



Former CJI: opinion given in Presidential Reference does not overrule a judgment

**Krishnadas Rajagopal**  
NEW DELHI

Chief Justice of India B.R. Gavai, who retired from the post on Sunday, said the Presidential Reference opinion against tying Governors to timelines was not intended to shift the burden back on States to run pillar-to-post to get recalcitrant Governors to pass pending Bills on time.

"If the Constitution does not provide for a timeline, we [judiciary] cannot read something that is not there. It is for the Parliament to do that," he said.

He explained that an opinion given in a Presidential Reference did not overrule a judgment but only clarified the law.

"In a Presidential Reference, we cannot overrule a judgment, but we can lay down the law, and while

laying down the law, we can observe that the law laid down in a particular manner [in a judgment] is not correct," he said.

The Presidential Reference was triggered by a judgment in the Tamil Nadu Governor case on April 8, which broke the silence in the Constitution and held that Bills must be cleared by the Governors and President in three months or they would be "deemed" to have got assent. On November 20, a five-judge Bench, in its advisory opinion, contradicted the April 8 judgment and concluded that Governors and the President cannot be forced to follow a timeline.

The clarification came following outrage in Punjab with parties, including the Congress, Shiromani Akali Dal and Aam Aadmi Party, opposing the move which would pave the way for the appointment of an independent administrator in Chandigarh, bringing the joint capital of Punjab and Haryana under the direct control of the Ministry.

The claim over Chandigarh has been a sensitive political issue ever since the Punjab Reorganisation Act of 1966. Currently, the Governor of Punjab serves as its Administrator.

The Centre hurried to issue a clarification on a Bill that aims to align Chandigarh with other Union Territories without legislatures

## The Chandigarh question

On November 21, the Lok Sabha Bulletin listed the Constitution (131st Amendment) Bill, 2025 among 10 Bills for the Winter Session.

Chandigarh has been a sensitive issue since the Punjab Reorganisation Act of 1966. Currently, the Governor of Punjab serves as its Administrator.

No Bill will be introduced in the upcoming Winter Session

**With protests in Punjab, the Ministry issued a clarification**

Proposal is still under consideration, no final decision yet

It does not seek to alter Chandigarh's governance or administrative structure

No Bill will be introduced in the upcoming Winter Session

## Opposition targets BJP over emotive issue

### CHANDIGARH

Political parties on Sunday criticised the BJP even as the Union government clarified that it had no intention of introducing a Bill on Chandigarh in the Winter Session of Parliament. Punjab Congress president Amarinder Singh Raja Warring termed the clarification vague. » PAGE 14

The Ministry said that the "proposal to simplify the Central Government's law-making process for the Union Territory of Chandigarh is still under consideration..."

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**BLO DEATHS**  
**SIR is an imposed oppression: Rahul**

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**UKRAINE PEACE PLAN**  
**Officials discuss proposal**

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**TEJAS CRASH**  
**Experts warn against premature conclusion**

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## Breathless fight



People protesting against air pollution near India Gate in New Delhi. Air quality in the national capital remained in the 'very poor' category on Sunday morning, with overall AQI recorded at 381, according to the Central Pollution Control Board. SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA (REPORT: PAGE 2)

## UNSC reforms no longer an option but a necessity: Modi at IBSA meet

**Press Trust of India**  
JOHANNESBURG

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday said reform of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) was no longer an option but a necessity, and asserted that the India-Brazil-South Africa troika should send a clear message for changes to institutions of global governance.

Addressing the India-Brazil-South Africa (IBSA) leaders summit here, Mr. Modi said that at a time when the world appeared fragmented and divided, the IBSA could provide a



Prime Minister Narendra Modi with South African President Cyril Ramaphosa (left) and Brazil President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva. ANI

message of unity, cooperation, and humanity.

He proposed institutionalising the IBSA NSA-level

meeting to strengthen security cooperation among the three countries.

"In the fight against ter-

rorism, we must move forward in close coordination. There is no place for any double standards on such a serious issue," Mr. Modi said at the meeting attended by South African President Cyril Ramaphosa and Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva.

The Prime Minister said the IBSA was not just a group of three countries but an important platform connecting three continents, three major democratic nations, and three major economies.

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## IN BRIEF



**₹262-crore drugs seized: Shah hails Delhi Police, NCB**

**NEW DELHI**  
Home Minister Amit Shah on Sunday lauded Delhi Police and the Narcotics Control Bureau for seizing 328 kg of drugs worth ₹262 crore from a house in Chhatarpur. » PAGE 2

**High command will take call on leadership: Kharge**

**BENGALURU**  
Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge on Sunday said the party high command will take a call on the leadership tussle in the Congress government in Karnataka. » PAGE 4

**EDUCATIONPLUS** » PAGE 5

## Mind your 'administrative' language, says SC report

Report urges judiciary to stop using words that perpetuate a 'grammar of inequality'; former CJI says continued use of this terminology has 'unintended effect of normalising outdated hierarchies and undermining the respectful work culture'

**Krishnadas Rajagopal**

NEW DELHI

**H**alakhor, cycle sawar, dhobi, coolie, scavenger, masalchi, malan, basta bardhar, chowkidar, and bundle lifter are among the job titles a Supreme Court report wants the judiciary to get rid of.

The report from the court's Centre for Research and Planning says these and several other terms used in the administrative language of the courts perpetuate a "grammar of inequality".

The report, titled "Reforming administrative nomenclature in the Indian judiciary embedding dignity and equity in service rules", explained that the

"grammar of inequality" referred to the "set of unwritten, hierarchical rules inherited from feudal, colonial, and caste-based systems that structure the judiciary's administrative nomenclature".

CJI's foreword  
Former Chief Justice of India B.R. Gavai, in his foreword to the report, said the continued use of this outdated terminology had the "unintended effect of normalising outdated hierarchies and undermining the respectful work culture that the judiciary must uphold".



The Chief Justice, as one of his last acts in office before retiring on Sunday, has sent the report to all the State High Courts with a gentle nudge that updating the judiciary's administrative nomenclature would be a

small but significant step towards affirming the worth of every individual working within the judicial system, regardless of rank or role.

The Centre has found that the archaic terminology were once used as a "powerful tool of dominance that causes 'thingification' of the individual".

"Halakhor" and "scavenger" violate the prohibitions of caste-based discrimination under the Constitution, the report said.

"Align the language of the administration with

the language of the Constitution. Close the gap between what the judiciary pronounces and what it practises. Reaffirm that language itself is the judiciary's first act of justice – an act of recognition, pedagogy, and symbolic justice," the Supreme Court's research centre recommends.

To start with, the report says courts must abandon halakhor for sanitation assistant, dhobi for laundry operator, coolie for freight assistant, cycle sawar for logistics assistant, basta bardhar for document handler, bundle lifter for material coordinator, masalchi for kitchen assistant, malan for horticulture attendant, and scavenger for sanitation assistant.

## The Hindu Bureau

CHENNAI

Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK) chief Vijay alleged on Sunday that the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) has forgotten the principles and ideals of its founder, C.N. Annadurai.

He also accused the ruling party of making "looting as its principle" and speaking about ideologies while burying them in practice.

The actor-turned-politician was addressing party workers in Tamil Nadu's Kancheepuram at a limited-access, indoor meeting held at a private college.

This was Mr. Vijay's first public engagement nearly two months after 41 people died in a stampede at his rally in Karur.

"Personally, we [the

## TVK chief Vijay targets DMK at first meeting after Karur stampede

### The Hindu Bureau

CHENNAI

Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK) chief Vijay alleged on Sunday that the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) has forgotten the principles and ideals of its founder, C.N. Annadurai.

Recalling that he had begun his first public outreach in support of farmers opposing the proposed greenfield airport at Parandur, Mr. Vijay said, "After a period of great turmoil, our public outreach programme has resumed, and it begins again in Kancheepuram. We are following the path shown by Anna [C.N. Annadurai] who said 'Makkalidam Sel (reach out to the people)'.

But those who run the party today have deviated from Anna's principles."

## IN BRIEF



## One jackal found, three others at large; zoo officials on alert

After four jackals escaped from the National Zoological Park (NZP) in Delhi, officials on Sunday guided one of them back to its enclosure, while the other three remain at large. To capture the animals, the zoo has placed trap cages and deployed additional staff. "Teams have been sent out to bring the rest of the animals back into the enclosure," an official said. Animal capture teams and security personnel have been alerted. The joint director of the NZP has been instructed to conduct an inquiry into the matter and submit a report, officials said.

## Delhi Cong. chief alleges vote theft ahead of MCD bypolls

Delhi Pradesh Congress Committee president Devender Yadav has written to State Election Commissioner Vijay Dev alleging vote theft in Ashok Vihar ward ahead of the November 30 Municipal Corporation of Delhi bypolls. There was no immediate reaction from the State Election Commission. Mr. Yadav alleged that the photograph of a voter was found at 91 places in the voters' list of ward number 65, booth number 13, Wazirpur Industrial Area, where mostly labourers reside, "which means the right to vote of 90 people will be taken away under a conspiracy", he alleged. PTI

## Holiday tomorrow to mark martyrdom of Sikh guru

The Delhi government has announced a public holiday on Tuesday to mark the 350th Shaheedi Purab of Guru Tegh Bahadur. Earlier, the government had declared November 25 as a restricted holiday, but on Sunday, it announced a public holiday for all Delhi government offices. Chief Minister Rekha Gupta said that the life and *shahadat* of the Guru stand as an eternal symbol of resistance against tyranny and injustice. She said, "Guru Sahib was a protector of humanity - a divine figure who embraced *shahadat* to uphold the right of every individual to follow their faith without fear." PTI

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NO. 1 (MCOP CASES)  
COIMBATORE  
MCOP No. 1003/2025  
1.V.Haripriya, 2.J.Sujatha,  
3.S.Madhavanan ... Petitioners  
Vs  
H.Jitendra Singh, S/o. Harbarsan  
Singh, No.8, Chakrata Road,  
Kehri Geon, Pren Nagar,  
Dehradun, Uttarakhand - 248002.  
... 1st Respondent  
**NOTICE**  
Take notice that the Petition filed by the said petitioners seeking compensation for death of M. Karthik who was killed in a motor vehicle accident on 29.05.2022. Above said matter has been posted on 18.12.2025 at 10.30 am for your appearance. Therefore, you are hereby called upon to enter appearance either in person or through an advocate. Failing which the case will be decided against you as set apart.  
Dr.R.Shamugam, M.A., B.L.Ph.D.,  
S.Priya, B.A., B.L.,  
Advocates, Coimbatore,  
Cell No. 98432402.

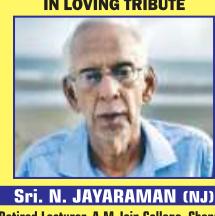
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COMMISSION

'A' BLOCK 1st Floor, Vikas  
Bhawan, I.P. Estate, New  
Delhi-110002  
No. FA-548/23 Dated  
28/07/2025

In the Matter of :  
Devyani International Ltd.  
Vs.

Mr. Kamal Anand  
1. Mr. Kamal Anand 45/7  
Rajpur Road, Civil Lines,  
Delhi-110054

Whereas an Appeal / complaint  
against you ( Copy Enclosed )  
has been made to this  
Commission for Adjudication.  
You are hereby summoned to appear in this Commission in  
person or by a pleader or an  
authorized agent duly instructed  
and able to answer all the  
material question in relation to  
the appeal/complaint on  
18/09/2025 at 10:30 a.m. sharp.  
you are further directed to file  
complete reply of your defense  
on the aforesaid date and take  
note that default of your  
appearance on the said date the  
matter will be heard and  
determined in your absence,  
given under my hand and the  
seal of this Commission on  
28/07/2025  
Registrar  
State Commission

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Sri. N. JAYARAMAN (N.J.)  
(Retired Lecturer, A.M Jain College, Chennai)

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Daughters-in-law: Ramya & Jayashree,  
Grandsons: Vidyut, Prahlad and Srujan,  
Brother: Mohan & Sister: Meena

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# Protesters demand clean air amid worsening pollution; 5 detained

Police used force, female protesters faced rough handling by male officers, say demonstrators who gathered at India Gate; 271 water sprinklers operating continuously across 2,000 km of roads, teams fully mobilised in 'war against pollution': CM

**The Hindu Bureau**  
NEW DELHI

**F**ive persons were detained on Sunday when a group of 50-60 protesters gathered at India Gate to highlight Delhi's worsening air quality and demand action against the pollution crisis.

The protest began around 4 p.m. and continued for more than two hours despite repeated interventions and forceful dispersal attempts by the police. "We gathered at India Gate for a peaceful protest aimed at drawing the Delhi government's attention to the worsening air quality. Instead of listening to our concerns, the police brutally manhandled our members and tried to suppress the agitation," said Kranti, from Himkhand, one of the participating groups.

**Heavy deployment**

The protesters said that five among them were detained and taken to the Parliament Street police station. Personnel from the local police station, along with the CRPF's Rapid Ac-



People protesting against rising air pollution near India Gate in New Delhi on Sunday. SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

tion Force, were deployed in large numbers around the site. "We were putting forth our demands peacefully. But the heavy deployment tried to restrict our movement and physically removed several members from the protest site. Many of our female members were also manhandled by male officers," said another participant. A similar anti-pollution protest was held on November 9.

Even as the protest un-

folded, the Capital's air quality remained in the 'very poor' category on Sunday and is expected to stay at similar levels for the next six days.

**No immediate relief**

Delhi's 24-hour average air quality index (AQI) at 4 p.m. stood at 391, up from 370 a day earlier, according to the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB). Neighbouring cities re-

cords even worse conditi-

ons, with Noida, Hapur and Ghaziabad in Uttar Pradesh reporting 'severe' air quality, a level known to affect even healthy individuals and impact people with existing respiratory or cardiac conditions.

An AQI between 301 and 400 is categorised as 'very poor', while readings between 401 and 500 fall under the 'severe' category.

The Air Quality Early Warning System for Delhi has predicted that the Cap-

ital will remain in the 'very poor' category between November 24 and 25.

**Action on every front**

Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta said that 271 water sprinklers were operating round the clock, spraying nearly one lakh litres of treated water across 2,000 km of roads and major hotspots. "For pollution control, our teams are engaged in on-ground action on every front and are working with full readiness," she wrote on X, calling it part of Delhi's "war against pollution".

The protest came a day after the Commission for Air Quality Management in NCR and Adjoining Areas (CAQM) revised the Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP), tightening emergency measures.

Delhi-NCR has been under Stage III of GRAP since November 11. The CAQM has now directed governments to consider allowing public, municipal, and private offices to function with 50% staff on site and the rest working from home, a provision earlier reserved for Stage IV.

**Cyber-slavery:  
4 Delhiites  
among 500  
rescued from  
Myanmar**

**Shrimansi Kaushik**  
NEW DELHI

Four among the nearly 500 Indian nationals rescued recently from "cyber-slavery" in Myanmar hailed from the national capital, a Delhi police officer said on Sunday.

"Cyber-slavery" refers to the trafficking of individuals through fake job offers, who, upon joining, are coerced physically and psychologically into participating in organised cyberfraud activities.

According to the officer, one of the four from Delhi was trafficked in July and the remaining three in August. The cyberfraud operators in Myanmar allegedly told the victims to cough up \$4,000 for their release or remain captive.

"The only way out of these confinements is paying \$4,000 [nearly 36 lakh] or a military operation that raids such compounds and frees those trapped inside," said Vinit Kumar, DCP (Intelligence Fusion and Strategic Operations).

On Friday, Delhi Police arrested two men - Danish Raja, 24, and Harsh, 30 - for recruiting and trafficking Indians to Myanmar.

## Shah hails police, NCB for seizing ₹262-crore drugs, busting cartel

**The Hindu Bureau**  
NEW DELHI

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Sunday lauded Delhi Police and the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) for seizing 328 kg of high-quality methamphetamine worth ₹262 crore from a house in Chhattarpur, saying the government is "shattering drug cartels at an unprecedented pace".

The joint NCB-Delhi Police team busted the cartel on November 20 as part of 'Operation Crystal Fortress', which targets high-volume synthetic drug networks.

In a post on X, Mr. Shah said the joint operation was a "brilliant example of seamless multi-agency coordination" to achieve Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of a drug-free India.

Fiercely pursuing the top-to-bottom and bottom-to-top approach to the investigation of drugs, a breakthrough was achieved by seizing 328 kg of methamphetamine



Police busted the cartel as part of Operation Crystal Fortress.

SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

worth ₹262 crore in New Delhi and arresting two.

Congratulations to the joint team of NCB and Delhi Police," he wrote.

Two persons, including a woman from Nagaland, were arrested after the drugs were seized from her residence. Officials said the network's operatives have been identified, including the kingpin operating from abroad, who is also wanted in connection with last year's seizure of 82.5 kg of cocaine in Delhi by the NCB.

Efforts are on in coordination with international enforcement partners to secure his deportation to India to face legal proceedings, they added.

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## Residents call for tighter regulation of waste plants under GRAP norms

**Suruchi Kumari**  
NEW DELHI

Harbai, a 56-year-old resident of Metro Vihar JJ Colony in north-west Delhi's Bawana, says she often clears layers of black ash from the terrace of her four-storey residence. "A few years ago, we couldn't figure out where all this dust was coming from. But now we know there is a plant nearby that burns garbage, which emits this black ash," she recalls.

Her neighbour, 59-year-old Somvati, says she struggles with breathlessness every morning. "It feels like some residue always sits in my throat. People with asthma or other lung problems suffer even more," she says.

Less than 2 km away stands the 24 MW waste-to-energy (WTE) plant, run through a public-private partnership between the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) and Re-Sustainability. Residents of nearby villages, Holambi Khurd, Sonath, Holambi Kalan and Naya Bans, report similar health con-

cerns. On the day of *The Hindu*'s visit, the air quality index (AQI) in the Bawana Industrial Area was slightly higher than that of New Delhi.

Even during GRAP III restrictions, which curb industrial activity, these plants continue operating because they are classified as "essential services".

Delhi's four WTE plants in Bawana, Tekhand, Okhla, and Ghaziabad operate round the clock and together process around 7,500 tonnes of the 11,300 tonnes of mixed waste generated daily. The remaining waste piles up in landfills. Government rules mandate regular health fa-

cilities and medical camps for residents within a 5-km radius of such plants. But villagers say these are rare. "There are so many industries here now. We are told everything is safe, but we live with the impact," said Lekh Ram, 49, from Holambi Khurd.

**Segregation gaps**

At the Bawana facility, a senior employee said around 85 garbage trucks arrive daily and often make multiple rounds, and over 200 workers handle the waste.

"All the waste is segregated. Machines sort it in several rounds, but they can only do so much, given the condition in which we

receive it," he said.

He insisted that the plant follows all prescribed norms, provides safety gear to workers, and undergoes DPCC inspections every three months.

A Jindal Group representative, which operates the Okhla and Tekhand plants, said fly ash and bottom ash are stored in sealed silos or sent to approved landfills, while plants use flue-gas systems to trap acidic pollutants.

Plastics like PVC are separated before burning to prevent the release of toxic fumes.

Parth Kumar of the Centre for Science and Environment said proper source segregation is essential as toxins remain in combustible material when waste arrives mixed.

"These plants are inside the city where people live. When residents raise concerns, GRAP-like norms should be prepared," Mr. Kumar said, adding that industries here now. We are told everything is safe, but we live with the impact," said Lekh Ram, 49, from Holambi Khurd.

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## Tejas crash: Wing Commander Namansh Syal cremated with full military honours in H.P.

**The Hindu Bureau**  
COIMBATORE

Wife of Wing Commander Namansh Syal, killed in the Tejas crash at the Dubai Air show on November 21, bid goodbye to her husband while their six-year-old daughter held on to her as his mortal remains were consigned to flames in Himachal Pradesh's Kangra district on Sunday.

Syal's wife Afshan is also an Indian Air Force (IAF) officer.

His cousin lit the pyre in the presence of Indian Air Force and civic officials, politicians and locals, who had lined up to pay their last respects to their dear 'Nammu'. For the locals, Syal, who was in his mid-30s, remains an outstanding athlete distinguished by his dedication to the country, "who even set an example in death by diverting the aircraft to save thousands present at the mega air show".

The Wing Commander was attached to IAF's No.45 Squadron (Flying Daggers) based at Air Force Station Sulur in Coimbatore, one of the two Squadrons oper-



IAF officer Afshan salutes her husband, Wing Commander Namansh Syal, as she pays her last respects to him, in Kangra on Sunday. ANI

ating Light Compact Aircraft (LCA) HAL Tejas.

On Sunday morning, mortal remains of Syal was brought to the Sulur Air Force Station and was placed on the tarmac. IAF officials, Coimbatore District Collector Pavankumar G. Giriyappanavar, and Coimbatore District Superintendent of Police K. Karthikeyan paid their respects to the deceased fighter pilot.

Sources said the mortal remains were later flown to Himachal Pradesh on an IAF aircraft. The body was then taken to his native Patiyalkar village in an Army truck bedecked with flow-

ers and followed by a convoy of armed forces and civilian vehicles.

