀ and coarse particles and forms a large share of the air we breathe. With the National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) aiming for a 40% reduction in PM₁₀ by 2025-2026, reducing road dust is an urgent priority.

This is reinforced by source apportionment studies across 17 non-attainment cities that have found road dust to be a major contributor to PM₁₀ (20-52%) as well as PM_{2.5} (8-25%) particles. IIT-Delhi researchers have also recorded that streets in 32 cities across Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, and Telangana vary widely vis-à-vis their silt loads, from 0.2 g/m² to 111.2 g/m²; Delhi averages 14.47 g/m².

Overall, cities in North India have heavier silt loads and are thus dustier than their southern counterparts.

In response, governments have already invested heavily in fighting dust. Per a 2024 report by the Centre for Science and Environment, ₹19,711 crore was allocated to 131 cities between 2019 and 2025 under the NCAP to improve air quality. By November 2023, nearly 64% of the total fund had been spent on road dust control, far more than what was spent on tackling biomass burning, vehicular pollution, and capacity-building efforts.

While this suggests that there's a prioritisation, it's essential to assess effectiveness on the ground.

Policy landscape

Efforts to control road dust have been underway for several years. In January 2018, the Union Environment Ministry issued a notification to mitigate dust at construction sites, mandating paving and blacktopping of roads leading up to such sites. In 2021, the Commission for Air Quality Management in the National Capital Region and Adjoining Areas (CAQM) recommended the establishment of 'Dust Control and Management Cells'. Following statutory directions from the CAQM, 68 Cells were set up to undertake a comprehensive set of actions, including identifying dust hotspots, paving and repairing roads and roadsides, greening central verges and roadsides, and deploying mechanised road-sweeping machines and anti-smog guns. The CAQM periodically reviews these activities. However, dust from roads and open areas remains a major driver of poor air quality in Delhi-NCR.

To strengthen its approach, the CAQM initiated a study called 'Addressing vehicular traffic-induced road dust resuspension for air quality action plans' in 2025. In the pilot phase, 24% of 82 km of assessed road length was found to be in poor condition, 42% moderate, and 34% good. The CAQM also set up a committee to develop a 'Standard Framework for Controlling Dust Pollution from Roads and Open Areas'.

Both initiatives recommended multiple activities, including paving and greening, for the NCR states as well as additional steps such as digital mapping of all roads in Delhi-NCR and conducting comprehensive road condition surveys.

As is evident, these efforts were focused on Delhi-NCR whereas similar measures and institutional mechanisms are needed across India. Indeed, the Environment (Protection) Act 1986 and



Efforts to control road dust have been underway in India for several years. Representative photo. SUBHASIS DUTTA/UNSPLASH

the Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act 1981 make broad references to road dust management. The Construction and Demolition Waste Management Rules 2025 don't outline specific regulations addressing road dust control at the national scale, however. There are also no standard operating procedures to scientifically dispose of the dust collected by manual and mechanised sweeping to prevent resuspension.

Jurisdictional puzzle

While the NCAP, the CAQM guidelines, and city action plans prioritise control options such as paving roads and roadsides, sprinkling water, and so on, the outcomes remain uneven.

Even with 64% of the total NCAP fund spent on road repair and maintenance, 29 cities have reported an increase in PM₁₀ concentrations. Of the 68 cities where the local PM₁₀ concentration dropped, 61 were above the National Ambient Air Quality Standards, pointing to the limited effectiveness of extant interventions.

One major challenge is fragmented jurisdiction.

Under the NCAP, municipal corporations and State Pollution Control Boards are required to curb road dust. In practice, however, the responsibility is split across multiple agencies. In Delhi, 12 agencies – including the Municipal Corporation, the Delhi Development Authority, the Central Public Works Department, and the National Highways Authority of India – maintain roads. Similarly, 18 agencies are involved in Uttar Pradesh, 22 in Haryana, and 16 in Rajasthan. Without clearly demarcated roles, funds and accountability become

Even with 64% of the NCAP fund spent on maintenance, 29 cities reported an increase in PM₁₀ concentrations. Of the 68 cities where local PM₁₀ concentration dropped, 61 were above the National Ambient Air Quality Standards

diffused. Operational constraints add to the problem. Of Delhi's total road length of 19,000 km, only 8,000 km has been identified for mechanised sweeping. Around 200 mechanised road-sweeping machines (each operating at 40 km/hr) are required to clean this stretch every day. Yet the number of such machines in Delhi is only 85. This gap is much wider in other cities, underscoring the need to properly estimate road length and for machine mapping. Road dust management guidelines should also be established to define the appropriate type of cleaning and maintenance machinery based on road width, surface type, traffic conditions, debris characteristics, water availability, and seasonal variations.

Finally, to ensure agencies coordinate better, a GIS-based platform should be created to allow them to monitor and resolve complaints in real-time, thus improving accountability. Such a system can be integrated with existing applications, such as the Green Delhi App and Swachhata App, to improve coordination and response.

Practical measures

Dust pollution is mainly caused by unscientific practices during road

development and maintenance. The collected dust is typically discarded in landfills or on roadsides, wherefrom the wind easily carries it back into cities, rendering the entire sweeping process ineffective.

Dust suppressant chemicals such as calcium chloride, magnesium chloride, and natural polymer-based agents (e.g. lignosulphate and bitumen-based emulsions) are widely available. However, their effectiveness and impact on soil and road health aren't well documented. We need scientifically informed mitigation strategies, including guidelines for using dust suppressants and scientific disposal mechanisms for collection.

Addressing road and open-area dust across India will require a holistic and time-bound approach, embedded within a long-term, sustainable urban planning framework.