Hundreds of people lined up en route while patriotic slogans and rallying cries, such as 'Jab Tak Suraj Chaand Rahega, Nammu Tera Naam Rahega', rent the air.

### Stalin condoles death

In a social media post, Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin said, "Tamil Nadu pays its tributes to him, who served in the IAF unit in Sulur. My deep condolences to his family members. His courage remains immortal."

(With inputs from PTI)

## Kerala govt. to move court if Bills are kept pending for long

**K.S. Sudhi**  
KOCHI

The Kerala government will approach the courts to get the Bills that are pending with either the President or the Governor passed, after waiting for a "reasonable time" as indicated in a Supreme Court advisory.

"The Kerala government will seek legal remedy if the Bills are not cleared after a reasonable time," said P. Rajeeve, State Minister for Law.

In its recent advisory opinion on a Presidential Reference on the judiciary's authority to impose timelines for the Governors and the President on the State Bills sent to them, the Supreme Court had indicated that only a limited judicial review was possible in the case of such Bills pending beyond a reasonable time.

However, the State government may have to get some clarity on when to initiate legal action, as the Supreme Court had not elaborated on the 'reasonable time' in the advisory, legal sources pointed out.

Some of the Bills pending with the President include the University Laws (Amendment) Bill 2025 and the Kerala State Private Universities (Establishment and Regulation) Bill 2025.

**Concurrent subjects**  
The State government had sent two Bills, the Wildlife Protection (Kerala Amendment) Bill 2025 and the Prevention of Cruelty to



Minister P. Rajeeve

## Bandh called by Maoists passes off peacefully in A.P.

**The Hindu Bureau**  
CHINTOOR

The one-day bandh called by the outlawed Communist Party of India (Maoist) against the Maredumilli encounters ended peace-

fully in Alluri Sitarama Raju district of Andhra Pradesh on Sunday.

However, 'Operation Sambhav', in which top Maoist leader Madvi Hidma was killed in the Maredumilli encounter on No-

vember 19, remains active in the Maredumilli Agency. At least 13 Maoists have been killed in the operation during the two encounters in Maredumilli Agency on November 18 and 19.

Rampachodavaram Deputy Superintendent of Police G. Sai Prasanth told *The Hindu* that there was no response from the public to the bandh call given by the Maoists in the Rampachodavaram division.

However, inter-State bus services from Odisha, Chhattisgarh, and Telangana were halted or diverted on the tri-State border at Chintoor in Alluri Sitarama Raju district on Sunday night.

V-P. Naidu, Revanth pay tributes to Sathya Sai Baba

**The Hindu Bureau**  
PUTTAPARTHI

Vice-President C.P. Radhakrishnan, Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu, Telangana Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy and several other dignitaries participated in the celebrations of the 100th birth anniversary of Sri Sathya Sai Baba at Puttaparthi in Andhra Pradesh.

Mr. Radhakrishnan recalled Sathya Sai Baba's large-scale humanitarian initiatives, particularly drinking water projects..

Mr. Naidu described November 23, 1926, as the divine advent of a figure who changed millions through unconditional love.

**Timings**  
**DELHI**

|                      |
|----------------------|
| MONDAY, NOV. 24      |
| RISE 06:51 SET 17:25 |
| RISE 10:20 SET 20:34 |
| 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 |

|                      |         |
|----------------------|---------|
| <b>Delhi Weather</b> | max min |
| Delhi City           | 27 10   |
| Safdarjang           | 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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## Opposition demands EC action against Ajit Pawar's 'no votes, no funds' remark

Political parties question 'silence' of poll panel; NCP says Maharashtra Deputy CM's comments are explicit threat to the democratic rights of the people; Chief Minister downplays the controversy

**The Hindu Bureau**  
MUMBAI

The Opposition on Sunday demanded action by the Election Commission (EC) against Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar over his recent comments during election campaigning for Malegaon Nagar Panchayat elections, alluding to an alleged threat to voters. The Deputy Chief Minister defended his statement, while Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis sought to downplay the controversy.

"Where did I threaten? You saw in Bihar too. [RJD's] Tejashwi [Yadav] said in Bihar that each household will get a job. Everyone has the right to say what they want to say. It is the voters who take a call on who to vote for. The voters are smart. They will decide," Mr. Pawar told presspersons on Sunday.

The statement came a



A video of Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar allegedly linking development funds to votes triggered a political storm. FILE PHOTO

day after a video clip emerged in which he was seen speaking at a public event, saying, "If you elect all the 18 candidates, I will give you what I have committed. But if you cut on something, even I will put a cut. You have your vote in your hands, I have funds in my hands."

When asked about it, Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis said, "Everyone says things during elections. That does not mean

anything. Once we get elected, we all work together for the progress of the entire State."

### 'EC's responsibility'

The Opposition asked why the EC had not taken cognisance of the remarks and sought action against the Deputy Chief Minister. Supriya Sule, MP of the NCP SP and Mr. Pawar's cousin, said it was the moral responsibility of the Election Commission to keep a

check on such statements.

Maheesh Tapase, spokesperson of the Nationalist Congress Party (Sharadchandra Pawar), issued a strong condemnation, saying it amounted to an explicit threat against the democratic rights of the people.

He sought immediate and stringent action from the EC. "How long can the Election Commission remain a silent spectator while a prominent State leader openly threatens voters and tries to leverage State resources for political gain? The ECI must take immediate action against Mr. Ajit as per the law," he said.

Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Ambadas Danve said that the Deputy CM was a mere custodian of public money, and not the owner. "This is like threatening voters. The funds do not come from his personal funds. It is tax-payer's money. Why is the Election Commission silent on it?" he asked.

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## Three of family killed in Ajmer

**Press Trust of India**  
JAIPUR

Three members of a family, including an 11-year-old boy, were killed after a trailer truck rammed into their car on National Highway 89 in Ajmer district of Rajasthan on Sunday, police said.

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## IN BRIEF

Telangana Rising summit:  
CM reviews arrangements

Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy reviewed preparations for the Telangana Rising Global Summit, scheduled to be held on December 8 and 9 at Bharat Future City in Hyderabad. The summit is being positioned as a flagship event to project the State as one of India's most dynamic and emerging global destinations for investment and innovation. During his inspection, the CM instructed the administration to ensure hassle-free movement and services for all visiting representatives, which might include ambassadors of various countries. Telangana Rising 2047, the vision document charting the State's path to becoming a \$3 trillion economy by 2047, will be unveiled at the summit.

12 medical store owners held  
for illegal cough syrup trade

An FIR has been registered in Uttar Pradesh's Jaunpur against 12 medical store owners and two others for allegedly running a large illegal trade of codeine-based cough syrup, a senior officer said on Sunday. The accused have been booked for fraud and criminal conspiracy, he said. A drug department probe found that more than 37 lakh bottles of codeine syrup worth around ₹57 crore were shown as sold through forged documents by over a dozen medical stores. The supply, sourced from a Ranchi-based firm, was routed on paper to several U.P. districts but was actually smuggled to States like Bihar, Jharkhand and West Bengal for illegal sale. PTI

## 'Will connect with youth': Pratibha Singh backs new Himachal Congress president



"The appointment has been made thoughtfully. We are grateful to the Congress high command for appointing Vinay Kumar, a

young face representing Sirmaur district," she said.

The Congress said it has reposed faith in a young leader from the reserved category to lead the State with a sizeable Dalit population, according to sources.

Mr. Kumar was the Deputy Speaker and tendered his resignation, which Speaker Kuldip Pathania accepted on Saturday.

A three-term Dalit MLA

from Sri Renukaji in Sirmaur, he was born in an agriculturist Koli family in Renukaji. His father Prem Singh also served as an MLA representing the Renukaji seat four times before his demise in 2011.

The appointment of a new chief had been held up for a while after the previous State unit headed by Ms. Singh was dissolved on November 6 last year.

Artistes glorifying gun culture in songs  
will face strict action, says Haryana DGP

O.P. Singh linked gun culture in music to a high crime rate among the youth. FILE PHOTO

paign being carried out in the State to track down cri-

SIT probing shifting  
of Sabarimala panels  
to homes for worshipG. Anand  
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Gold-clad plates being removed for scientific tests as part of the probe into the alleged gold theft at the Sabarimala temple. PTI

serve notices on Mr. Jayaram and others.

However, the officials noted that the High Court had frowned on the use of the TDB-owned artefacts, which they said fall within the broad category of government property, for personal gratification, and that such misuse entailed substantial legal jeopardy. Hence, they said the SIT needed to summon those connected with the offence for questioning.

Meanwhile, the SIT is also reportedly investigating the possibility, flagged by the court, that the suspects had replicated the panels to sell the originals to collectors, while returning the replicas as originals to the temple after "restoration" at a factory in Chennai.

The Kerala High Court-appointed Special Investigation Team (SIT) probing the misappropriation of Sabarimala Ayyappa temple artefacts is reportedly inching closer to fixing legal accountability for chartering the gold-plated copper panels to wealthy worshippers for private veneration at their homes and business premises.

Social media videos showing the main suspect Unnikrishnan Potti offering puja to the gilded panels covering the doorway of the sanctum sanctorum on the private premises of celebrities, notably actor Jayaram, in 2019 had gone viral after the Vigilance wing of the Travancore Devaswom Board (TDB), flagged the issue in October 2025.

Likewise, the TDB Vigilance also yielded evidence, including video footage of Mr. Potti offering puja to the gold-plated copper moulds encasing the *Dwarapalaka* figurines at the homes of his wealthy patrons in Bengaluru, Hyderabad, and Chennai.

Given the High Court's order forbidding the public disclosure of information concerning the case, officials were non-committal on whether the SIT would

minals. "Singers who promote gang lifestyles to youth through music and videos, driven by money and power, should be treated as criminals and strict legal action should be taken against them," he wrote.

Earlier this year, the Haryana police had taken down about 10 songs allegedly promoting gun culture from various social

media platforms.

**Targeting a few'**  
However, several artistes from the music industry had accused the police of "picking and choosing" to target a few singers. The issue had also resonated in the State Assembly during the Budget session in February, with legislators seeking a lenient view of the matter.

## The family packs of Bihar

In the recent Assembly poll, sons and daughters of MPs and MLAs were thrown into the fray. Those who won say it is a sign of their work and potential, and not only their legacy that translated into votes



**Kinship matters:** (From left) Deepak Prakash, son of Rashtriya Lok Morcha leader Upendra Kushwaha, became a Minister in the new government; Santosh Kumar Suman is the son of Hindustani Awam Morcha (Secular) leader Jitan Ram Manjhi and a Bihar Minister; and Samrat Choudhary, the Deputy Chief Minister of Bihar and son of Samta Party legislator Shakuni Choudhary. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

This step was not just necessary but inevitable to save and sustain the party's existence and future." Without naming Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) leader Tejashwi Yadav, 36, Lalu Prasad Yadav's son, who hasn't finished school, he said, "Deepak Prakash is not a student who failed in school." All that the electorate needs to do is "give him a little time to live up to their trust", he said.

During the RJD's rule, Samrat Choudhary was made Agriculture Minister in 1999 when he was not a member of either the Legislative Assembly or the Council. He was subsequently removed because of an age discrepancy. Samrat switched to the BJP about seven years ago, rising as an OBC leader, and is

now the Deputy CM and the Home Minister in Nitish's government. This is the first time in 20 years that Nitish has given this portfolio to someone else.

Samrat is the son of veteran Koeri leader Shakuni Choudhary. He contested the election after a gap of 15 years from the Tarapur seat. His father was an MLA from the Samta Party, switching to the Congress and later the RJD, representing Tarapur six times.

The Hindustani Awam Morcha (Secular) saw its founder Jitan Ram Manjhi, 81, a Union Minister, give out tickets to his daughter-in-law Deepa Kumari, 38, who contested and won from the Imamganj seat; and her mother Jyoti Devi, 60, who won from the Barachatti seat. His son, San-

Prasad's family, which she claimed did not start by working at the grassroots. Tejashwi was a cricketer before he entered politics. Lalu had made his wife, Rabri Devi, the CM overnight in 1997, when there were allegations of him being embroiled in the multi-crore fodder scam. She had no political experience then, but survived as a CM for seven years, she said.

## From old hands to new

Another leader from Bihar who faced criticism for promoting his family members was the late Ram Vilas Paswan, who pushed his brothers Pashupati Kumar Paras, 73, and the late Ram Chandra Paswan into politics. His son and Union Minister Chirag Paswan, 43, from the Lok Janshakti Party (Ram Vilas), follows in his footsteps. His brother-in-law Arun Bharti, 49, is an MP from the Jamui Lok Sabha seat and during the Assembly election, he gave his nephew, Simant Minal, a ticket to contest from the Garkha Assembly seat.

In 2019, out of six MPs from the party, three were from the Paswan family.

In an interview, Chirag had said, "I am a nepo kid; I can't shy away from the fact..." He joked that he tried other professions but failed. He said it was a double-edged sword: if someone like him did well, it was attributed to his parents; if he didn't, people would say he has sunk the

family name.

Chetan Anand, 33, the son of former MP and don-turned-politician Anand Mohan, dubbed as Sher-e-Bihar in the Kosi region, won from the Nabinagar Assembly seat on a Janata Dal (United) ticket.

Chetan won the 2020 Assembly election on an RJD ticket from Sheohar seat, but joined the Nitish Kumar camp during the trust vote last year. His mother, Lovely Anand, 59, is a JD(U) MP from Sheohar Lok Sabha seat. Chetan has

no hesitation in accepting that family politics is part of regional politics. "I started my political career when my father was in jail, and had no one's support. I have made my political identity based on my hard work," he says, adding that his mother became an MP much before his father did. "Let people decide whether the family member concerned is capable or not. People are wise enough to choose, and they always elect the right person irrespective of caste, religion, or whether they are from an influential family."

Osama Shahab, 31, is another MLA with a family history of politics. He won the Raghu Nathpur seat on an RJD ticket. His father, the late Mohammad Shahabuddin, don-turned-politician, once spread terror not only in Siwan but in neighbouring districts like Gopalganj and Saran.

His father was a four-

time parliamentarian from Siwan and two-time MLA from the Ziradei seat. Shahabuddin died while serving a life sentence in a double-murder case in Tihar jail in May 2021 during the COVID-19 pandemic. "You are calling it nepotism, but I see it as people's support. My father is no more with me and despite that I have won the election. The good work he did for the people of Siwan is still in their minds," Osama asserts.

**The upper hand'**  
Sanjay Kumar, a former associate professor of Political Science at A.N. College, Patna, says compared with other candidates, the children of politicians have the upper hand as they get a well-established social and political set-up. "New candidates take time to win the trust of voters whereas politicians' children already have a relationship with society. It's a different thing that they are recognised both in a bad and good way," he says.

For instance, Tejashwi has fought two consecutive elections with the 'jungle raj' tag attached to the family name despite the fact that he had nothing to do with it. However, because of his family, he gets the Muslim-Yadav vote bank.

In 2021, Prime Minister Narendra Modi called political dynasties the "biggest enemies of democracy".

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## Soma Basu

Steve Jobs revolutionised our lives with smartphones by applying the principles of graphic design to personal computing. The Welsh School of Architecture is delving into how design can shape a supportive and nurturing end-of-life environment.

Closer home, Bengaluru-based preventive healthcare service, NURA, works with hospitals to train and empower family caregivers to improve patient outcomes in healing at home.

This ability to synthesise and formulate creative solutions is a skill increasingly in demand and necessary to shape the future, says American designer-educator Sandy Speicher, who emphasises that design is the next big thing in education. Usually understood in terms of fashion, interiors, and aesthetics, design is also about creating human-centred, sustainable experiences that work in favour of people.

"Design education is not for self but public service; it is about how to make communities happy and prosperous," said Speicher, during an interview while on a visit to India to forge connections with institutions willing to integrate innovative design thinking with different academic streams. "It is the only way forward to navigate modern complexities."



## Design for the future

Designer-educator Sandy Speicher explains why design thinking is an effective tool to promote multi-sectoral learning across disciplines.

### Systemic and savvy

The former CEO of the global design firm IDEO, Speicher is currently an advisor at the BITS School of Design in Mumbai. She feels that, while India provides abundant opportunities for future careers and is a fantastic place to brainstorm ideas, "the country lacks a design identity. There is a need to harness the power of

design thinking across all disciplines."

Design has to be systemic and savvy to community needs and offer real-time benefits to people. "In the social space, human-centred designing is happening, but it is not visible yet in the education sector. Learning about what support people need is how design ought to be taught and

understood."

Take the case of pollution in Delhi. How can design thinking address the root causes, which come from population, human behaviour, geographical landscape and vagaries of weather?

The issue is not – and should not be – the concern of environmentalists or scientists alone. Experts cutting across spe-

cialisations should feel the pain, imagine what can be done to alleviate the situation, execute a pro-active plan, and keep sharing the same.

"This is how design thinking operates: feel, imagine, do, and share. Every curriculum should sensitise students and turn them into mini-investigators in their respective fields of knowledge and steer them to problem-solving at every level, from local to global," says Speicher. According to her, the skills to bridge knowledge gaps independently, collaboratively, and resourcefully are most relevant today. A heart to build livelihoods and being sensitive to who is left out should be at the core of one's development.

Everybody thinks and acts like a designer; teachers are designers, but they neither know it nor have the language for it. When design keeps the human being at the centre of education instead of being more engineering or policy focused, it is then sustainable.

Speicher says recognising design as a process creates deeper understanding and empathy. "It is vital to be attuned to people's needs, feel for the community, and support with simple solu-

tions, highlighting the success of a project in Latin America where she helped scale a network of schools in Peru and made education affordable for the country's growing middle class.

### Successful projects

"We introduced a blended learning approach with indoor and outdoor classrooms and did away with rote learning. Students were given 'me time' to develop other skills or pursue research of their interest. The classrooms were turned into flexible spaces to accommodate more or fewer students. We also developed a database of 18,000 lesson plans for the teachers," she explains. Since 2011, Innova has grown to 80 schools

[Every curriculum should sensitise students and turn them into mini-investigators in their respective fields and steer them to problem-solving at every level, from local to global](#)



with 80,000 students, expanded to Mexico, and has inspired similar education models worldwide.

In India, she worked with Kiran Bir Sethi on the Design for Change challenge for the pre-teens (10 to 13 years). The outlines are processed for children to create new ideas with innovative solutions. "To feel for another community and see another world beyond theirs imparts the power of 'I can' to the students."

Today, creative leaps are crucial without losing sight of the intersection of design, leadership and social impact. The pandemic taught us to focus on our relationships with everything – our work, organisations, other humans, and the planet – and is also shaping learning environments.

"The best breakthroughs come with empathy and creativity. Good design projects bring the shared intent, vision and aligned commitments to improve the world and solve complex problems."

According to her, programmes that provide students with holistic transdisciplinary education practised through future-forward human-centred research will have an edge over others in the coming years. "Future design leaders have to be creative thinkers, problem identifiers and solvers, and aesthetically sensitive to responsibly simplify work in multidisciplinary groups."

## SCHOLARSHIPS

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Courtesy: buddy4study.com

## Master time management

Uncertain about your career options?  
Low on self-confidence?  
This column may help

I am a B.Sc. (Hons) Agriculture graduate. I have a strong interest in finance. How can I switch my domain? Vijay

Dear Vijay,

While it is possible to switch, you will need to acquire the foundational knowledge first. NSE's Certification in Financial Markets (NCFM) has modules like fundamental analysis, mutual funds, and currency derivatives, which are great short-term accredited certifications. The CFA, a rigorous and globally recognised qualification, is the gold standard for investment roles. The Post Graduate Certificate in Business Finance from NISM is another good option.

Take online courses such as Introduction to Corporate Finance, Financial Markets, Financial Modelling, and Investment Management from top universities. If you enjoy all this, consider an MBA in Finance or a Master's in Finance. Your unique profile can be a great differentiator in the admission process.

I am in Class 10. I want to study at IIT, but not Engineering. Are there other courses? Also, I want to join the Indian Army. What should I do for that? Reitha

Dear Reitha,  
The main non-Engineering programmes in IITs are B.Sc. in Pure Sciences (a four-year programme in Physics, Chemistry, and Maths), the five-year Dual Degree Programmes (B.Sc. + M.Sc.), five-year Integrated M.A. in

and Governance (ESG) team to manage its environmental footprint, ensure regulatory compliance, and prepare sustainability reports. The CSR departments often fund and manage many environmental projects.

In the public sector and government, jobs are available in pollution control boards for scientists, environmental engineers, and analysts. The Ministries of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Jal Shakti, and Urban Development hire consultants and permanent staff for various projects. NGOs and international agencies also hire experts.

A Master's degree from a reputed foreign university is the most effective way to secure a job overseas. Job opportunities abroad are more structured and well-paying.

North America and Europe have stringent environmental laws that drive demand in consulting, government agencies, corporate sustainability, and the clean or greentech sector. Australia and West Asia offer roles in desalination, water recycling, and mining environmental management. Southeast Asia's rapid industrialisation needs environmental consultants to manage pollution and water resources.

Choose your PG specialisation wisely and look for programmes that are application-oriented and align with high-demand areas. Prioritise universities with strong placement records and industry connections. If you have a passion for research, a Ph.D. opens doors to advanced roles in academia, government labs, and the corporate sector.

**Disclaimer:** This column is merely a guiding voice and provides advice and suggestions on education and careers.

The writer is a practising counsellor and a trainer. Send your questions to [eduplus.thehindu@gmail.com](mailto:eduplus.thehindu@gmail.com) with the subject line Off the Edge.



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Cyber-slavery: 3 held for sending youth from Uttarakhand to Myanmar

**Press Trust of India**

Three individuals involved in fraudulently transporting people to Myanmar through Thailand to commit cybercrimes have been arrested, the Uttarakhand Special Task Force (STF) announced on Sunday.

According to the STF, the arrested individuals are among those whose names emerged during interrogation of nine victims from Bageshwar, Pithoragarh, and Udhampur districts, who were recently repatriated from Myanmar.

It stated that several Indian youth from various states, including Uttarakhand, who were living illegally in KK Park in Myawaddy town, Myanmar, were repatriated. The nine youth from Uttarakhand were brought here from Delhi and handed over to their families.

**'Defrauded victims'**  
The STF stated that during interrogation, it emerged that Indian agents, under an organised scheme, allegedly defrauded these youths of substantial sums of money, sent them abroad using Thai visas, and then illegally sent them to Myawaddy.

Preliminary investigations revealed that Indian agents contacted the victims in person or through mobile applications such as Telegram and WhatsApp, and after extorting money, sent them to Bangkok.

## Allay fears of people over SIR, Bengal Governor tells EC

Bose's call comes amid the BJP's allegation of 'change of demography' in border districts of State due to illegal immigration and the TMC's charge of '100-150 voters being deleted' from every booth

**Shiv Sahay Singh**  
KOLKATA

West Bengal Governor C.V. Ananda Bose on Sunday urged the Election Commission (EC) to allay fears of people over the special intensive revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in the State.

"There are various fears among people about SIR. Incidents like suicide have happened. In this context, the EC and the State government should meet more to allay people's fears about SIR," the Governor said.

He added he would do everything in his capacity to allay these fears. Speaking to presspersons, the Governor, who completed three years in office on the day, said that his priority remained a violence-free and corruption-free West Bengal. "I will work for Bengal, especially for women and children. I want to build a



**Public outcry:** Congress activists protest against the special intensive revision procedure, in Kolkata on November 20. PTI

violence-free, corruption-free Bengal," he said.

On reports that people have gathered in large numbers along the borders with Bangladesh, particularly at the Hakimpur outpost, the Governor said that he would have to visit the field to understand the situation on the ground.

Over the past few days, the BJP leadership has alleged the demography of

the State has been changed in border districts due to illegal infiltration from Bangladesh.

Leader of the Opposition Suvendu Adhikari raised the issue in meeting with Deputy Election Commissioner Gyanshankar Bharati.

On Sunday, BJP leader Amit Malviya, in a social media post, said that between 2002 – when the SIR was last conducted by the EC – and 2025, West Bengal

has seen a 66% increase in the number of registered voters from 4.58 crore to 7.63 crore. "EC data shows that among the top 10 districts with the highest increase in voters, nine share a border with Bangladesh," Mr. Malviya said.

The BJP leader said the top of among these nine districts are: Uttar Dinajpur (105.49% increase), Malda (94.58%), Murshidabad (87.65%), South 24 Parganas (83.30%) and Jalpaiguri (82.3%). Mr. Malviya said the only non-border district in the top 10 is Birbhum (73.44%).

### Fire in SIR camp

The TMC on Sunday claimed that a SIR assistance camp set up by the party was set on fire at Kalyani in West Bengal's Nadia district and blamed BJP for the act. A district BJP leader denied the claim and added it was a result of infighting within the ruling party.

## Unrealistic targets causing immense stress, say BLOs

**Meghna M.**  
CHENNAI

Mangalam (name changed), a Booth Level Officer (BLO) from Erode, has no time to spare for herself. It was 9 p.m. when she explained her role as a BLO. "I can't take a moment to even calm myself. They have told me that I need to upload the details of 100 forms today. I'm not sure how it can be done," said the 54-year-old.

As many as 68,467 BLOs, who are anganwadi workers, midday meal assistants, teachers, and revenue staff, among others, have been deputed across Tamil Nadu to finish the Election Commission of India's (EC) Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls, which is due on December 4. According to the EC, there are 6,41,44,587 electors in Tamil Nadu and every BLO has at least 1,000 voters in their respective wards. It's a race against time to complete the process while managing their regular employment.

An anganwadi worker in



The women who have been deputed as BLOs say they have to juggle daily chores and regular work with SIR duties. C. VENKATACHALAPATHY

Kumbakonam, who was carrying out SIR work, attempted to end her life on November 18 allegedly due to the heavy workload. In States such as Kerala, Gujarat, and Rajasthan, where the SIR exercise is being conducted, there have been rising reports of BLOs attempting to end their life due to the enormous work pressure.

Ramini S., Tiruchi district secretary of the All India Federation of Anganwadi Workers and Helpers, said, "We have not been given adequate training. There is also no support for travel or understanding from our regular jobs" she said. Despite repeated attempts, the Chief Electoral Officer could not be reached.

(Those in distress can contact Tele MANAS at 14416 to seek help)

## BLOs should work in interest of voters: BJP

**Press Trust of India**  
KOLKATA

voter is included in the draft rolls after the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) is completed.

Addressing a rally in Purba Medinipur district, Mr. Adhikari referred to a "few BLOs" allegedly showing allegiance to the ruling TMC and accused it of intimidating them.

## LDF, UDF say SIR pressuring officials, but BJP differs

**Abdul Latheef Naha**  
MALAPPURAM

The Election Commission's special intensive revision (SIR) of the electoral rolls are overlapping with Kerala's local body elections scheduled for December 9 and 11. All major parties, except the BJP, have called for the SIR to be postponed, arguing that the

process is pressuring officials, confusing parties and voters alike.

According to CPI(M) State committee member and former MP N.N. Krishnadas, every politician regardless of party or standing is involved in the local body polls, and the SIR will be a major distraction for them.

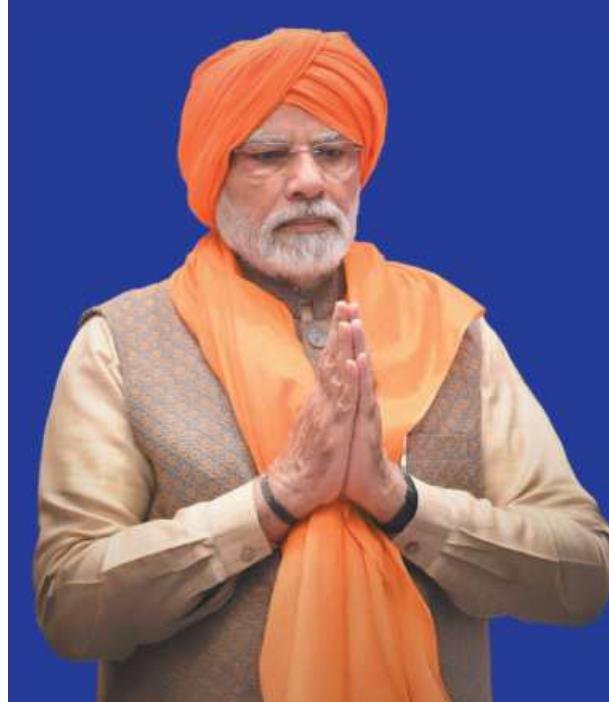
He said that local body

elections, often described as the festival of democracy, attract ordinary people rather than just seasoned politicians. Everyone is under pressure now, he said.

Mr. Krishnadas added that over two lakh government employees are currently being trained for the local body polls while roughly one lakh BLOs are tied up with the SIR.

The BJP, however, said party workers can combine house-to-house SIR duties with local body electioneering.

A single visit can cover both tasks and that the timing actually helps BLOs and political parties. Other parties are opposing the SIR for political reasons," said BJP State treasurer E. Krishnadas.



केंद्रीय गृह मंत्री श्री अमित शाह जी गुरु चरणों में शीथ नवायेंगे

सोमवार, 24 नवंबर 2025

अमागम के मुख्य बिंदु

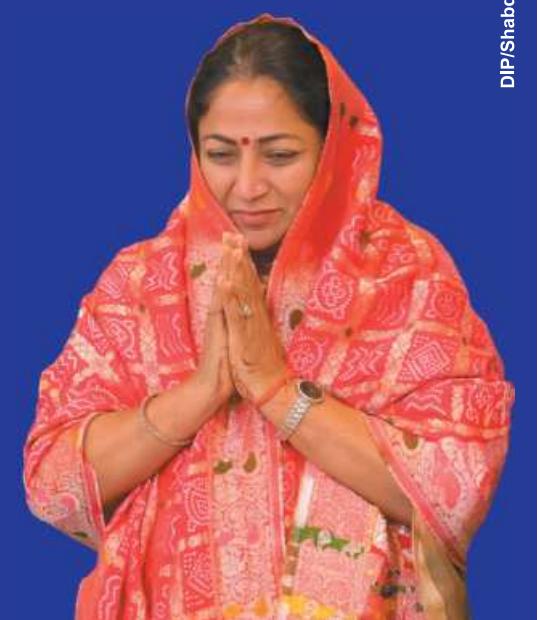
श्री गुरु तेग बहादुर जी की जीवनी पर लाइट एंड साउंड शो

श्री गुरु तेग बहादुर जी संग्रहालय

कीरत दरबार और कवि दरबार

संगतों के लिए टेंट सिटी एवं लंगर सेवा  
मन्दि - शाम 5:45 बजे से | स्थान - लाल किला मैदान, दिल्ली

श्री गुरु तेग बहादुर साहिब जी के बलिदान ने भारत की अनेकों पीढ़ियों को अपनी संत्कृति की रक्षा और उसके सम्बान्ध के लिए, जीजे और मर-गिटने की प्रेरणा दी





# Glorious Chapters of Navya Ayodhya



## Sugamya Ayodhya

### Enhancing Transportation and Connectivity

- Maharishi Valmiki International Airport
- Upgradation of Ayodhya Dham Railway Station with six platforms, and capacity for handling 50,000 passengers
- 4-lane widening and strengthening of Ram Path (Sahadatganj to Naya Ghat)
- Construction of Sultanpur National Highway (NH-330)
- Widening and strengthening of Bhakti Path (Ayodhya Main Road to Shri Ram Janmabhoomi via Hanumangarhi)
- Pedestrian pathways with underground utility ducts, stormwater drains, and aesthetic street lighting on Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Path
- Six gateway complexes to Ayodhya named after Shri Ram, Lakshman, Bharat, Hanuman, Garuda, and Jatayu
- 250 e-golf carts (Aastha Rath) and 75 electric shuttle buses are operational/proposed
- Widening of a 35.60 km stretch into a 4-lane corridor on Akbarpur-Baskhari Road (SH-30)
- Plan for providing waterway connectivity by linking rivers, including Ganga, Saryu, and Yamuna
- Announcement to launch water transport services on the Saryu River between Ballia and Ayodhya
- Electric-hybrid public transport system 'Water Metro' operational
- Boating, water sports, and adventure activities at the historic Guptar Ghat on the Saryu River



## Sanskritik Ayodhya

### Conservation of Heritage, Art and Religious Sites

- Surface improvements, mural painting and artistic restoration at historical sites
- 162 murals painted across 81 walls, depicting episodes from the life of Bhagwan Shri Ram along the Shri Ram Heritage Walk
- Display of Shri Ram's life events through 162 murals made from diverse materials along the Dharma Path
- Construction of a grand entrance gateway along the Dharma Path
- Ramayana-themed mirror maze (Bhul-Bhulaiya)

## Adhyatmik Ayodhya

### Upgrading Parikrama Routes and Religious Circuits to Enhance Pilgrim Facilities

- Development of facilities on Panchkosi & Chaudah Kosi Parikrama Routes
- Tourism Development at Kunds on Chaurasi Kosi Parikrama Route
- Basic facilities and beautification works at the ancient Sant Ravidas Temple complex
- Promoting cultural and spiritual heritage through Ram Leela and traditional festivals
- Showcasing art, craft, and local cuisine as part of cultural revival

## Ayushman Ayodhya

### Strengthening Healthcare and Medical Infrastructure

- Academic building and OPD block at the Government Ayurveda Hospital
- Enhanced healthcare services at Rajarshi Dashrath Medical College
- 100-bed hospital at Kumarganj and 50-bed hospital at Milkipur
- Community Health Centre in Sunhwa
- Departmental rooms and classrooms at Dr. Brijkishore Government Homoeopathic Medical College and Hospital



## Aadhunik Ayodhya

### Building a Technology-Driven and Future-Ready City

- GIS-based master plan for a 133 sq. km area
- Integrated Traffic Management System (ITMS) for efficient traffic control
- State Smart City Mission : Red Light Violation Detection (RLVD) and Adaptive Traffic Control Systems (ATCS) at 22 intersections
- Deployment of a city-wide public address system within the Municipal Corporation

## Swachh Ayodhya

### Sanitation, Drainage, and Sewage Management in Urban Areas

- 6 MLD capacity expansion of Sewage Treatment Plant at Ram Ghat
- In 181 lanes, including Sita Kund, Lakshman Ghat, and Brihaspati Ward, works completed on water supply, drainage, main cable installation, and street development
- 5 Toilet Blocks & Utility Centres
- Rapid Economic Development Plan: Construction of new drains across 59 locations
- New drain developed from Fatehganj Vegetable Market to Pathan Tola on the Chaudah Kosi Parikrama Marg

## Suramya Ayodhya

### Beautification of Religious and Cultural Sites and Promoting Tourism

- Guptar Ghat Park, Parking & Kiosk Development
- Facade Beautification along Bhakti Path and Shri Ram Janmabhoomi
- Installation of 12 corten-steel sculptures depicting the divine chariots along the riverfront on the Saryu River
- 15,000 saplings planted across 75 locations; two sites proposed for Miyawaki forests

## Saksham Ayodhya

### Enhancement of Administrative, Educational, Commercial, and Logistics Infrastructure

- Upgradation of the old Dak Bungalow Complex along NH-28
- Atal Residential School
- Arundhati Parking & Commercial Complex
- Renovation and upgradation of 49 schools
- Reconstruction of 4 Composite Schools
- Establishment of a new ITI (Industrial Training Institute)



## The Council of BJP

Nitish Kumar and the JD(U) are no longer in command in Bihar

**T**he composition of the newly sworn-in Council of Ministers in Bihar, and the distribution of portfolios, reflect the ongoing realignment of power between the BJP and the JD(U). JD(U) supremo Nitish Kumar retains the post of Chief Minister, even though his party finished second to the BJP in the Assembly election. However, for the first time in his nearly 20 years as Chief Minister, he is not in charge of the Home Department. Samrat Choudhary, one of the two BJP Deputy Chief Ministers, now controls this administratively powerful ministry. Vijay Kumar Sinha, the other Deputy Chief Minister, has been assigned revenue, land reforms, mines and geology, further consolidating the BJP's control over critical administrative levers. The BJP holds 14 of the 26 ministerial berths and controls key departments including health, law, road construction, urban development, and agriculture. The BJP has effectively taken a decisive step in formally inverting the hierarchy of its alliance with the JD(U) in its favour. While the BJP was the larger party even in 2020, Nitish Kumar retained crucial ministries. The social justice plank and the composition of the previous Assembly gave the JD(U) room to keep an alliance with the RJD open. But the overwhelming sweep of the National Democratic Alliance this time has not only placed the BJP firmly on top but has also made any exploration of alternatives by the JD(U) difficult, if not impossible.

Nitish Kumar is battling ill-health; while he remains indispensable for the BJP, the party is also carefully planning its long-term path. It has built a wide and deep caste coalition, seeking to reach communities that have traditionally viewed the JD(U) as their platform. The induction of Ram Kripal Yadav, a former Lalu Yadav loyalist who joined the BJP, signals that Yadavs too can have a place in the party. Through clever social engineering and administrative manoeuvring, the BJP has now positioned itself at the pole position of Bihar politics. But the real challenge ahead is good governance. The BJP may claim that its repeat victory is a popular endorsement of its previous government, but the State remains behind on many development indicators. The true test for the new Council will be whether it can pull Bihar forward. Bihar is home to nearly a tenth of India's population, and the State's development can positively influence the entire country. The Council should confront the substantial governance deficit honestly and work to address it with active support from the Centre.

## Difficult choices

Ukraine and its allies must seek to build on Trump's proposals

**T**he Trump administration's draft peace proposal for Ukraine has triggered predictable unease in Kyiv. President Volodymyr Zelensky has warned that Ukraine now faces a "very difficult choice", risking the loss of its dignity or a key partner. U.S. President Donald Trump has urged him to accept the proposal by Thanksgiving (November 27). Ukraine's apprehensions are understandable. According to the leaked draft of Mr. Trump's 28-point plan, Kyiv would be required to cede territory in Donetsk and recognise Crimea, Donetsk and Luhansk as de facto Russian. In the other two oblasts annexed by Russia (Kherson and Zaporizhzhia), the conflict would be frozen along the line of contact, effectively allowing Moscow to retain the areas it has seized. Russia would withdraw from the territories it has captured outside the five oblasts and pledge not to attack neighbouring countries again. The plan also demands Ukraine cap its armed forces at 6,00,000 personnel and formally renounce its bid to join NATO. The bloc's eastward expansion would be halted, sanctions on Russia lifted, while Ukraine would receive "reliable security guarantees". The plan does not elaborate on these guarantees, but U.S. media said that the Trump administration has circulated a separate three-point plan, promising NATO-style security assurances to Kyiv. Russian President Vladimir Putin has positively responded to the proposal, but Ukraine and its European partners are scrambling to craft an alternative proposal to achieve what they call "peace with dignity".

Several elements of the Trump plan mirror Russia's long-standing demands, including the halt of NATO's eastward expansion. On the other hand, the proposal that Ukraine cede territory is not going to be easy for any Ukrainian leader to implement. This makes it enormously difficult for any mediator to craft a peace blueprint that provides genuine common ground for the warring parties. Any meaningful push for peace must take into account at least three dimensions. First, the reality on the battlefield; second, Ukraine's need for credible and lasting security assurances; and third, the creation of a new security framework in Europe. The military balance currently favours Russia, which now controls over 20% of pre-2014 Ukraine. Mr. Zelensky's regime, on the other hand, is grappling with corruption scandals. The tragedy of Ukraine is that it is trapped in the great power rivalry between the West and Russia. Trust has evaporated, and the post-Cold War European security order lies in tatters. A peace deal must address this lack of trust and seek to build a new security equilibrium in the region, addressing Europe's fears and Russia's concerns. None of these goals can be achieved through an open-ended war. Mr. Trump's plan, though imperfect, at least offers a structured framework for dialogue, involving the U.S., Europe, NATO, Ukraine and Russia.

**T**he Republic of India has had 15 Presidents over 16 presidencies, its inaugural President, Dr. Rajendra Prasad having served two terms. Of the number of Governors appointed since 1947, the figure is too large to be counted.

The holders of these two high offices can do great good, sometimes not a little harm and very or most often, prefer an almost Advaitic selflessness that leaves no mark whatever – a self-protecting mechanism. It is better to be not remembered at all than remembered negatively. I have often wondered why these high functionaries, when they are males as they invariably are, carry pens in the pockets of their coats. The pen is almost a piece of their essential 'getting ready'-ness. It makes them seem ever-ready to sign the paper put up to them, wherever they are.

The master cartoonist, Abu Abraham, immortalised the 1975 moment when the then President signed the proclamation of the national emergency by a searing cartoon that showed him signing the paper when it was brought to him (this time with the stylus) at a very odd moment. Signatures can be affixed all too easily, when what is required is saying, 'No, very sorry, but no.' The reason may be plain gratitude for being where the Excellency wants to be.

Equally, when a signature is declined not out of genuine reservations but out of bias, an Abu Abraham or an R.K. Laxman is needed to depict the scene. Assets when given in fear or refused out of bias are infractions of Constitutional responsibility.

### Reflections from the past

As one who knows that sometimes a signature (and more) can be affixed by a President on his own, without 'aid or advice' and without a care on whether what he was doing would 'go down well or not', I must recall here President R. Venkataraman (his years in office: 1987-92) and President K. R. Narayanan (years in office: 1997-2002). The pen was used by RV, confidently. It was used by KRN, independently. No cabinet as much as whispered disquiet. Morality was not coy with them, nor fairness halting.

The Prime Ministers RV's term coincided with – Rajiv Gandhi, V.P. Singh and Chandra Shekhar – were all strong-willed men but they were first-time incumbents of their pivotal office while RV's experience of political and constitutional office was infinitely bigger. It was natural that they deferred to him when on Bills or other recommendations he had a view contrary to the cabinet's; he put it across to them in one-on-one confidential discussions, that being his way. The fourth Prime Minister who overlapped with RV, P.V. Narasimha Rao, thought-partnered him more than he did his own cabinet colleagues. There was no scope for friction.