A comprehensive, science-based regulatory mechanism for cleaner road construction and maintenance, considering open roadsides and air quality as critical components of infrastructure development plans, is essential.

Thoughtfully designed and consistently implemented dust control strategies can significantly enhance air quality, protect public health, and help build more resilient and liveable cities.

(Charu Tyagi is a senior associate and Swagata Dey heads the Air Quality Policy and Outreach team, both at the Center for Study of Science, Technology and Policy (CSTEP), a research-based think tank. charudec10@gmail.com, swagata.dey@cstep.in)

THE SCIENCE QUIZ

110 years of general relativity

Vasudevan Mukunth

Question 1

Albert Einstein's theory of general relativity is written in a compact set of linked equations that relate how spacetime responds to how matter and energy are distributed. What are these central mathematical relations, which are often named after Einstein, called?

QUESTION 2

Instead of treating gravity as an invisible pull across empty space, general relativity says that mass and energy tell spacetime how to bend and that bent spacetime tells objects how to move. Name the geometric property of spacetime that describes this bending in the theory.

QUESTION 3

Einstein didn't invent the mathematical tools he needed for general relativity from scratch. Instead he drew on the work of a 19th century Italian mathematician who, with Tullio Levi-Civita, formalised the mathematics of spaces. Name this mathematician, whose contributions to differential geometry eventually made Einstein's theory possible.

QUESTION 4

Before the general theory of relativity, physicists described the attraction between two masses using a simpler theory that treated gravity as a force that acted instantaneously across some distance. Name the originator of this theory, which includes a law saying force depends on the product of the masses and the inverse square of the distance.

QUESTION 5

In order to solve problems in general relativity, physicists need to first describe quantities like energy, momentum, and the properties of spacetime in a way that works in any coordinate system and any direction. Which mathematical tool, which generalises the concept of scalars and vectors to higher dimensions, is used for this purpose?

Answers to November 20 quiz:

1. Bubble separation method in mineral processing – **Ans: Froth flotation**
 2. Selective swapping of ions between solid, liquid phases – **Ans: Ion exchange**
 3. Carbon-based extraction technique in metallurgy – **Ans: Carbothermic reaction**
 4. Liquid medium used in electrorefining methods – **Ans: Molten salts**
 5. Mixtures with lower melting points than their constituents – **Ans: Eutectics**
- Visual: Diamond
First contact: K.N. Viswanathan | Mohammad Sohail | Tamal Biswas | Anmol Agrawal

Please send in your answers to science@thehindu.co.in



Visual: Each exact solution of the mathematical relations of general relativity (Q1) has a name. Name this person, who solved the relations for what space looks like around a spherical and non-rotating black hole, while serving as a soldier in World War I. PUBLIC DOMAIN



Moss growing on bricks. JAMES919 (CC BY-SA)

Moss spores survive space exposure, testing life's bounds

Vasudevan Mukunth

How far can plant life be pushed in harsh environments? Climate change as much as humans' plans for colonies on the moon or Mars makes this question urgent. Scientists already know that some microbes and crop seeds can tolerate heavy doses of radiation, deep cold, and vacuum.

Mosses and other bryophytes were among the first plants to colonise land and have survived repeated shifts in the earth's climate, yet their limits in true space conditions were not well known. Previous space experiments mostly used vascular plants, which have specialised tissues to transport water and minerals through their bodies. Research on mosses stopped at simulations in labs.

In a study published on November 20 in *iScience*, researchers from Japan chose the model moss *Physcomitrium patens* because its life cycle and stress responses have been well studied in the lab. They examined which moss tissues could withstand extreme stress, and whether any of them could stay alive in open space outside the International Space Station (ISS).

The team first compared three moss tissues – young filaments (protonemata), stress-induced brood cells, and spores inside their capsule – in simulated conditions, including intense ultraviolet (UV) light, freezing, high heat, vacuum, and vacuum plus short-wave UV. Then they sent the most resilient stage, spores encased in their sporangium, to a platform outside the ISS for nine months and measured how many spores still

The study strengthened the idea that bryophytes could help green extraterrestrial bases and support life-support systems while giving astrobiologists a clearer view of how robust plant life could be beyond the earth

germinated when they returned.

In the ground tests, protonemata died quickly under strong UV, long freezing at minus 80 °C, and when heated to 55 °C. Brood cells performed better but still failed under the strongest treatments. Spores protected by the sporangium were far tougher: many survived UV doses about 1,000x higher than brood cells, 30 days of deep freezing, and 30 days at 55° C, with only partial loss of germination. They also tolerated nearly a month in high vacuum and strong vacuum-UV with almost no drop in viability. In space, spores from all dark and UV-shielded groups germinated at about 95%, showing that vacuum, temperature swings, and microgravity had little effect. Even in the fully exposed group, which received space UV, about 86% of spores still germinated.

The results suggested while the *P. patens* spores themselves were intrinsically stress-resistant, the sporangium added a protective shell against radiation, temperature extremes, and vacuum – echoing the way seed coats protect embryos in higher plants, and may reflect early evolutionary solutions that helped the first land plants cope with dry, exposed conditions.

By comparing UV tolerance across many organisms, the authors also showed that moss spores rival or exceed famous radiation-resistant microbes and some crop seeds, especially in their ability to handle very-short-wavelength UV. At the same time, the study noted the spores were less impressive at ultra-low temperatures than some tree seeds, that pigment damage could matter over longer missions and estimated that spores might survive 15 years in space based on limited data and needs testing.

Even so, the authors added, their work strengthened the idea that bryophytes could help "green" future extraterrestrial bases and support closed life-support systems while giving astrobiologists a clearer view of how robust plant life could be beyond the earth.

For feedback and suggestions for 'Science', please write to science@thehindu.co.in with the subject 'Daily page'