In 1997, the Union Cabinet headed by Prime



**Gopalkrishna Gandhi**  
was Secretary to the President, and a Governor of West Bengal and Bihar

Minister I.K. Gujral recommended to KRN the dismissal of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) government in Uttar Pradesh headed by Kalyan Singh. KRN's world view and that of the BJP did not match. But he was the President of India, not just a resident of Rashtrapati Bhavan, answerable to the values of the Constitution. He did not agree with the recommendation of dismissal and sent it back for reconsideration. The recommendation did not come back.

By 1998, the BJP was in power at the Centre and the newly appointed Governor of Bihar recommended that the government of Rabri Devi be dismissed and President's Rule imposed under Article 356 of the Constitution of India. The Governor had sent what was claimed to be a fool-proof case showing financial mismanagement and poor law and order markers. KRN demurred, and sent the recommendation back. Prime Minister A.B. Vajpayee's cabinet did not repeat the recommendation. KRN's action in returning these recommendations had no politics to it. Zero. It had only fairness, Constitutional fairness. It had only morality, Constitutional morality. Fairness and morality are unmistakable. As are their opposites.

RV and KRN could be frank with the government when frankness was called for and they were not misunderstood for the government knew that the frankness came from a desire to caution and correct, not to criticise.

### 'Alert and alive'

Presidents and Governors are meant to be men and women with minds that are alert and alive to the letter of the Constitution and to its spirit in an evolving nation. They should see that recommendations made to them adhere to the letter, knowing that the letter can be used sometimes to subvert the spirit – an irony that the framers of the Constitution could not have anticipated. Would Babasaheb Ambedkar have thought that could have happened? The Constitution of India has been made by honest intentions for honest actuation.

No file was held by RV and KRN for more than a few days. They did not have to be detective-Presidents. No delay was orchestrated during which confabulations could be held, and opinions sought in huddles, and given in whispers. No pocket was deepened for a pocket-veto to be exercised.

But their sense of Constitutional morality and fairness did not make them look out for flaws or faults or fallibilities as a full-time occupation, 24X7.

The President and Governors are neither robots, nor are they ring-masters. They are not inert rubber stamps that are pressed gently or not-so-gently onto any parchment that the government of the day places before them; they would make laughing stocks of themselves if they

were that. Nor are they pens that can choose any colour of ink or any vocabulary of their choice when expressing a Constitutional view.

### Conservative and realistic

The 'answers' of the five-judge Bench headed by the Chief Justice of India (CJI) B.R. Gavai, and including CJI-designate Surya Kant, to President Droupadi Murmu's 16th Presidential Reference is imbued with this verity. The Bench has said that Governors cannot have a date-line fixed by the Supreme Court of India for their study of Bills – upholding the letter of the Constitution. The Bench has also said unambiguously that 'evasive inaction' is not 'on' either – upholding the spirit of the Constitution.

In saying the former, the Bench has been conservative. In saying the latter, it has been realistic. The Bench has made it clear that it knows that action and inaction by Governors may not be because they are studious and industrious but because they may be politically predisposed. The answers of the judges have said that no calendar can be hung on a Governor's wall that says 'This is your deadline'.

Their answers have also placed a clock on their desk that ticks loud and clear and has an informal alarm that can ring if the 'study' has prolonged beyond normal study hours, leaving it open for the delay to be raised in court.

The Constitution of India, especially in matters concerning Centre-State relations – or to put it differently, on matters affecting India's federal polity – takes two to work it, but just one, on either side, to wreck it. Ultimately, the working of a Constitutional arrangement depends on the two – legislature and the Governor/President – playing their roles with respect for the Constitution and for each other.

It is remarkable that the five judges unequivocally declined to school either side, or to assume the role of tutor. They have given neither side victory or defeat. The letter of the law has won, but the spirit of the law has not been defeated. In what is an opinion, not an order (for they were not handling an appeal), they have said what is exactly right: the Supreme Court should not, will not, say how a President or Governor should or should not act. That would amount to 'clutching at a jurisdiction' (a favourite phrase of RV's) which is not their's.

Has the Bench done an exercise in balancing? It has not. It has done an exercise for balance between the power to do right and the right way to do it.

The Indian polity needs to be run not by power games played by adroit players. It needs to be governed by men and women who, when in high office, rise above their limitations. Some incumbents make their offices great, some offices make their incumbents great. The tragedy, as the judges have seen, is that the opposite is equally true.

## The letter has won but the spirit has not lost

**T**here is a shadow – of doubt – over India's food landscape. In recent years, a string of high-profile food adulteration cases has shaken consumer confidence. As a result, many are now more cautious about their everyday food choices. Street food, once a beloved symbol of India's rich culinary culture, is facing growing scrutiny that is related to safety and hygiene.

In July 2024, raids on 58 *pani puri* stalls in Chennai revealed alarming practices. Officials found vendors using contaminated water and dipping their hands into chutneys. These cases are not isolated instances but highlight a troubling gap in food safety across India's informal food sector. While street food brings tradition and community to life, its hygiene standards often remain unchecked.

Food safety and standards for both packaged and unpackaged foods fall under the purview of the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI). However, the vast number of unpackaged food vendors makes it more challenging for the regulator to enforce safety standards consistently. In contrast, packaged foods allow for stricter enforcement of traceability, transparency, and reliability standards, due to clearer labelling and standardised processing protocols.

**Packaged foods, safety and trust**  
India's packaged food industry is often associated with convenience. But it also reflects a structured system of food production shaped by science, regulation, and evolving consumer expectations. Compared to the informal food sector, the organised packaged food industry operates within a framework of clearer oversight. Regulatory guidelines set by the FSSAI span the entire production cycle – from sourcing raw materials to packaging the final product.

Modern processing techniques further reinforce this reliability and shelf-life amidst variable weather conditions. Methods such as pasteurisation, vacuum sealing and aseptic packaging are widely adopted across the industry. These techniques help reduce microbial risks



**Arpita Mukherjee**  
is Professor, Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations

while aiming to retain flavour and nutritional value. They also support broader distribution and storage needs, particularly in urban and working populations.

Transparency is another area where packaged foods provide clarity. From listing allergens and ingredients to providing manufacturing and expiry dates, packaged foods offer consumers, especially parents, elderly individuals, and health-conscious individuals, the tools to make informed dietary decisions.

Importantly, the industry is responding to growing consumer priorities around processed foods. Driven by market demand and growing health awareness, companies are evolving their product portfolios by introducing a wider range of offerings that cater to health-conscious consumers, thereby expanding the choices available to them. Simultaneously, there is a surge in fortifying foods with vital micronutrients to combat widespread nutritional deficiencies. These shifts mark a responsible and forward-looking approach that aligns commercial interests with consumer well-being.

**A part of culinary landscape, but with risks**  
Street food remains a vibrant and integral part of India's culinary landscape. It reflects cultural heritage, supports millions of livelihoods, and continues to be a popular choice for both locals and tourists. However, beneath this rich and flavourful surface lies a series of systemic risks that cannot be ignored.

A recent analysis by the Observer Research Foundation paints a grim picture, estimating that India records a staggering 100 million cases of food-borne illnesses annually, leading to approximately 1,20,000 deaths. A significant portion of these illnesses is linked to contaminated food from informal sources, including street vendors, small eateries and roadside stalls. These are not just statistics. They represent a significant public health burden that disproportionately affects the most vulnerable sections of society.

The quality of street food often deteriorates

due to incorrect cooking practices. The reuse of cooking oil, for instance, is a common practice that not only diminishes the nutritional value of the food but can also lead to the formation of harmful trans fats and other toxic compounds. Similarly, the incentive to use cheaper, adulterated ingredients is high. These practices frequently trigger localised outbreaks of food poisoning and other gastrointestinal illnesses, which often go unreported, further masking the true scale of the problem.

The FSSAI has introduced initiatives to train, certify, and integrate these vendors into the regulatory framework. In collaboration with the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) it launched a food safety training programme for street food vendors in Mumbai. The training modules include personal hygiene, safe food handling, storage protocols to prevent contamination and proper waste disposal. At the same time, the unorganised nature and sheer scale of the sector make this a gradual and ongoing effort.

### Foster a commitment to safety

While packaged foods go beyond convenience and reflect a science-led, structured approach to addressing food safety concerns, it is important to ensure that street foods are safe and hygienic through training and rating of street vendors under national-level campaigns such as the Eat Right India movement or the Clean Street Food Hub (CSFH).

As India progresses on its path of modernisation and urbanisation, ensuring access to safe and hygienic food must become a top priority for all stakeholders involved. While the romance and tradition of street food remain integral to India's cultural fabric, the associated health risks cannot be overlooked especially when public health is a national priority. The future of food in India must be shaped not by sentiment, but by an unwavering commitment to safety.

The views expressed are personal

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Managing Dhaka

The crisis surrounding Sheikh Hasina's conviction and her presence in India has complicated one of New Delhi's most important neighbourhood equations. Extradition is impossible, yet indefinite refugee risks

becoming a diplomatic burden. Bangladesh's interim government is already recalibrating foreign policy, slowing India-backed projects and signalling openness to Beijing and Islamabad. In this fluid landscape, India must

ensure that the "Hasina question" does not eclipse broader national interests. The real lesson is India's overdependence on a single leader. Long-term stability in bilateral ties requires political diversification, discreet engagement with

all stakeholders in Dhaka, and restraint from public messaging. Bangladesh's political turbulence will pass, but the underlying interdependence will endure.

**Gopalaswamy J.**, Chennai

### Toxic air, strange apathy

Delhi's air quality has crossed from seasonal discomfort into a full-blown public health emergency. Yet, our response remains strangely casual. What worries me the most is our growing tolerance for

poison in the air. It is time we treat clean air as a right that demands accountability.

**Harshita Singla**, Jalandhar, Punjab

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

# The future of health lies in harmony

**A**s the world grapples with rising lifestyle diseases, environmental degradation, and social fragmentation, there is a growing realisation that restoring the balance between people and the planet, progress and sustainability, innovation and intuition is a necessity.

Health, in its truest sense, has always been a reflection of harmony – within the human body and between humanity and nature. This is the principle that is at the heart of traditional medicine systems worldwide, which view health not merely as the absence of illness but as the presence of equilibrium. The science of well-being, therefore, is not new. It is the rediscovery of a traditional understanding, now being reaffirmed through evidence-based research.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) reports that around 90% of WHO member-states have reported on the use of traditional medicine. For billions of people, it remains the first line of care, particularly in low- and middle-income nations where accessibility and affordability are paramount.

Its value, however, extends well beyond health care. Traditional medicine supports biodiversity, nutrition, food security and livelihoods, embodying the holistic concept of integrative health. Market analysts estimate India's AYUSH sector at \$43.4 billion – a figure that tells a larger story. This surge is driven not only by consumer preference but also by a paradigm shift: health-care systems are evolving from reactive treatment models to proactive, preventive, and personalised ones. This global shift represents a shared realisation – that well-being cannot be achieved through fragmented approaches. It demands an ecosystem of balance – between mind and body, human and environment, science and spirit. It is a fact that India has emerged as a hub of innovative research and development initiatives,



Prataprao Jadhav

Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for AYUSH and Minister of State for Health and Family Welfare, Government of India

transforming the global traditional medicine sector.

To support this transformation, WHO's Global Traditional Medicine Centre (GTMC) serves as a knowledge hub for evidence-based collaboration and innovation. With its strategic focus on evidence and learning, data and analytics, sustainability and equity, the GTMC aims to optimise the contribution of traditional medicine to global health and sustainable development. It also upholds a guiding principle often overlooked in the age of globalisation – a respect for local heritages, resources, and rights.

Established in Jamnagar, Gujarat, with the foundational support of the Government of India, the GTMC is an expression of shared global leadership. It reflects WHO's vision that harnessing the potential of traditional medicine, when grounded in evidence, innovation, and sustainability, can be a game-changer for health.

India's commitment to this vision stems from the belief that knowledge must serve humanity collectively. The establishment of the Centre in India is a testament to this spirit.

Under the Prime Minister's emphasis on evidence-based research in the field, there have been initiatives such as a dedicated AYUSH department at the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS), development of global standards in AYUSH Systems through ISO/TC 249/SC 2 subcommittee, paving the way for wider global acceptance of India's traditional medicine.

The growing recognition of traditional medicine as a scientific and social asset took a decisive step in August 2023, when the first WHO Global Summit on Traditional Medicine was held in Gandhinagar, Gujarat, alongside the G-20 Health Ministerial Meeting. The gathering of Ministers, scientists, practitioners and communities from around the world mobilised political commitment, fostered data-driven action, and laid the groundwork

The Second WHO Global Summit on Traditional Medicine will strengthen recognition of traditional medicine as a scientific and social asset

for evidence-based integration of traditional medicine into national health systems. The Gujarat Declaration, adopted at the Summit called for the protection of biodiversity, fair benefit-sharing, digital innovation, and equitable access to traditional health knowledge.

The global community is now ready to take the next step – to deepen scientific understanding, encourage innovation, and align traditional medicine's potential with modern global health priorities. Thus, WHO and the Government of India have signed a Memorandum of Understanding to co-host the Second WHO Global Summit on Traditional Medicine (New Delhi, December 17–19, 2025), marking a new chapter in global collaboration for health and sustainability. With its theme, "Restoring balance: The science and practice of health and well-being", it will mobilise multi-stakeholder action in support of WHO's new 10-year Global Traditional Medicine Strategy (2025–34), adopted at the 78th World Health Assembly earlier this year.

These initiatives are designed not only to celebrate traditional medicine's heritage but also to propel it into the future – where it stands validated by science, empowered by technology, and guided by ethics. As the birthplace of Ayurveda, Yoga, Unani, Siddha and Sowa-Rigpa, India's contribution lies in demonstrating how traditional knowledge can coexist with modern science.

Its approach is rooted in integration – uniting tradition with technology, research with community participation, and well-being with sustainability. As the world gathers once again under a shared commitment to restore balance, India's message is simple yet profound: health must heal, not harm; progress must sustain, not consume; and science must serve, not separate.

The summit is more than an event – it is a global convergence to reaffirm that the future of health lies in harmony.

# Calm returns to Sabarimala

For the government, the corrective actions have given it political oxygen

## STATE OF PLAY

Hiran Unnikrishnan  
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**A** week after the Sabarimala Ayyappa temple opened for the annual pilgrimage, there is an unusual calm at the hill shrine in Pathanamthitta. Nearly six lakh devotees have completed the trek through the Periyar Tiger Reserve.

The tranquil scene of mist, rain-washed forest trails and an unhurried flow of pilgrims is in sharp contrast to the chaos of the first few days of the season. It began even before the temple opened, triggered by a High Court-monitored probe into alleged misappropriation of gold involving Travancore Devaswom Board (TDB) officials. There was a flurry of reviews, security checks and confident claims about the arrangements followed.

As the crowds began to build, every system buckled under the pressure. Cleanliness and hygiene faded away, there were food and water shortages and queues froze. Images of exhausted pilgrims fainting along the trekking route poured in. Many bypassed barricades and used multiple points to make their way to the Samidhanam. Even distant transit hubs such as Erumely and Pandamal were overwhelmed.

For a shrine known for its precise crowd management, Sabarimala was now close to facing a stampede-like situation. The TDB president, K Jayakumar, a former bureaucrat, who took over the reins of a scandal-hit TDB just days before the season began, called the situation 'dangerous' and 'unacceptable under any circumstances'.

The TDB and the police



came up with explanations such as the heavy inflow through forest routes, poor handover by the outgoing administration and a surge in footfalls. Reports of devotees abandoning their journey made it clear that the situation was in danger of getting out of control.

Efforts to divert the swelling crowds at the Samidhanam through alternative gates prevented many from accessing the 18 holy steps, which is a core ritual of the pilgrimage. Extending darshan hours made little difference, as the surge of pilgrims continued at the steps – around 45 pilgrims per minute. The death of a 59-year-old pilgrim from Koyilandy in Kozhikode at Appachimedu, heightened tensions. The absence of central forces only added to the pressure.

There was also the politics. The Congress accused the CPI (M)-led government of gross negligence. The BJP amplified the attack. Right-wing social media lit up with allegations that the State was 'humiliating' Ayyappa devotees. And the Karnataka government formally sought Kerala's cooperation to ensure the safety and smooth movement of pilgrims from the State. The Devaswom Bench of the High Court stepped in once again, demanding urgent corrective action by the authorities.

While reviewing the Sabarimala Special Commissioner's report, which stated that over two lakh pilgrims had visited

the temple in just 48 hours, the High Court noted that women and children could not face danger. Then came the most pointed question: why were preparations for the Mandalam-Makaravilakku season not initiated six months earlier?

The course correction was swift, with a clampdown on the crowd inflow. Though virtual-queue bookings remained unchanged, spot bookings were slashed from 20,000 to 5,000 a day. The effect was immediate. Footfalls from neighbouring States dropped sharply, perhaps affected by reports of the chaos.

But order returned. The forest trails became quieter. Pilgrims walked on with a sense of fulfilment. For a government heading into back-to-back elections, this return to normal was nothing short of political oxygen.

Even under the Model Code of Conduct, Devaswom Minister V.N. Vasavan sought special permission from the High Court to convene a review meeting – an indication of how critical the situation had become. A new consultative committee – the police coordinator, the TDB Executive Officer and the Special Commissioner – is in place. The movement rate up the holy steps has risen to over 70 pilgrims a minute, with plans to push it to 85. A 140-member Rapid Action Force team is to support crowd management. The relief in the corridors of power is unmistakable. If Kerala's political establishment has learned anything over the years, it is this: a crisis at Sabarimala never remains confined to Sabarimala. It spills into public discourse, onto political platforms and, eventually, to the ballot box. And with election season looming, that is a risk no government can afford to take.

# Did SIR process decide the Bihar result? Data says 'no'

The NDA's advantage over the MGB remained mostly intact, despite a decrease in electorate numbers following the Special Intensive Revision exercise

## DATA POINT

Srinivasan Ramani

**T**he Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls became one of the most contentious issues in the Bihar 2025 Assembly election. The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and allies welcomed the process as necessary to remove "infiltrators" from voter lists, while the Congress and Rashtriya Janata Dal decried it as systematic disenfranchisement – part of what they termed as "vote chori" (vote theft), alleging collusion between the Election Commission of India and the ruling BJP to manipulate electoral rolls in the latter's favour. The controversy was not confined to campaign rhetoric. The SIR process required many interventions by the Supreme Court. The scale of the revision was unprecedented: approximately 68 lakh electors were deleted, while 24 lakh were added, resulting in a net deletion of around 44 lakh voters between January 2025 and October 2025.

A critical question emerges: did the SIR process actually influence the election outcome? A data-driven analysis comparing changes in vote share patterns with the extent of electoral roll deletions across Assembly constituencies suggests that it did not play a determining role in the NDA's victory.

The electoral outcome itself showed remarkable continuity with the 2024 general election. The NDA secured close to 46.6% of the vote share in the Assembly polls, a marginal drop of around 1.4 percentage points from the parliamentary elections held in May 2024. The Mahagatbandhan's vote share declined more sharply, by approximately 2.2 percentage points from 39.2% to 37%. While these shifts favoured the NDA, the pattern suggests the alliance retained rather than expanded its existing advantage over the Opposition. To examine whether the SIR

process contributed to these patterns, we analysed two key variables across Bihar's Assembly constituencies: the change in the vote share difference between the NDA and MGB from the 2024 general election to the 2025 Assembly elections, and the decrease in electorate numbers following the SIR as a percentage of the original electoral roll.

**Map 1** illustrates the changes in vote share difference between the two elections at the Assembly constituency level. The darker red shading indicates constituencies where the NDA increased its advantage over the MGB, while the darker blue shading shows the opposite. **Map 2** depicts the decrease in the electorate across constituencies, with the darker red indicating larger percentage reductions in voter numbers following the SIR process. **Chart 3** plots these two variables against each other for every Assembly constituency in Bihar. If the SIR process had systematically benefited the NDA by removing Opposition voters, we would expect to see a clear pattern: constituencies with higher deletions showing greater increases in the NDA's vote share advantage. The scatter plot, however, tells a different story.

The correlation coefficient between these variables is 0.192, indicating an extremely weak positive relationship. To understand what this means, consider that correlation coefficients range from -1 (representing a perfect negative correlation), to +1 (representing a perfect positive correlation), with 0 (indicating no relationship whatsoever). At 0.192, the data reveal virtually no meaningful connection between the extent of electoral roll deletions in a constituency and the change in the NDA's advantage over the MGB. This is further confirmed by the R<sup>2</sup> value of 0.037 visible in the chart's trendline, which indicates that only 3.7% of the variation in the NDA's electoral performance can be explained by changes in the electoral roll. In

practical terms, Assembly constituencies that experienced large-scale deletions were no more likely to see an increase in the NDA's vote share advantage than constituencies with minimal deletions. Similarly, constituencies with smaller reductions in the electorate showed no distinct pattern in voting behaviour compared to those with larger reductions.

The scatter plot itself is revealing. Points are dispersed widely across both axes with no clear upward or downward trend. The near-flat trendline and the clustering of points across the entire spectrum suggest that the SIR's impact, if any, was not a determining factor in electoral outcomes. Had the revision systematically disenfranchised Opposition voters to the NDA's benefit, the data would show constituencies with higher deletion rates trending toward greater NDA advantage – a pattern conspicuously absent from the analysis.

The conclusion is straightforward. There was no major increase in NDA vote shares relative to the decrease in the electorate across Bihar. The NDA's advantages from the 2024 general election remained largely intact, and the coalition's victory appears to have been based on the same factors that gave it an edge in the parliamentary polls rather than being a product of the SIR process.

This is not to diminish the concerns about the SIR process. After all, data revealed that there was a disproportionate decrease in the number of women in the electorate following the SIR, leading to the gender ratio dropping from 907 in the January rolls to a meagre 892 in the final rolls released in September. And yet, women turned out in much larger numbers when compared to men (four lakh more despite being forty lakh fewer in the rolls). However, the data also suggest that the SIR, despite being a political flashpoint, did not alone determine the outcome of Bihar's election.

**Little correlation**  
The data were sourced from the Election Commission of India's Bihar 2025 Assembly election results and constituency-wise elector information

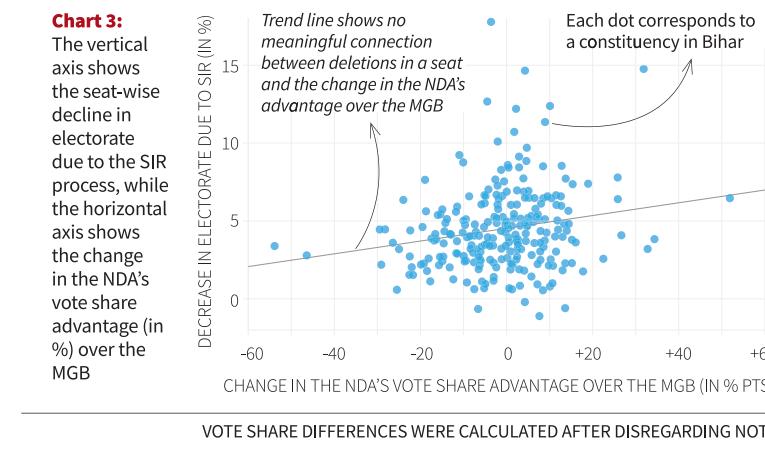
**Map 1:** The changes in vote share difference between the 2024 and 2025 elections at the Assembly constituency level

Darker red shading indicates seats where the NDA increased its advantage over the MGB, while darker blue shading shows the opposite

**Map 2:** The decrease in the electorate across seats, with darker red indicating larger % reductions in elector numbers following the SIR process

While these shifts favoured the NDA, the pattern suggests the alliance retained rather than expanded its advantage

**Chart 3:** The vertical axis shows the seat-wise decline in electorate due to SIR (In %). The horizontal axis shows the change in the NDA's vote share advantage (in %) over the MGB. Trend line shows no meaningful connection between deletions in a seat and the change in the NDA's advantage over the MGB. Each dot corresponds to a constituency in Bihar.



## FROM THE ARCHIVES

**The Hindu**

FIFTY YEARS AGO NOVEMBER 24, 1975

Cochin-Bombay Train from Jan. 26

FROM OUR CORRESPONDENT

COCHIN, Nov. 23

The Railways will introduce a weekly Jayanthi Janata express train between Cochin and Bombay from Jan. 26 next (Republic Day). The frequency of the present tri-weekly Jayanthi Janatha Express between Mangalore-Cochin and New Delhi will be increased to five days a week from Jan 26, 1976. The Bombay-Madras Mail and the Bangalore-Cochin Island Express will be dieselised from the next Republic Day. An announcement to this effect was made here to-day by Mr. Mohamed Shafi Qureshi, Union Minister of State for Railways while inaugurating the 155.33-km long broad gauge link from Ernakulam to Quilon. Mr. Qureshi said this line represented an important railway link in India for it would eventually connect Cape Comorin in the South with Kashmir in the North. He expressed the hope that the opening of this broad gauge line would bring in more and more industrial and economic prosperity to Kerala. Preliminary work on the Rs. 13.59 crore conversion project inaugurated on Dec. 28, 1971, by the former Railway Minister, Mr. K. Hanumanthaia began early in 1972. The Ernakulam-Quilon section has now been thrown open to traffic and the conversion of 64.81-km long Quilon-Trivandrum section is expected to be completed by June 1976. Mr. Qureshi said Kerala possessed vast potentialities for further economic growth.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO NOVEMBER 24, 1925

Improving the Breed of Indian Horses

The efforts which are being made to improve the breed of Indian horses are of importance to large numbers of Indian agriculturists. It is expected that for 1930 it will be possible to supply Indian bred remounts for the Army at low prices than the horses can be purchased from Australia and that by the year, enough remounts will be available in India to meet the annual requirements for the Cavalry. This would effect saving in Indian revenues while the money expended on horses would be kept in the country. Advices from Australia meanwhile show that light-horse breeding in the Commonwealth is diminishing rapidly, which is an additional reason why efforts should be made to make the Cavalry from animals bred in India itself. – "The Pioneer."

# Text & Context

THE HINDU

## NEWS IN NUMBERS

### Number of persons sentenced to death in Yemen's Houthi court

**17** A Houthi-controlled court in Yemen's capital convicted 17 people of spying for foreign governments and sentenced them to death. The people convicted were part of "espionage cells within a spy network affiliated with the American, Israeli and Saudi intelligence," said the court. PTI

### Villages being built under Vibrant Villages Programme in J&K

**124** A comprehensive roadmap has been prepared for the focused development of 124 strategic villages across 43 border blocks in eight districts under the second phase of the Vibrant Villages Programme in Jammu and Kashmir, officials said on Sunday. PTI

### Number of lives claimed by earthquake in Bangladesh

**10** Three jolts after a relatively major earthquake claimed at least 10 lives within a span of 32 hours. The quake caused damage to buildings mostly in central parts of the country, including the capital Dhaka, while a tremor rocked the country at around the same time on Saturday morning. PTI

### Number of rare species of turtles recovered in U.P.

**74** Two suspected wildlife traffickers have been arrested and 74 rare species of turtles recovered from their possession in the Dumila border area. During the interrogation, the accused told the police that they were taking the turtles to Uttarakhand to supply to local buyers. PTI

### Foreigners arrested by the Myanmar junta in scam hub raids

**1,590** Sprawling fraud factories have mushroomed in war-torn Myanmar's border regions, housing scammers who target internet users with romance and business cons worth billions of dollars annually. AFP  
COMPILED BY THE HINDU DATA TEAM

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## How can State PSCs be reformed?

How did the Montagu Chelmsford report lead to the establishment of present-day Public Service Commissions? What is the role of the Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions? Is a periodical review of the examination syllabi necessary?

### EXPLAINER

#### Gopalakrishna. V

##### The story so far:

The 2025 national conference of chairpersons of the State Public Service Commissions (PSCs) is being hosted by the Telangana State Public Service Commission on December 19 and 20. Every year, whenever State PSCs conduct examinations for recruitment, they are mired in one controversy or the other. Aspirants often have to seek judicial recourse, due to which the entire process is derailed, leading to a 'trust deficit'. This is an outcome of systemic lapses, both structural and procedural, which exist in almost all State PSCs. This conference would be an apt occasion to discuss such issues and more.

##### What is the history of PSCs?

The PSCs in India are a product of India's struggle for Independence. The entry of Indians into the civil services on the sole criterion of merit was embedded in the demand for 'self-rule'. The Montagu Chelmsford report accepted the demand and proposed a permanent office free from political influence to regulate service matters. The first Public Service Commission for the Union was formed in 1926. Later the Government of India Act, 1935 provided for the establishment of one PSC for each province. These provisions were continued by the framers of the Constitution, and so today we have a Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) and PSCs in each State to primarily serve the needs of recruitment.

##### How are these commissions structured?

The UPSC functions in a relatively politically sterile environment. The members are appointed based on merit and rich prior experience in public affairs. Moreover, representation of members from all zones of the country is ensured. While the Constitution does not mention minimum age or qualifications, most of the appointed members are at least above the age of 55, and enjoy a reputation of being apolitical. On the other hand, State PSCs operate in a politically osmotic environment and the proverbial 'spoils system' is visible in the appointment process. The conventional requirements of minimum age, qualifications and public experience are given a short shrift.

The Union government has vast manpower needs. This is matched by financial resources to meet the retirement obligations of the superannuated and the remunerative needs of fresh entrants. It has also created a dedicated ministry, the Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions in 1985, to formulate all policies in the field of personnel management. This ensures regular declaration of vacancies by the government enabling the UPSC to notify, conduct and declare the results of the examinations conducted by it with regularity and precision.

In contrast, the manpower needs of the States are limited and not planned. Often, they lack the financial resources to meet the retirement and recruitment obligations of their employees leading to extension of the superannuation age and postponement of recruitment. Most State governments do not have a dedicated Ministry of Personnel. And therefore, vacancies are not notified regularly by the government which effectively means that State PSCs are not required to conduct



A revamp: Applicants of Telangana State Public Service Commission Group 2 exam stage a protest to postpone the exam, in Hyderabad in 2023. NAGARA GOPAL

the examinations regularly.

##### How do they work?

The UPSC undertakes a periodical exercise of establishing committees comprising not only of academicians but also civil servants, social activists etc, to recommend changes in the syllabi and achieve a balance between academics and contemporary developments. They are able to tap the best talent from across the country to formulate question papers and also evaluate them. A time tested method of 'inter-se' moderation of scores is followed at different levels of the examination to minimise subjectivity. The UPSC ably balances conflicting interests of transparency and confidentiality by being quick to respond to any lapses and making systemic changes so that aspirants do not often have to seek judicial recourse for grievances.

On the other hand, State PSCs do not appoint committees regularly to redraft the syllabus; are constrained to tap academic resources from within the State; and are not able to achieve satisfactory 'inter-se' moderation in evaluation. They also have the daunting task of making complex calculations to accurately incorporate not only vertical reservations but also horizontal reservations. Meeting the demands of regional quotas in the form of zonal reservations adds to this complexity. All these lead to continuous litigation in one form or the other delaying the recruitment process.

These are some of the main reasons limiting the efficient functioning of State PSCs and their declining credibility. Often aggrieved students comment that they have lost faith in State Commissions and would like the UPSC to conduct the examinations. Time bound structural and procedural reforms are required to restore faith in State PSCs.

##### What can be done?

First, manpower planning should be systematised and a separate ministry should be created for personnel management. This Ministry should clearly layout a five-year road map for recruitment so that State PSCs are able to notify and conduct the examination process.

Along the lines of the 41st amendment of the Constitution (1976), which raised the maximum age limit of the members of State PSCs from 60 to 62 years in order to attract meritorious and experienced civil servants, there is a need for another amendment. The minimum age for appointment as a member should be fixed at 55 and the maximum age at 65. The stipulation of minimum age will enable appointment of experienced individuals while increasing the maximum age will enable State PSCs to benefit from the experience of senior civil servants who have retired at 60 for a longer period than under the existing provisions.

This amendment could also specify the necessary qualifications that members need in order to be appointed. For example, in order to be an 'official' member, experience as Secretary to a State government or a post equivalent to this rank should be stipulated while for 'non-official' members 10 years of practice in a recognised profession like law, medicine, or engineering should be stipulated. A mandatory pre-consultation with the leader of the Opposition before appointment may be considered for non-official members. Thus, a State wide panel of eminent people – those with high standing, integrity, merit and independence – should be constituted and periodically updated.

Secondly, the syllabus should be revised periodically, keeping in view the

changing academic scenario and the syllabi for examinations as stipulated by the UPSC. Every proposal for revision should be placed in the public domain and changes can be made after public consultation. Knowledge on State specific areas like regional history, regional economy and regional geography, in which the availability of faculty is limited, should be tested in the objective type format so that there would be no scope for complaint on the grounds of asymmetry of information and value laden correction. Thus, while the preliminary examination may continue in the objective format, the main examination should be a mixture of objective and subjective papers. The process of translation of the questions from English to the regional language should not only involve technology for secrecy but also the human element so that the right meaning is conveyed. Care should be taken to regularly change the pattern of questions so that the role of AI-chat bots, as a source of information for formulating answers, is effectively countered.

Finally, the Secretary of the State PSCs should be a senior officer with prior experience as either Commissioner of School Education or Secretary of the Board of Intermediate Education to enable effective supervision of the examination branch of the Commission. Transparency and confidentiality should be balanced on the lines of the UPSC.

If these changes are effected, one would have vibrant Public Service Commissions at the State level on par with the Union Public Service Commission.

The writer is the Founder Director of Brain Tree IAS Hyderabad and has been engaged in teaching public administration for the last 35 years.

### THE GIST

The entry of Indians into the civil services on the sole criterion of merit was embedded in the demand for 'self-rule'.

The manpower needs of the States are limited and not planned. Often, they lack the financial resources to meet the retirement and recruitment obligations of their employees leading to extension of the superannuation age and postponement of recruitment.

State PSCs do not appoint committees regularly to redraft the syllabus; are constrained to tap academic resources from within the State; and are not able to achieve satisfactory 'inter-se' moderation in evaluation.

## CACHE



In shambles: Smoke rises following the Israeli military bombardment of Nuseirat, as seen from central Gaza strip, on November 21. AP

## Why did Wikipedia lock the page titled 'Gaza Genocide'?

Wikipedia's co-founder criticised the use of the word 'genocide' to refer to Israel's actions in Gaza, further igniting a debate about political neutrality on Wikipedia. Protections on the locked-down page was enhanced by editors on July 2024 and May 2025, to prevent un-vetted edits

## Sahana Venugopal

## The story so far:

**E**arlier in November, the page titled 'Gaza Genocide', hosted on Wikipedia, was locked. A small lock icon at the top right corner of the page restricted users from making edits to the page's contents. The locked-down page made waves when Wikipedia co-founder Jimmy Wales posted a statement disagreeing on how the term 'genocide' was applied to Gaza. He claimed, in his personal capacity, that the page failed to meet Wikipedia's high standards and needed immediate attention. While the page exists on the platform in its locked-down form, debates continue across the world on how to classify the conflict.

## Why was Wikipedia's Gaza genocide page locked?

The 'Gaza Genocide' page begins by stating: "The Gaza genocide is the ongoing, intentional, and systematic destruction of the Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip carried out by Israel during the Gaza war. It encompasses mass killings, deliberate starvation, infliction of serious bodily and mental harm, and preventing births."

While multiple organisations and academics have described Israel's actions in Gaza as a genocide targeting civilians, pro-Israel supporters have pushed back against the use of the word as they claim that the militant organisation Hamas is

using Palestinian civilians as human shields and that Israel has the right to self-defence following the gruesome October 7 killings.

Protections on the locked-down page was enhanced by editors (both humans and bots) on July 2024 and May 2025, to prevent un-vetted edits. More recently, it was locked on October 28 and November 4, so only verified editors with accounts older than 30 days and over 500 edits can access the page to make updates.

This is not the first time that Wikipedia has locked a page on a contentious topic. Thousands of such articles covering significant world events, key definitions, or celebrity figures have been temporarily locked in the past to prevent partisan edits by un-vetted editors as well as acts of Wikipedia "vandalism" that range from funny to hateful.

Not surprisingly, there have been hundreds of edits made to the 'Gaza Genocide' page on Wikipedia in recent days and weeks. Many of these are simple formatting and punctuation edits while more controversial changes deal with how to include and interpret sources, or even revise other contributors' edits.

**What did Wikipedia's co-founder say?** Mr. Wales posted a personal statement in a talk page that discussed the nature of edits made to the 'Gaza Genocide' page as well as the reasoning behind the use of the term 'genocide'. There, he criticised how Israel's actions were being classified as a "genocide" and instead urged a

correction to present this as a contested allegation.

Citing neutrality as the basis for his opinion, Mr. Wales said the article "fails to meet our high standards and needs immediate attention."

Furthermore, Mr. Wales said he was leading a group that was looking into issues of neutrality in Wikipedia across articles and topic areas, including "Zionism." He also claimed that much more work was needed, though he clarified that he was only speaking in a personal capacity.

"I assume good faith of everyone who has worked on this Gaza 'genocide' article. At present, the lede and the overall presentation state, in Wikipedia's voice, that Israel is committing genocide, although that claim is highly contested," Mr. Wales stated, later noting, "A neutral approach would begin with a formulation such as: 'Multiple governments, NGOs, and legal bodies have described or rejected the characterisation of Israel's actions in Gaza as genocide.'

Though Mr. Wales' opinion is not a definitive decision or judgment, it has ignited debate across the Wikipedia editors community as they re-examine how they are collectively working to document Israel's violence against Palestinians.

## Has a genocide in Gaza been confirmed?

A UN Independent International Commission of Inquiry reported on

September 16 that Israel committed genocide against Palestinians in the Gaza Strip. The investigation covers events since October 7, 2023, when Hamas attacked Israeli civilians, and Israel's military actions since then.

The Commission reported that Israel carried out four of the five genocidal acts as defined by the 1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, including "killing, causing serious bodily or mental harm, deliberately inflicting conditions of life calculated to bring about the destruction of the Palestinians in whole or in part, and imposing measures intended to prevent births."

The International Association of Genocide Scholars (IAGS) also published a resolution in August 2025 stating that Israel carried out war crimes and genocide, noting that its actions "have not only been directed against the Hamas group responsible for these, but have also targeted the entire Gazan population".

The Human Rights Watch stated in December 2024 that "Israeli authorities are responsible for the crime against humanity of extermination and for acts of genocide" by throttling Palestinian civilians' access to water.

According to the Palestinian Ministry of Health, 67,173 people have been killed as of October 7 this year, two years after Israel's offensive on Hamas began. This figure includes 20,179 children, who account for about 30% of the total, reported Reuters.



## KNOW YOUR ENGLISH

*I climbed up and reached the pinnacle*

Stop name-dropping when you are trying to make new friends. It will not help

## S. Upendran

What is the difference in meaning between 'to drop names' and 'name-dropping'? (D. Aditya, Secunderabad)

In terms of meaning, there is no difference between the two. When you drop a name during the course of your conversation with someone, what you are doing is mentioning the name of some well-known individual. You talk about this individual as if you have known him for some time, and that he is a good friend of yours. This may, however, not be true. You may have seen the individual, but never actually talked to him; but during the conversation with your friend, you give the impression that the two of you are very close. People often resort to 'name-dropping' because they want to impress those around them – and in the process, hope to get preferential treatment. But this act of dropping names does not go down well with everyone – hence, the expression is often used to show disapproval.

*I find her constant name-dropping highly irritating.*

A person who frequently drops names is referred to as a 'name-dropper'.

**Is it okay to say 'hang a right/left'?** (G. Vasanthi, Kodaikanal)

The expression 'hang a right/left' is much more common in American English than British; it is seldom heard in our country. It is normally used when you are giving directions to someone who is driving. When you tell someone to 'hang a right', you are asking the person to turn right. 'Hang a right' and 'hang a left' have the same meaning as 'make a right' and 'take a left'. 'Hang a right/left' have been part of American English since the 1900s.

*Once you cross the railway station, hang a left.*

**How is the word 'pinnacle' pronounced? What does it mean?** (J. Kavitha, Kochi)

The word consists of three syllables; the vowels in the first two syllables sound like the 'i' in 'pin', 'din' and 'tin'. The final 'cle' is like the 'cle' in 'uncle' and 'cycle'; the word is pronounced 'PIN-i-kel', with the stress on the first syllable. It comes from the Latin 'pinnaculum' meaning 'peak', and it was originally used to refer to the top of a relatively high/tall mountain. With the passage of time, the word began to be applied to other objects which were relatively tall – for example, the highest point of a rather tall building can be referred to as 'pinnacle'. Nowadays, the word is used in everyday contexts to talk about the achievements of an individual – the highlight of our career, the greatest success that we have achieved can be referred as our pinnacle. It is always 'pinnacle' and not 'pinnales'.

*In Mala's opinion, getting a PhD from Harvard was the pinnacle of her academic achievement.*

upendrankye@gmail.com

## THE DAILY QUIZ

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

## A quiz to celebrate 100 years of the musical genius Salil Chowdhury

## V.V. Ramanan

## QUESTION 1

Where did Salilda go underground after arrest warrants were issued for his support to the peasant movement in the 1940s?

## QUESTION 2

Which composition rendered beautifully by Talat Mahmood and Lata Mangeshkar was inspired by Mozart's 40th Symphony?

## QUESTION 3

Salida became a household name in Kerala for his superb work in which award-winning film by Ramu Kariat based on a Thakazhi Sivasankara Pillai's novel?

## QUESTION 4

Can you name the song in *Half Ticket* set to tune by Salilda where actor-singer Kishore Kumar croons in both male and female 'voices'?

## QUESTION 5

Admiring Salilda's versatility, which popular filmmaker once remarked 'He can play almost any instrument he lays his hands on, from the tabla to the sarod, from the piccolo'?



## Visual question:

Name this Bimal Roy classic which is based on a story written by Salil Chowdhury.

**Questions and Answers to the November 21 edition of the daily quiz:** 1. This player has the highest partnerships from the 2nd to 6th wicket in the history of the Ashes. Ans: Sir Donald Bradman

2. The only bowler in Ashes history to pick more than 40 wickets in a series twice. Ans: Terry Alderman (Australia), 42 wickets in the 1981 series and 41 in 1989

3. This wicketkeeper holds the record for effecting most dismissals in a single Ashes series. Ans: Brad Haddin (Australia); 29 in the 2013 series

4. This neutral Umpire holds the record for having officiated in most Ashes Tests. Ans: Aleem Dar (Pakistan), 23 Tests

5. This English batsman scored 905 runs in 1928-29 Ashes series. Ans: Wally Hammond

6. This player holds the record for having scored the highest individual score in an innings in Ashes history. Ans: Sir Len Hutton (364)

7. This ground has hosted the most Test matches in Ashes history. Ans: Sydney Cricket Ground (SCG)

8. This player holds the record of being the only player to have scored more than 1,000 runs and taken more than 150 wickets in Ashes history. Ans: Stuart Broad – 1019 runs and 153 wickets

Visual: Name this player. Ans: Peter Siddle (Australia)

Early Birds: Piyali Tuli| Arun Kumar Singh| Suchit Narottam| Arjun Debnath| Sukdev Shet

## Word of the day

## Fructify:

become productive or fruitful; make productive or fruitful; produce fruit

## Synonym:

Usage: The treaty, if fructified, will be a disaster.

## International Phonetic Alphabet:

/fɪəktɪfaɪ/

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

**From Page One****No plan to bring Bill on Chandigarh, says Centre**

"No final decision has been made on this proposal. The proposal in no way seeks to alter Chandigarh's governance or administrative structure, nor does it aim to change the traditional arrangements between Chandigarh and the States of Punjab or Haryana," it said.

"A suitable decision will be made only after adequate consultations with all stakeholders, keeping in mind the interests of Chandigarh. There is no need for concern regarding this matter. The Central government has no intention of introducing any Bill to this effect in the upcoming Winter Session of Parliament," the Ministry further stated.

Currently, the Governor of Punjab is concurrently the Administrator of Chandigarh, and if the Bill is passed, the Union Territory will be governed by a Lieutenant-Governor.

Congress leader and Rajya Sabha member Jai-ram Ramesh said that the Parliament Bulletin had listed for "the introduction of a Constitution Amendment Bill to enable the appointment of a full-time L-G for Chandigarh".

"This was immediately and aggressively opposed by the INC and other parties in Punjab whose Governor is also the Administrator of Chandigarh. The Union Home Ministry now says that it has no intention to introduce the Bill in the Winter Session. Yet another example of the Modi Govt's FAST approach to governance – First Announce, Second Think," Mr. Ramesh said.

**Ex-CJI says opinion does not overrule judgment**

They need to act only within a "reasonable period". The Bench, however, did not specify the term "reasonable period" in its opinion.

"We have only relaxed the timeline. At the same time, we have balanced it by saying the Governor cannot sit on a Bill endlessly. We have also provided for a limited judicial review based on the facts and circumstances of each case. You cannot have a straitjacket formula that in every Bill, if assent not granted, it would be deemed to have been passed. In a routine Bill, one month is sufficient for a Governor to clear it. However, in Bills concerning internal or external emergency, a Governor may not be able to take a call in a month. He may take three or four months," he said.

To a question if Justice B.V. Nagarathna's dissent to a Supreme Court proposal to elevate Justice Vipul Manubhai Pancholi had any merit, he said that "if it had, the four other judges on the collegium would not have agreed to the proposal".

He said he did not believe in the age-old adage that there should be "friction" between the judiciary and the government. "I do not believe friction is necessary, especially when we have to depend on the purse for infrastructural development... I do not think continuous friction is necessary," he said.

Justice Gavai said the popular notion was that a judge was independent only if he decided against the government. "The decision of a judge is not based on whether the litigant is the government or a private person. You decide as per the papers before you. The government may succeed, or the government may lose in a given case. That is not the correct approach," he said.

When asked if he had ever come under pressure from the government, he replied, "No. I know when asked this question everyone in my position would say 'no'. But in my case, it is really a 'no'."

**UNSC reforms necessity, Modi says at IBSA meet**

Highlighting technology's crucial role in ensuring human-centric development, the Prime Minister proposed establishing an IBSA Digital Innovation Alliance to facilitate the sharing of digital public infrastructure such as unified payments interface (UPI), health platforms such as CoWIN, cybersecurity frameworks and women-led tech initiatives among the three countries.

Appreciating the IBSA Fund's work in supporting projects across 40 countries in sectors such as education, health, women empowerment and solar energy, Mr. Modi proposed the IBSA Fund for Climate Resilient Agriculture to further advance South-South cooperation.

Mr. Modi also invited IBSA leaders to the AI Impact Summit to be held in India next year, even as he emphasised the grouping's potential to contribute to the development of safe, trustworthy and human-centric AI norms. He said the IBSA can complement each other's development and become an example for sustainable growth.

He highlighted cooperation opportunities in areas such as millets, natural farming, disaster resilience, green energy, traditional medicine and health security.

Later, in a social media post, Mr. Modi said the IBSA reflects "our enduring commitment to strengthening the voice and aspirations of the Global South. IBSA is no ordinary grouping."

"Ours is a bond that is heartfelt, carrying with it diversity, shared values and shared aspirations. All three IBSA nations have held the G20 Presidency in the last three years and have used this opportunity to further the human-centric agenda," he said.

**PM calls for global compact on AI to prevent misuse**

The pact must be based on certain core principles like effective human oversight, safety-by-design, transparency, and restrictions on AI use in deepfakes, crime, terror activities, says Modi at G-20

**Press Trust of India**  
JOHANNESBURG

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday called for a global compact to prevent misuse of artificial intelligence (AI), and made a strong pitch for critical technologies to be "human-centric", instead of "finance-centric".

Addressing the third session of the G-20 Summit on the topic "A fair and a just future for all – critical minerals; decent work; artificial intelligence", Mr. Modi said technology applications should be "global" rather than "national" and based on "open source" rather than "exclusive models". Mr. Modi said that this vision had been integrated into India's technology ecosystem, and it had resulted in significant benefits, be it in space applications, AI or digital payments, where it is a world leader.

"We must all ensure that AI is used for global good and its misuse is prevented. To do this, we must create a global compact on AI, based on certain core



Laying out a road map: Prime Minister Narendra Modi and other world leaders during a session at the G-20 Summit held in Johannesburg on Sunday. PTI

principles, including effective human oversight, safety-by-design, transparency, and strict restrictions on the use of AI in deepfakes, crime, and terror activities," Mr. Modi said.

The Prime Minister said AI systems that impact human life, security, or public trust must be "responsible and auditable". "And most importantly, AI should enhance human capabilities, but the ultimate responsibility for decision-making always remains with humans," he said.

"We must all ensure that AI is used for global good and its misuse is prevented. To do this, we must create a global compact on AI, based on certain core

added. He said that in this age of AI, the approach must rapidly shift from "jobs of today" to "capabilities of tomorrow". "Unlocking talent mobility is essential for rapid innovation. We made progress on this topic at the Delhi G20. We hope that in the next few years, the G-20 will develop a global framework for talent mobility," he said.

Mr. Modi said that under the India-AI Mission, accessible high-performance computing capacity was being built with the aim of ensuring that AI benefits reached everyone.

The Prime Minister said India would be hosting the AI Impact Summit in February 2026 with the theme "Sarvajanam Hitaya, Sarvajanam Sukhaya" [welfare for all, happiness for all]. He articulated India's message for global well-being, asserting that it stood for development that is sustainable, trade that is trusted, finance that is fair, and progress in which everyone prospers.

**BJP urges J&K L-G to bar admission of Muslims at university**

**Peerzada Ashiq**  
SRINAGAR

Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant-Governor (L-G) Manoj Sinha has accepted a memorandum of the BJP seeking to scrap the MBBS admission list, which has more Muslim qualifiers, and reserve all the seats for Hindus at the Shri Mata Vaishno Devi University (SMVDU), Katra. The move has evoked sharp reactions from J&K parties.

A five-member BJP delegation, headed by Leader of the Opposition in the Assembly Sunil Sharma, met Mr. Sinha at the Raj Bhavan on Saturday. The delegation sought Mr. Sinha's intervention to amend the rules of the Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board and reserve the seats for Hindus only. The L-G is also the Chairman of the Board.

"The varsity is a religious institution and people have faith and beliefs attached to it. Every devotee donates to this religious institution with a wish to

**The move evoked sharp reactions from several political parties**

see the promotion of their faith... We made it clear to the L-G that only those who have faith in Mata Vaishno Devi should get admission," Mr. Sharma said. The BJP and several right-wing parties in Jammu are up in arms against the admission list, in which 42 of the 50 qualified students are Muslims.

The move evoked sharp reactions from several political parties. "It is unfortunate that the L-G has accepted such a divisive and communal memorandum.

Across the country, students of all religions study in minority institutions... No one has raised an objection to that ever," NC

spokesperson Imran Nabi Dar said. Another NC leader Tanvir Sadiq accused the BJP of "communalising institutions" and "dividing society".

The extradition letter was expected as the ICT sentenced Ms. Hasina and former Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal to death on November 17.

Bangladesh's Foreign Ministry urged India to hand them over without delay. The External Affairs Ministry had said that they had "noted" the verdict without indicating if India would consider it.

**Bangladesh seeks Hasina's extradition, sends letter**

**Kallol Bhattacharjee**  
DHAKA

Days after deposed Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina received a death sentence at the International Crimes Tribunal here, the interim government of Bangladesh has sent a letter to the Indian External Affairs Ministry seeking her extradition, said the Foreign Affairs Adviser of Bangladesh's interim government, Touhid Hossein, on Sunday.

Mr. Hossein said that the letter detailing the judgment on Ms. Hasina's role in the July-August 2024 crackdown on unarmed protesters has been sent to India.

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**'Consensus on most recommendations of Assam Accord panel'**

**The Hindu Bureau**  
GUWAHATI

The Assam government and the All Assam Students' Union (AASU) have reached a consensus on "most recommendations" of a panel to implement Clause 6 of the Assam Accord of 1985, the Chief Minister's Office (CMO) said.

Clause 6 of the peace deal, which ended the violent six-year, anti-foreigner Assam Agitation, promised appropriate constitutional, legislative, and administrative safeguards to protect, preserve, and promote the cultural, social, and linguistic identity and heritage of the Assamese people.

Representatives of the government and the AASU held the third round of discussions on Clause 6 on Saturday. Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma chaired the meeting.

**New panel to be formed**  
"...Both the Assam government and the AASU reached consensus on

**PM discusses trade, critical minerals with Ramaphosa**

**Press Trust of India**  
JOHANNESBURG

**The two leaders agreed to work jointly to amplify the voice of the Global South**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday met South African President Cyril Ramaphosa on the sidelines of the G-20 Summit here.

The two leaders discussed cooperation in various areas, including trade, investment, mining, critical minerals, AI, and food security.

"Had an excellent meeting with President Cyril Ramaphosa during the G-20 Summit in Johannesburg," Mr. Modi posted on social media after his meeting.

"We reviewed the full range of the India-South Africa partnership, especially in boosting linkages of commerce, culture, investment and diversifying cooperation in technology, skilling, AI, critical minerals and more," he added.

Mr. Modi congratulated the South African leader on the successful presidency of the G-20 summit this year.

They discussed ways to enhance cooperation in the fields of AI, Digital Public Infrastructure and critical minerals, it added.

The leaders agreed to work jointly to amplify the voice of the Global South.

Mr. Modi appreciated the initiative taken by South Africa to hold the IB-SA leaders meeting.

**ULFA(I) suffers setback as a top leader surrenders**

**The Hindu Bureau**  
GUWAHATI

The Pares Baruah faction of the banned United Liberation Front of Assam, or ULFA (Independent), suffered a setback when one of its top leaders surrendered before troops of the paramilitary Assam Rifles on the Myanmar border on Sunday.

The self-styled 'major-general' Arunodoi Dohoutia, alias Bijit Gogoi, one of the last extremists from the northeastern region to have been trained in Afghanistan and Pakistan by the Afghan Mujahideen and Inter Services Intelligence almost five decades ago, has been a close aide of ULFA(I) chief Pares Baruah. Officials said he and his PSO, Francis Axom, surrendered at Pangasau Pass in Arunachal Pradesh. The two are likely to be brought to Guwahati.

Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma dismissed the speculation that the extremist leader would be taken to New Delhi for the ongoing peace process.

**Experts warn against premature conclusion about Tejas crash**

**Saurabh Trivedi**  
NEW DELHI

The recent crash of an Indian Air Force (IAF) Tejas fighter aircraft at the Dubai air show has triggered a wave of speculation on social media, with many users terming the accident a setback for India's flagship defence export platform.

On Sunday, an IAF team reached Dubai to conduct a joint investigation with the UAE authorities. While no evidence of foul play has emerged so far, online discussions have intensified, demanding a thorough probe into the circumstances surrounding the incident.

Several hashtags gained traction, amplifying theories about sabotage and ex-

ternal interference. A fabricated social media post also claimed that an oil leak had been detected on the Tejas before the flight. However, a PIB Fact Check clarified that the allegation was false, stating that the fluid seen in the video was part of a routine draining process, not a technical malfunction.

A senior official monitoring misinformation campaigns said numerous accounts – operating from neighbouring countries – were found circulating misleading narratives about the crash.

The heightened military cooperation between China and Pakistan, especially in defence technology, has also been frequently referenced in online discus-



The Tejas fighter jet crashed at the Dubai air show on November 21. An IAF team reached Dubai on Sunday to conduct a probe. FILE PHOTO

sions around the incident.

Aviation experts, however, cautioned against premature conclusions until the joint investigation report is released.

**Impeccable record**  
"IAF has full confidence in

Air Power Studies (CAPS).

Air Vice-Marshall Golani added that incidents during development or early induction phases were not unusual. "Tejas has had an impeccable record. It was inducted in 2016, and till 2024 not a single incident occurred. Its safety record is excellent."

On the export potential of Tejas, he said India must first prioritise domestic requirements. "IAF has already placed orders for 220 Tejas aircraft. There are many powers in the world trying to pull India down."

According to the Ministry of Defence, India's indigenous defence production reached a record ₹1,27,434 crore in FY 2023-24, a 174% jump from 2014-15.

With the retirement of its last MiG-21 squadrons, the IAF's strength has dipped to 29 fighter squadrons, its lowest since the 1960s, against a sanctioned 42.

To bridge the gap, the force is relying heavily on the phased induction of the Tejas. The upgraded Tejas Mk-IA, featuring advanced radar, enhanced electronic warfare systems, and improved maintainability, is expected to significantly boost IAF capability.



Justice Surya Kant

## Justice Surya Kant to take oath as Chief Justice today

### Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI

Justice Surya Kant, who has been part of several landmark verdicts, will on Monday take oath as the 53rd Chief Justice of India.

He will succeed Justice B.R. Gavai.

Justice Kant was appointed the next Chief Justice on October 30 and will remain in the post for nearly 15 months. He will demit office on February 9, 2027, on attaining the age of 65.

Born on February 10, 1962, in Hisar district of Haryana to a middle-class family, Justice Kant went from being a small-town lawyer to the country's highest judicial office.

Justice Kant, who penned several notable judgments in the Punjab and Haryana High Court, was appointed the Chief Justice of the Himachal Pradesh High Court on October 5, 2018.

His tenure as a Supreme Court judge is marked by verdicts on the abrogation of Article 370, free speech, and citizenship rights.

The judge was part of the advisory opinion on the recent Presidential Reference on the powers of the Governor and President in dealing with Bills passed by a Assembly.

He was part of the Bench that kept the colonial-era sedition law in abeyance. Justice Kant nudged the Election Commission to disclose the details of 65 lakh voters excluded from the draft electoral rolls in Bihar.

# SIR is imposed oppression, a ploy to harass people, allow vote theft: Cong.

Rahul Gandhi says SIR aims to 'tire out genuine voters' by forcing them to sift through a 'jungle of paperwork'; Mallikarjun Kharge likens 'hasty, unplanned' revision to demonetisation and lockdown, he slams EC for standing as a 'mute spectator'

### The Hindu Bureau

NEW DELHI

**F**lagging the deaths of booth-level officers (BLOs) engaged in the special intensive revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in various States, the Congress on Sunday said the exercise was an "imposed oppression" and a "deliberate ploy under which citizens are being harassed".

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge and Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi flagged the issue.

The SIR is likely to dominate the upcoming Winter Session of Parliament.

Mr. Gandhi said that chaos had been "created" across the country in the name of the SIR of electoral rolls. He shared a news



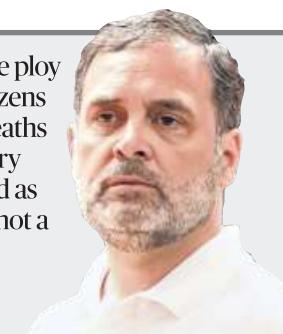
SIR is a deliberate ploy under which citizens are being harassed and deaths of BLOs due to unnecessary pressure are being ignored as collateral damage. This is not a failure, it is a conspiracy

RAHUL GANDHI

Congress leader

report in Hindi, which said that 16 BLOs had lost their lives in 19 days due to heart attack, stress, and, in at least two cases, suicide. "SIR is not a reform, it is an imposed oppression," he said in a post in Hindi on X.

Mr. Gandhi said the Election Commission of India had created a system where citizens had to sift through thousands of scanned pages of 22-year-



old voter lists to find their names. "The objective is clear: to tire out genuine voters and allow voter fraud to continue unabated," he alleged. He slammed the poll body for "creating a jungle of paperwork".

"If the intentions were clear, the list would be digital, searchable, and machine-readable, and the EC would have taken its time

to focus on transparency and accountability instead of rushing through the work in a 30-day hurry," Mr. Gandhi said.

"SIR is a deliberate ploy under which citizens are being harassed and deaths of BLOs due to unnecessary pressure are being ignored as 'collateral damage,'" Mr. Gandhi said, adding, "This is not a failure, it is a conspiracy; democracy is being sacrificed to protect power."

Congress president Mr. Kharge said the BJP's "vote chor" had now taken a deadly turn. "My deepest condolences to every family who has lost a loved one. Based on ground reality, this number is far higher than reported, which is extremely worrying. Who will provide justice to these

families," Mr. Kharge asked in his post in Hindi. He accused the poll body of standing by as a "mute spectator" while the BJP enjoyed the "fruits of stolen power". "The hasty, unplanned forced implementation of SIR is reminiscent of demonetisation and the COVID-19 lockdown," Mr. Kharge said.

The BJP's "hunger for power" is driving institutions to force suicides, shredding of the Constitution, and weakening of democracy through misuse of power, he alleged.

"If we still don't wake up, no one can save the last pillars of democracy from collapsing. Those who remain silent on SIR and vote theft are responsible for the deaths of these innocent BLOs," he said.

## BJP predicts Opposition setbacks in Bengal, U.P.

### Press Trust of India

LUCKNOW

communities had suffered violence, forced conversions, and displacement, and criticised past "appeasement-seeking governments" for denying them proper rehabilitation in India. He added that Prime Minister Narendra Modi understood their suffering, which led to the introduction of the Citizenship Amendment Bill.

He noted that the government had permitted persecuted minorities from neighbouring nations to stay "without passports till 2024, enabling them to live with dignity".

Mr. Singh criticised the Congress leadership during Partition, saying it ignored the security concerns of Hindus in Sindh and discouraged their migration to India.

A day after Samajwadi Party (SP) chief Akhilesh Yadav accused the BJP government and the Election Commission of plotting to remove voters from select constituencies, Uttar Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister Keshav Prasad Maurya suggested that the next electoral setbacks for the Opposition would come in West Bengal and Uttar Pradesh.

Taking to X, Mr. Maurya posted, "During the Bihar elections, with Rahul Gandhi diving in and dragging Tejaswi Yadav along, the fate of the Mahagatbandhan was sealed." He added, "The next number is that of Mamata Didi and then Akhilesh Yadav."

# T.N. finds itself in a tight spot over Code on Social Security

### T. Ramakrishnan

CHENNAI



With the Union government notifying the enforcement of the four Labour Codes all over the country, the Tamil Nadu government has found itself in a tight corner with regard to the Code on Social Security, as it has been entertaining reservations on the issue.

Ever since the Centre enacted the four Codes five years ago in the place of 29 laws, it had held discussions with the State government over the implementation of the Code on Social Security (CSS), 2020. But no consensus was arrived at, according to a policy-maker.

Of the four Codes, the State government, in April 2022, published draft rules for the three – the Code on Wages, 2019, the Industrial Relations Code, 2020, and the Occupational Safety, Health, and Working Conditions Code, 2020. As consultations with stakeholders have been held, the government can notify the final rules anytime now.

Only in respect of the CSS, no draft rules have been framed so far.

Fundamentally, the CSS does not give liberty to the State government to retain its existing law – the Tamil Nadu Manual Workers (Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Work) Act, 1982. But, the Unorganised Workers' Social Security Act, 2008, one of the nine laws subsumed by the latest Code, had allowed States to have any corresponding law, providing welfare schemes more beneficial to the unorganised workers than those provided for them under it.

The main reason behind the State government's reservation is that Tamil Nadu, being a "pioneer" in labour welfare measures for the unorganised sector, has been having 18 unorganised workers' welfare



# THE RISE OF RELENTLESS DEEPTI

From a childhood vow to a World Cup masterclass, Deepti Sharma's journey from Agra's lanes to cricket's grandest stage is a study in quiet, unrelenting fire.



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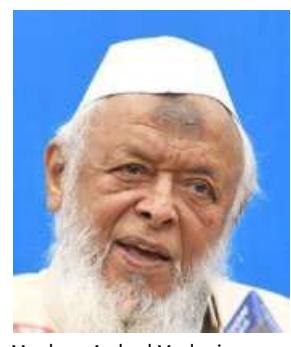
# Jamiat chief Madani's Al Falah remarks spark row

### The Hindu Bureau

NEW DELHI

Jamiat Ulama-i-Hind chief Maulana Arshad Madani's remarks alleging discrimination against Muslims in the context of multiple investigations into Al Falah University, in connection with the Red Fort blasts, sparked a controversy on Sunday. The BJP responded by claiming the "aataan-ki-bachao [save terrorist] jamaat" had become active.

"The world thinks that Muslims have been crip-



pled and finished. I don't believe so. Today, a Muslim, Mamdani, can become the mayor of New York, a Khan can become mayor of London; whereas in India, no one can even become a university vice-chancellor," Mr. Madani said at a session at the Jamiat headquarters here on Saturday.

"And even if someone does, they will be sent to jail, like Azam Khan. Look at what is happening today with Al Falah. He [the founder] is in jail, and no one knows how many years he

will be in jail," he said. The government is working relentlessly to ensure that Muslims never raised their heads, the chief of one of

the two factions of Jamiat alleged.

BJP leaders slammed Mr. Madani for the remarks, and accused him of giving a communal colour to the Delhi blast probe.

The ruling party's spokesperson, Shehzad Poonawalla, said, "Arshad Madaniji, leave aside this talk of mayor; this country has seen Muslims becoming President, Vice-President, Chief Justice, Home Minister. The biggest artists and businessmen have also come from the Muslim community."

"When a terror act takes place, those people who say terrorism has no religion, start advocating on behalf of terrorists on the basis of religion," he said.

Reacting to Mr. Madani's

remarks, Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis said, "In India, A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, who became the President, is the icon of Muslims. He always kept his head high. Why make others an icon?" BJP leader Shahna-waz Hussain slammed Mr. Madani's statement as "very irresponsible".

"The role of election officials, he alleged, was quite evident in Malappuram, Kannapuram and Andhoor in Kannur district. There have also been incidents in Ernakulam, Kasaragod and Palakkad districts where attempts were made to dissuade UDF candidates," he said. The CPI(M) is celebrating these "victories" even before local body polls by slaughtering democracy, he said, accusing the CPI (M) of threatening people who have forward to be the UDF candidates.

Mr. Satheesan's allegation has come in the wake of the rejection of the nominations of UDF candidates in the run-up to the local body polls in Kerala.

## Satheesan says UDF candidates are being illegally excluded

### The Hindu Bureau

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Leader of the Opposition in Kerala V.D. Satheesan has alleged that a group of election officials acted as a unit of the Communist Party of India (Marxist) to illegally exclude candidates of the Congress-led United Democratic Front on Saturday.

Mr. Satheesan's allegation has come in the wake of the rejection of the nominations of UDF candidates in the run-up to the local body polls in Kerala.

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NIT No.: CE/CTD/WBSETCL/Procurement-25-26/08 (2nd Call) Date: 24.11.2025  
E-Tender is invited for supply and delivery of 'A/C Leakage Current Meter along with associated items as per technical specification'. Bid documents can be downloaded from 24.11.2025, 06:00 PM, and bids shall be submitted online up to 03:00 P.M., 24.12.2025.  
Visit the following websites - [www.wbtenders.gov.in](http://www.wbtenders.gov.in), [www.wbsetcl.in](http://www.wbsetcl.in) for details.

IC-A-233787(2)/2025

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA-DEPARTMENT OF SPACE CONSTRUCTION & MAINTENANCE GROUP, SDSC -SHAR SRIHARIKOTA-524124**

**Brief E-TENDER NOTICE**

No:SHAR:CMGCIVIL:MAINT:E-PT-09/25-26  
Dt: 21.11.2025  
On behalf of President of India, Item Rate tenders are invited through e-tendering for following works;

| Name of Work   | Tender No  | Estimate Cost  |
|--|------------|----------------|
| AMC for Civil, PH, Water supply etc at PHC-I area for the year 2026-27 | T/C-25-042 | ₹ 67.54 Lakhs  |
| Term Contract for Civil works @ SLIP areas, SDSC SHAR                  | T/C-25-043 | ₹ 100.00 Lakhs |

Tender documents can be downloaded up to 08.12.2025, 14:30 hrs. For eligibility criteria and other details, interested tenderers may please refer to the detailed bilingual (Hindi-English) Notice Inviting Tenders (NIT) on the website <https://www.isro.gov.in/Tenders.html> and tender free view at <https://www.tenderwizard.com/isro>

Sd/- GROUP HEAD, CMG/ SDSC SHAR



THE HINDU

News

13

## IN BRIEF



## T.N. districts on high alert as IMD predicts heavy rain, floods

In view of the heavy rain forecast for several districts, the Tamil Nadu government has deputed three teams of the State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) to Thoothukudi and Tirunelveli. The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has predicted heavy rain in Cuddalore, Ariyalur, Mayiladuthurai, Nagapattinam, Tiruvarur, Thanjavur, Pudukkottai, Sivaganga, Madurai, Virudhunagar, and Ramanathapuram districts, a release said. The government has instructed the Collectors of these districts to take measures. While two SDRF teams have been deputed to Thoothukudi, one team has been sent to Tirunelveli.

## French Navy rejects Geo TV's claims on loss of Rafale jets

The French Navy has issued a strong rebuttal of Pakistan-based *Geo TV*'s "misinformation and disinformation" on Operation Sindoor. French official statements described claims by the channel as "fabricated". The clarification came after *Geo* published an article on November 21 alleging that a French naval officer confirmed Pakistan's air superiority and claimed that Indian Rafale jets had been shot down during recent border skirmishes. According to the French Navy, the statements attributed to "Captain Jacquis Launay" were fabricated. The officer's correct name is Captain Yvan Launay, and he "never consented to any form of publication," the Navy said. It noted that Captain Launay holds no operational insight into India-related missions.

## State Forest Departments across India have no record of African grey parrot trade, reveal RTI responses

Rohan Premkumar

UDHAGAMANDALAM

There are no registered breeders or authorised pet shops to sell African grey parrots (*Psittacus erithacus*) - one of the most easily procurable animals in the country. While the bird is extensively available in pet markets, the Forest Departments in different States said no breeder had registered with them. The departments had responded to applications filed by *The Hindu* under the Right to Information (RTI) Act, to understand the trade in the exotic species.

The parrot, listed under Appendix I of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna (CITES), requires special permits, including individual CITES registration

and import certificates, for their trade in the domestic and international markets.

Extensive capture for the international pet trade has decimated the bird's populations in their home ranges encompassing parts of Central Africa. The species is also listed as 'Endangered' by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature.

## RTI findings

Out of 19 States and Union Territories to which applications were sent asking about the trade in the species, only Kerala's Forest Department reported receiving 17 applications for the registration of breeders' licences for the species. The State also said registration of pet stores was delegated to the State Animal Welfare Board. Meanwhile, most other States



African grey parrot is listed as 'Endangered' by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

gave generic responses stating they did not have access to the data requested, while some forest divisions also responded individually, stating that the species was not found in their divisions.

Despite Tamil Nadu claiming that as per their records, there were no registered breeders, traders, or pet stores dealing in the commercial trade of Afri-

can grey parrots, the Forest Department said it was compiling inspection reports and audits of breeding facilities, pet shops, and sellers of the species.

## Breeding licence

To breed CITES Appendix I species like the African grey parrot, a valid breeding licence is required. To obtain this, an application must be submitted to the

Chief Wildlife Warden under the Breeders of Species Licence Rules, 2023. The applicant must also have the CITES import permit, a Directorate-General of Foreign Trade import licence number, and a no-objection certificate from the respective Chief Wildlife Warden for the import before applying for the breeding licence, a researcher familiar with the trade in exotic wildlife said.

Shekhar Kumar Niraj, the South Asia head of the Wildlife Justice Commission, said it was mandatory for each State's Forest Department to maintain records of exotic species.

"Even prior to importing, buyers have to receive approval from their respective State's Chief Wildlife Wardens, aside from import certificates and CITES

approvals," he said. "The trade in exotic species is on the rise, and maintaining registries of these species is extremely important as they pose a biohazard with the potential for spreading zoonotic diseases and also for becoming invasive species," he added.

## Trade hubs

Chief Executive Officer at Wildlife Trust of India Jose Louies said Kerala, Tamil Nadu, and Karnataka have become hubs for the import and trade in exotic species.

However, he does not lay the blame on the Forest Department. "You cannot expect the Forest Department to go house to house and search for these animals," he said. People buy animals without paperwork, and also breed them illegally.

## Opponents target BJP on emotive Chandigarh issue

**The Hindu Bureau**  
CHANDIGARH

Political parties on Sunday criticised the Bharatiya Janata Party even as the Union government clarified that it had no intention of introducing a Bill in the Winter Session of Parliament to bring Chandigarh within the ambit of Article 240 of the Constitution.

Punjab Congress president Amarinder Singh Raja Warring rejected the Union government's clarification and termed it vague. "What is the guarantee that it will not bring it [Bill] in the next session?" he said.

"What was the need to propose an amendment at the first instance. If the BJP is really sincere about Punjab and Punjabis, it should initiate the measures to

hand over Chandigarh completely back to Punjab instead of taking contrary steps," he said in a statement.

Malvinder Kang, Lok Sabha member from the Aam Aadmi Party, demanded that the BJP government declare Chandigarh as the rightful capital of Punjab. "There can't be a more appropriate moment for the BJP to clearly and finally declare Chandigarh as the rightful capital of Punjab," he said in a post on X.

Shironami Akali Dal vice-president Ravinder Singh Brahmpura, in a statement, termed the Home Ministry's clarification regarding the Chandigarh Bill as a "preliminary victory of Punjab's unity but a looming warning bell".

## FAITH

## Inescapable play of fate

If one has performed good deeds in previous births, happiness and comforts naturally follow in this life. Conversely, sinful or harmful actions bring difficulties and sorrow. Our scriptures call this destiny or fate. No one can escape its influence. King Janamejaya, a descendant of the Pandavas, approached his family's Guru, sage Vedavyasa, a great Tapasvi endowed with divine vision. He asked why the Mahabharatha war had occurred, leading to so much deaths. He wondered why Vedavyasa had not forewarned Yudhishthira to prevent it. The sage replied that even he could not halt the grand design of destiny and that such events unfold as ordained. Vedavyasa then cautioned the king of a great sin he would incur in the coming days and urged him to avoid it. Nevertheless, despite the warning, Janamejaya was unable to prevent the event.

Similarly, when it was ordained for Sri Rama's incarnation, destiny worked swiftly: He was sent to the forest – a turn of events that could not be stopped. This inexorable force of fate intervened once more, drawing Rama to chase the golden deer, which ultimately led to Sita's abduction by Ravana. These stories reinforce the idea that the workings of fate transcend individual will.

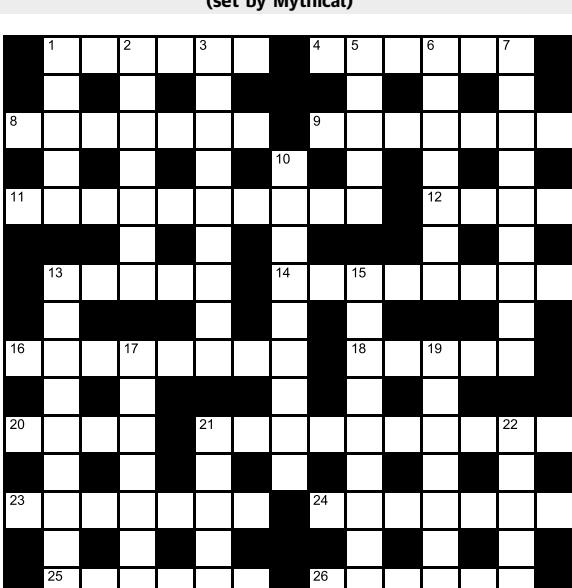
Lanka Sri Jeyaraj explained in a discourse that our karmas fall into three categories: Sanchita Karma is the vast storehouse of deeds from many past births; Prarabda Karma is the portion of these deeds that ripen for experience in the present life; Agamya Karma refers to the new actions, good or bad, that we perform in this life. These three types of karma work together to weave the fabric of our destiny, shaping the events we must undergo.

## TH CROSSWORD

14647

(set by Mythical)

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

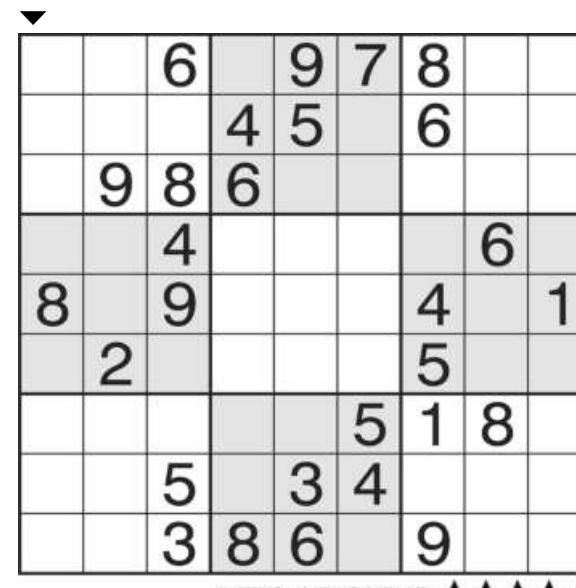


## Across

- Understand measure used by sailors (6)
- A couple of seconds, and Chatgpt e.g. basically creates artwork (6)
- Infected model blacked out after striking head (7)
- Dame possibly wearing princess's ornaments (7)
- Arm Britons! Perhaps, this might solve the problem (10)

- It nurtures immense lands, Egypt primarily (4)
- Join unit controlled by setter (5)
- Reading about a plant with fragrant flowers (8)
- Father a bit nostalgic after stories about fine years of existence (8)
- Royal leaves - avoids parades (5)
- Essentially going around that US state (4)
- Had guests shot?! (6,4)
- Aristocrat admits lying about leading developer (7)
- Discussed reports in stages (7)
- In auditorium, noticed player in spectacles (6)
- Song about alien traveller initially and princess in legendary ballet (6)
- Extremely frightful appearance and style (5)
- Port is more acidic (7)
- Fail to get up and go northward after cycling enthusiasts (9)
- Dislike quietly replacing daughter's drug (5)
- Like well-cooked pasta and beer around study time (2,5)
- Criticises change, getting hold of member with note (9)
- Friendly convict getting cocktail of gin and ale (9)
- Takes care of leading saint abroad (9)
- Esteemed doctor persecuted after rebuffing unionist (9)
- Improve unit hospital area in front of new church (7)
- Receive from Will, perhaps? (7)
- Work in silence, they say (5)
- Ultimately, outfits must satisfy local taste and fashion (5)

## SUDOKU



DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★☆

Solution to previous puzzle

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| R | H | E | W | R | D | M |   |   |
| A | D | A | M | S | W | I | N | R |
| F | L | C | T | P | S | S |   |   |
| F | A | L | O | N | H | A | T | I |
| L | O | R | J | I | A | Q |   |   |
| E | X | U | L | T | G | N |   |   |
| I | D | O | L | A | N | S |   |   |
| T | M | N | C | E | E | I |   |   |
| I | D | O | L | A | N | S |   |   |

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

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

# MONEYWISE

## TP cover: necessary, but isn't enough

K. Nitya Kalyani

Last Monday, we looked at the human side of Motor Third-party (TP) Liability insurance. This compulsory cover is meant to protect peace of mind – and finances – by shielding you from the legal burden of compensating those who suffer losses in an accident involving your vehicle.

But to borrow from the old saying, a TP policy is ‘necessary, but not sufficient.’ It is necessary for every vehicle owner. Yet, the number of vehicles actually insured is far too small for the cover to function as a meaningful social safety net for accident victims and their families.

Earlier this month, the Supreme Court asked the insurance regulator – the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) – to mull ways to improve motor insurance coverage, especially for TP cover, a statutory requirement under the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988.

### Poor coverage

The Court is also expected to look at enforcement strategies and policy reforms, given the troubling fact that a majority of vehicles on Indian roads are uninsured for TP liability. Estimates suggest by late 2023, almost half of all vehicles – about 18 crore – had no active TP cover. Another study puts the uninsured share at 57%.

This is not a recent failure.

Non-compliance has been recognised for decades, examined in committee reports, highlighted in the media and dissected in opinion columns – including this one. Numerous solutions have been proposed, and



**Rough ride:** A majority of vehicles are uninsured for TP liability. GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCK

some even tried, yet the problem persists.

Ideas have ranged from adding a small cess on fuel to fund TP payouts, to collecting a lifetime TP premium alongside lifetime road tax. Long-term 10-year policies were introduced, but uptake remained low, partly because these policies were often not accepted by traffic police. In 2018, the Supreme Court mandated multi-year insurance at the time of registration – five years for two-wheelers and three years for private cars. This nudged up the number of insured vehicles for a while. But many owners simply let the policy lapse after the initial block of coverage.

### Stark situation

Today, the situation remains stark: if you do not renew your TP cover, you risk personally bearing the cost of third-party property damage, injury or death. Compensation awarded by the Motor Accidents Claims Tribunal (MACT) routinely runs into lakhs and crores.

Even diligent policyholders are indirectly affected. Every year, IRDAI reviews TP premiums. If total TP claims exceed the collected premium, rates are revised upward. And who bears this burden? Those of us who renew our policies on time! In effect, the compliant end up subsidising the non-compliant – hardly a reward for doing the right thing.

All the more reason to nudge that neighbour, friend or relative who ignores TP renewal.

Remind them that neglecting a mandatory policy doesn't just endanger others – it also costs the rest of us.

*(The writer is a business journalist specialising in insurance & corporate history)*

**Send queries** on personal finance and investing to the [moneywise@thehindu.co.in](mailto:moneywise@thehindu.co.in) ID. Our experts in personal finance will respond to select queries, but will not give specific recommendations for investment in a particular mutual fund, share or fixed deposit.



**In the genes:** The pattern of spending is not a flaw but just natural flow. GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCK

## ‘Money-flow’ matrix: fresh lens on spending habits

Every financial habit carries a hidden emotional script, so discover yours. Before fixing your finances, know your financial personality

### MONEY MAPPING

Vaishali R Venkat

**M**oney is like water. Water responds to gravity, pressure, obstacles and also to the shape of its channel.

Likewise, money habits react to your impulses, emotions, fears, greed and other inner patterns.

These invisible patterns decide how money enters and escapes your wallet. Engineers study water flow and predict where it speeds up, slows down or leaks. Similarly, you need to know your money habits to direct flow and plug leaks.

### Battle within

The real battleground of money lies within, not outside. Benjamin Graham, considered the father of value investing, wrote: “The investor's chief problem – and even his worst enemy – is likely to be himself. The fault is not in our stars – and not in our stocks – but in ourselves.”

Often, researchers see that people fall into the trap of the emotional wiring, regardless of income, education or background.

The Money-Flow Matrix helps you see your money habits clearly. Seven patterns show where you're strong and where you stumble. Let's follow the currents...

### The Gusher

Gushers spend money as quickly as water gushes out of an open tap. It's the speed of spending that defines them. A Gusher feels



Money habits react to your impulses, emotions, fears, greed and other inner patterns, and decide how money enters and escapes your wallet



Drifters spend money without any purpose. They let their money drift wherever the moment or life takes them. No rhythm, no planning

a sudden urge to buy, and later realises that the money has flowed out faster than expected.

Author Daniel Kahneman explains that our brains have a fast, instinctive mode called System 1, which “operates automatically and quickly, with little or no effort and no sense of voluntary control.” The upside? Instant gratification. The downside?

Money slips away before they consciously decide where it should go.

### The Sipper

Every sip of a coffee is precious for sippers, they don't gulp it in one go. These types spend money penny by penny and rarely rush; they prefer value over impulse and take time to weigh their options.

Sippers compare choices carefully and often take longer time than others. With or without a formal budget, they have an internal sense of spending limits for food, travel, entertainment and leisure.

Their strength is thoughtful judgement but they postpone purchases that could genuinely improve their quality of life.

### The Anchor

When an anchor is

spending but they want every purchase to feel genuinely worthwhile.

Their strength is discernment, but they have difficulty in deciding when choices are galore.

### The Flooder

Flooders stay disciplined most of the time but release money in sudden, intense bursts of temptation. They indulge in shopping sprees during emotional peaks, festivals, celebrations or when they are stressed out.

This behaviour can be linked to ‘ego depletion’, a concept proposed by American social psychologist Roy Baumeister.

He explained that self-control can strengthen or tire, and once fatigued, it makes impulsive behaviour more likely.

### The Drifter

Drifters spend money without any purpose. They let their money drift wherever the moment or life takes them. No rhythm, no planning

### The Filterer

Filterers filter too many choices and zero-in on the ones that they feel are apt to them. This behaviour aligns with psychologist Barry Schwartz's idea of ‘The Paradox of Choice’, which explains how having too many options creates decision pressure and makes selection harder.

Filterers don't resist

dropped, the boat stays steadily in one place. Being stable and steady is the hallmark of Anchors. Psychologists Daniel Kahneman and Amos Tversky showed that the pain of losing money feels far more intense than the pleasure of gaining it. Averse to loss, Anchors gravitate toward traditional investments such as FD, RDs, gold or real estate, missing growth opportunities.

Their strength is that they don't act impulsively, but the challenge is that delay often costs them more in the long run, from late fees to missed opportunities.

### The Blocker

Blockers stop the flow altogether and the flow stays blocked until a deadline forces them to act. They avoid dealing with money because they are highly uncomfortable with it.

Their strength is that they don't act impulsively, but the challenge is that delay often costs them more in the long run, from late fees to missed opportunities.

Whether you gush, sip, anchor, drift, filter, flood or block, your pattern isn't a flaw, it's just your natural flow. And once you recognise it, awareness becomes the valve that directs where your money goes.

*(The writer is an NISM & CRISIL-certified Wealth Manager and certified in NISM's Research Analyst module)*

## Getting a taste of equity

### THINKINVESTOR

Moving some savings from bank deposits to equity boosts expected returns on total investments; but if the funds so invested generate negative returns, you may regret moving to equity

Venkatesh Bangarawuswamy

If you hold a view that equity investments are risky and, therefore, parked your savings in bank deposits and real estate, you could be facing a dilemma now. The stock market has been vibrant, and IPOs have mostly listed at a premium to their offer prices. Has that tempted you to move some money from your bank deposits to the stock market? This week, we discuss the rules you can apply when you move some money from deposits to equity investments.

### Asset class bet

Bonds as an asset class provide lower post-tax expected returns than equity. So, moving some savings from bank deposits to equity improves the expected returns on your total investments. But if the funds you invested in generate negative returns, you may regret the decision to move into equity. To moderate such future regret, it is better to take a bet on equity as an asset class. That means, selecting a broad index available in the country where you make the investments. For instance, the NSE 500 Index in India.

The next decision would be to choose between a passive fund and an active fund benchmarked to that index. Whether an active fund generates positive alpha (the excess return of the fund over its benchmark index) or negative alpha will only be known with time. The issue is that negative alpha can cause more pain than the same magnitude of positive alpha can give you happiness! So, you may want to settle for a passive fund. Within a passive fund, you have a choice between an index fund or an ETF. The latter is cost efficient.

### Conclusion

You may have observed your friends and family members hold large-cap funds. These funds primarily invest in top 50 or 100 stocks out of the NSE 500 Index. Should you consider them as a substitute for the NSE 500 Index? You could, if you are dissatisfied with the performance of the funds offered on the NSE 500 Index.

Then, an ETF, being a low-cost alternative, can be considered on the Nifty Index. You must be mindful of SEBI's definition of large-cap active funds. These are funds that must invest not less than 80% in large-cap stocks. So, such funds typically invest some money in mid-caps. For someone shy of the equity market, taking exposure to mid-cap stocks may not be optimal.

That leaves you with passive products on the Nifty 50 Index should you choose that benchmark.

*(The author offers training programmes for individuals to manage their personal investments)*

### Personal Loans

| Rates and Charges     |                   | Loan amount 5 lakh<br>Tenure 5 years | Loan amount 1 lakh<br>Tenure 5 years | (% of loan amount)   |
|-----------------------|-------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|
| Name of Lender        | Interest Rate (%) | EMI (Rs)                             | EMI (Rs)                             | Processing fee   |
| HDFC Bank             | 9.99 onwards      | 10,621 onwards                       | 2,124 onwards                        | Up to Rs 6,500   |
| Tata Capital          | 10.99 onwards     | 10,869 onwards                       | 2,174 onwards                        | Up to 3.5%   |
| State Bank of India   | 10.05-15.05       | 10,636-11,908                        | 2,127-2,382                          | NIL till 31st January 2026   |
| ICICI Bank            | 10.45 onwards     | 10,735 onwards                       | 2,147 onwards                        | Up to 2%   |
| Bank of Baroda*       | 10.40-18.10       | 10,722-12,724                        | 2,144-2,545                          | Up to 2% (Max. Rs 10,000)  |
| Axis Bank             | 9.99 onwards      | 10,621 onwards                       | 2,124 onwards                        | Up to 2%   |
| Kotak Mahindra Bank   | 10.99 onwards     | 10,869 onwards                       | 2,174 onwards                        | Up to 5%   |
| Bank of India         | 11.10-16.15       | 10,896-12,199                        | 2,179-2,440                          | Up to 1%<br>(Min. Rs 250;<br>Max. Rs 15,000)                           |
| Canara Bank           | 9.95-15.40        | 10,611-12,000                        | 2,122-2,400                          | Up to 0.25% (Max. Rs 2,500)  |
| Punjab National Bank  | 10.50-17.05       | 10,747-12,440                        | 2,149-2,488                          | Up to 1.80%  |
| HSBC Bank             | 9.99 onwards      | 10,621 onwards                       | 2,124 onwards                        | Up to 2%   |
| Federal Bank          | 11.99 onwards     | 11,120 onwards                       | 2,224 onwards                        | Up to 3%   |
| Union Bank of India   | 10.35-14.45       | 10,710-11,751                        | 2,142-2,350                          | Up to 1% (Max. Rs 7,500)   |
| Bajaj Finserv         | 10.00-31.00       | 10,624-16,485                        | 2,125-3,297                          | Up to 3.93%  |
| Punjab & Sind Bank    | 9.85-14.10        | 10,587-11,660                        | 2,117-2,332                          | 0.50%-1%   |
| Indian Overseas Bank  | 10.50 onwards     | 10,747 onwards                       | 2,149 onwards                        | Up to 0.75%  |
| UCO Bank              | 10.20-13.45       | 10,673-11,492                        | 2,135-2,298                          | Up to 1% (Min. Rs 750)   |
| IDFC FIRST Bank       | 9.99 onwards      | 10,621 onwards                       | 2,124 onwards                        | 2%   |
| Bank of Maharashtra   | 9.00-13.80        | 10,379-11,582                        | 2,076-2,316                          | Up to 1% (Max. Rs 10,000)  |
| Central Bank of India | 9.90-11.80        | 10,599-11,072                        | 2,120-2,214                          | Up to 1%   |
| IndusInd Bank         | 10.49 onwards     | 10,744 onwards                       | 2,149 onwards                        | Up to 3.5% (2%<br>for instant<br>personal loans<br>for limited period) |

\*Interest concession of 0.10% to customers opting for group credit life insurance.

### Car Loans

| Rates and Charges    |                   | Loan amount 5 lakh<br>Tenure 5 years | (% of loan amount)                  |
|----------------------|-------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Name of Lender       | Interest Rate (%) | EMI (Rs)                             | Processing fee                      |
| Union Bank of India  | 7.80-9.70         | 10,090-10,550                        | Up to Rs 1,000                      |
| Punjab National Bank | 7.80-9.70         | 10,090-10,550                        | Up to 0.25% (Rs. 1,000 - Rs. 1,500) |
| Bank of Baroda       | 8.15-11.60        | 10,174-11,021                        | Up to Rs                            |

## COLOMBO

Rajapaksa's party vows to topple Sri Lankan govt. at 'first chance'



Accusing the NPP government of failing to deliver on its pre-election promises, Sri Lanka's SLPP, led by former president Mahinda Rajapaksa, has warned that it would topple the administration at the "first opportunity". Since sweeping the 2024 polls, the NPP has pursued cases against members of the previous administration. PTI

## LAGOS

50 schoolchildren escape captivity in Nigeria; several still being held



At least 50 of the more than 300 children snatched by gunmen from a Catholic school in one of the largest mass kidnappings in Nigeria have escaped their captors, a Christian group said on Sunday, as the President announced the rescue of 38 worshippers seized in a separate attack last week. AFP

## TEHRAN

Iran's adversaries trying to target Khamenei: Intelligence Minister



Iran's intelligence Ministry has warned of attempts by foreign adversaries, including the U.S. and Israel, to target supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. Minister Esmail Khatib cautioned "the enemy seeks to target the supreme leader, sometimes with assassination attempts, sometimes with hostile attacks". AFP

## YANGON

Myanmar junta says nearly 1,600 foreigners held in scam hub raids



Myanmar's military said on Sunday it arrested nearly 1,600 foreign nationals in five days in a highly publicised crackdown on a notorious Internet scam hub on the Thai border. Sprawling fraud factories have mushroomed in war-torn Myanmar's border regions generating tens of billions of dollars annually. AFP

# U.S., Ukraine and European officials discuss Trump's proposal to end war

Europeans seek better deal for Kyiv before Thursday deadline; talks under way between U.S. team led by Secretary of State Marco Rubio and Ukrainian delegation; Donald Trump's ingratitude jibe prompts Ukrainian officials to stress their gratitude

**Reuters**  
GENEVA

**U**krainian, U.S. and European officials met in Geneva on Sunday to discuss a draft plan presented by Washington to end the war in Ukraine, after Kyiv and its allies voiced alarm over what they saw as major concessions to the aggressor Russia.

On Friday, Mr. Trump said Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy had until Thursday to approve the plan, which calls on Ukraine to cede territory, accept limits on its military and renounce ambitions to join NATO.

On Saturday, Mr. Trump said the current proposal



Taking stock: U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio (centre), next to special envoy Steve Witkoff, faces the Ukrainian delegation. AFP

for ending the war is not his final offer.

With the U.S. delegation led by Secretary of State Marco Rubio, the main talks between U.S. and Ukrainian officials got underway in Geneva on Sunday afternoon in a stiff atmosphere at the U.S. mission, soon after Mr. Trump complained in a Truth Social post that Ukraine's leadership had shown "zero gratitude" to the U.S. for its efforts and Europe continued to buy Russian oil.

Mr. Rubio interrupted

the meeting to speak to reporters, saying that the talks had been probably the best the U.S. had held with Ukraine since Mr. Trump returned to power.

He said changes would be made to the plan to work towards a solution that both Ukraine and the U.S. were comfortable with.

"Obviously this will ultimately have to be signed off with our Presidents, although I feel very comfortable about that happening given the progress we've made," said Mr. Rubio, who arrived in Geneva with U.S. Special Envoy Steve Witkoff.

Andriy Yermak, head of the Ukrainian delegation, was at pains to thank Mr.

Trump for his commitment to Kyiv during the brief remarks, before he and Mr. Rubio returned to their talks.

Minutes later, Mr. Zelenksiy himself offered thanks to Mr. Trump.

**'Allies not consulted'**

Since the U.S. plan was announced, there has been confusion about who was involved in drawing it up. European allies said they had not been consulted.

Europeans have submitted a modified version of the U.S. plan for Ukraine that pushes back on proposed limits to Kyiv's armed forces and territorial concessions, according to a document seen by *Reuters* on Sunday.

Israel has previously carried out similar strikes

# Israel launches air strikes in latest test of Gaza ceasefire; hospitals report 24 deaths

**Associated Press**  
GAZA STRIP

Israel's military on Saturday launched air strikes against Hamas militants in Gaza in the latest test of the ceasefire that began on October 10, as Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office said five senior Hamas members were killed.

Health officials in Gaza reported at least 24 people killed and 54 wounded, including children.

The strikes, which Israel said were in response to gunfire at its troops, came after international momentum on Gaza, with the UN Security Council on Monday approving the U.S. blueprint to secure and govern the territory.

Israel has previously carried out similar strikes



Benjamin Netanyahu

after reported attacks on its forces during the ceasefire.

"We are continuing to strike terrorism on several fronts," Mr. Netanyahu said as he opened a cabinet meeting.

"This weekend, the IDF struck in Lebanon, and we will continue to do everything necessary to prevent Hezbollah from re-establishing. This is also what we are doing in the Gaza Strip. Since the ceasefire, Hamas has not stopped violating it, and we are acting accordingly."

(With inputs from AFP)

## Israel says it killed Hezbollah 'chief of staff' in Beirut strike

**Agence France-Presse**  
BEIRUT

Israel said it killed Hezbollah's Chief of Staff in an air strike on Lebanon's capital on Sunday, hitting an apartment building in an operation the militant group said crossed a red line.

Lebanon's Health Ministry said the attack in Beirut, which came after Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu vowed Israel would "do everything ne-

cessary" to prevent the pro-Iran movement from regrouping, killed five people and wounded 28 more.

The Ministry did not give the identities of those killed in the strike in the Har el-Hreik area in Beirut's southern suburbs, a densely populated area where Hezbollah holds sway.

In a statement after the strike, the Israeli military said it had "eliminated the Haytham Ali Tabatabai, Hezbollah's chief of general staff".

A senior administration official on Saturday did not

## U.S. to launch new phase of operations in Venezuela as tensions rise: sources

**Reuters**  
WASHINGTON

rule anything out regarding Venezuela.

"President Trump is prepared to use every element of American power to stop drugs from flooding into our country and to bring those responsible to justice," said the official, speaking on the condition of anonymity.

The Trump administration has been weighing Venezuela-related options to combat what it has portrayed as Mr. Maduro's role in supplying illegal drugs that have killed Americans. He has denied having any

**Officials say options under consideration include attempts to overthrow Maduro**

links to the illegal drug trade.

Two U.S. officials told *Reuters* the options under consideration included attempting to overthrow Mr. Maduro.

Mr. Maduro, in power since 2013, has contended that Mr. Trump seeks to oust him and that Venezuelan citizens and the mili-

tary will resist any such attempt.

A military buildup in the Caribbean has been under way for months, and Mr. Trump has authorised covert CIA operations in Venezuela. The U.S. Federal Aviation Administration on Friday warned major airlines of a "potentially hazardous situation" when flying over Venezuela and urged them to exercise caution.

Three international airlines cancelled flights departing from Venezuela on Saturday after the warning.

## Japan 'crossed a red line' with remarks on Taiwan: China's Wang

**Reuters**  
HONG KONG

China's Foreign Minister Wang Yi said on Sunday it was "shocking" for Japan's leader to openly send a wrong signal concerning Taiwan, the latest remarks in a row that has shaken relations for more than two weeks.

Mr. Wang, the most senior Chinese official to have commented publicly on the issue, said Japan was crossing a red line that

must not be touched, according to an official statement.

He accused Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi of attempting to intervene militarily in Taiwan. Mr. Wang was referring to comments on November 7, in which Ms. Takaichi told a questioner in Parliament that a hypothetical Chinese attack on democratically governed Taiwan could trigger a military response from Tokyo.

## Wei to battle Sindarov for the crown

**CHESS WORLD CUP**

**P.K. Ajith Kumar**  
ARPORA (GOA)

A cool breeze blew across Resort Rio, bringing relief to an oppressively warm Sunday evening. That comforting breeze may have done little to calm Andrey Esipenko as he came out of the playing hall and walked swiftly towards his room.

The conditioned air inside the room may not have helped, either. The 23-year-old Russian had just blundered a place in the Chess World Cup, but his 56th move against Wei Yi in the second tie-break game of the semifinal will haunt him for long. It was a gentle pawn push on the 'c' file to the sixth rank, but it was also an irretrievable step to self-destruction.



**Costly blunder:** Disappointment is writ large on Esipenko's face after making the move that led to his downfall against Wei. FIDE

playoff for third place at the World Cup, but his 56th move against Wei Yi in the second tie-break game of the semifinal will haunt him for long. It was a gentle pawn push on the 'c' file to the sixth rank, but it was also an irretrievable step to self-destruction.

Cup final, and in the Candidates. Esipenko resigned immediately, and looked for a few seconds incredulously at the board before getting up.

In the final starting on Monday, the seventh-seeded Wei will meet Javokhir Sindarov. In the all-Uzbek semifinal, the 16th seed scored a crucial win against Nodirbek Yakubboev in the first game, riding on his advanced passed pawn. Sindarov then only needed a draw in the second game, and got that. In the other match, Esipenko and Wei had drawn the first game, setting up the dramatic second.

**The results (semifinals, tie-breaks):** Wei Yi (Chn) bt Andrei Esipenko (Rus) 1.5-0.5; Javokhir Sindarov (Uzb) bt Nodirbek Yakubboev (Uzb) 1.5-0.5.

## Sport

## Verstappen wins big; McLaren disqualified

**LAS VEGAS GP**

**Agence France-Presse**  
LAS VEGAS

title race, just 24 points behind Norris.

**The results:**

1. Verstappen (Red Bull) 1:21:08.429; 2. Russell (Mercedes) +23.546; 3. Antonelli (Mercedes) 30.488; 4. Leclerc (Ferrari) 30.768; 5. Sainz Jr. (Williams) 34.924; 6. Hadjar (Racing Bulls) 45.257; 7. Hulkenberg (Sauber) 51.134; 8. Hamilton (Ferrari) 59.369; 9. Ocon (Haas) 1:00.635; 10. Bearman (Haas) 1:10.549; 11. Alonso (Aston Martin) 1:25.308; 12. Tsunoda (Red Bull) 1:26.974; 13. Gasly (Alpine) 1:31.701.

+1 lap: 14. Lawson (Racing Bulls) and 15. Colapinto (Alpine).

**Did Not Finish:** Albon (Williams), Bortoleto (Sauber) and Stroll (Aston Martin).

**Disqualified:** Norris and Piastri, both McLaren.

**Standings:**

**Drivers:** 1. Norris 390; 2. Piastri 366; 3. Verstappen 366; 4. Russell 294; 5. Leclerc 226.

**Constructors:** 1. McLaren 756; 2. Mercedes 431; 3. Red Bull 391; 4. Ferrari 378; 5. Williams 121.

**THE JOURNEY IN NUMBERS AFTER THE 50-LAP RACE IN LAS VEGAS**

**Lights to flag**

1 Britain becomes the first nation to record 800 podium finishes

2 Verstappen and Red Bull are the first driver and team to notch up multiple wins at the Las Vegas GP

3 Verstappen is only the third driver, after Schumacher and Hamilton, to win eight times in

one country

7 The Dutchman has ended a seven-race streak of Grands Prix won from pole position

8 It is Verstappen's eighth consecutive podium finish this season, the third-longest streak of his career

33 Number of times Verstappen has won when not starting on pole, pulling him level with Alain Prost in third place

Compiled by ANIRUDH VELAMURI



A N D - N D E

**SEVEN MAXIMUMS**

Jansen hits the most sixes in a Test innings by a visiting batter in India



RITU RAJ KONWAR

South Africa's Marco Jansen smashed seven sixes in his 93 in the second Test in Guwahati to go past Viv Richards and Matthew Hayden's record of six, the most by a visiting batter in a Test innings in India. He also equalled the record for most sixes in a Test innings by a South African, held by AB de Villiers and Quinton de Kock.

**FIGHTING BACK**

'Wasn't sure if I would ever play Tests again after 2019 tour of India'



RITU RAJ KONWAR

Senuran Muthusamy felt he wasn't sure he would ever get to play Test cricket after a bruising maiden tour of India in 2019. "There were times, especially after 2019, when I wasn't sure if I'd ever play Test cricket again and certainly not in India after we lost that series. I am grateful for the support I have received back home," he said.

**THRILLING CLIMAX**

Pakistan pips Bangladesh-A in Super Over, takes the title



ASIAN CRICKET COUNCIL

Pakistan Shaheens beat Bangladesh-A in the Super Over to win the Asia Cup Rising Stars tournament in Doha on Sunday. **The scores:** Pakistan Shaheens 125 in 20 overs (Masood 38, Mondol 3/25) tied with Bangladesh-A 125/9 in 20 overs (Sufiyan 3/11); **Super Over:** Bangladesh 6/2 (0.3 overs) lost to Pakistan 8/0 (0.4 overs).

**ON A ROLL**

Tariq performs a hat-trick as Pakistan seals berth in final



SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Usman Tariq's hat-trick propelled Pakistan into the T20 tri-series final with a 69-run win over Zimbabwe in Rawalpindi. Zimbabwe was bowled out for 126 in reply to Pakistan's 195 for five. **The scores:** Pakistan 195/5 in 20 overs (Babar 74, Farhan 63) bt Zimbabwe 126 in 19 overs (Burl 67 n.o., Tariq 4/18, incl. a hat-trick).

# Muthusamy and Jansen put South Africa in the box seat

The former scores his maiden Test century while the latter misses out by seven runs; the duo's 97-run partnership for the eighth wicket powers the visiting team to a massive score; the Indian bowlers struggle to make an impression

**SA IN INDIA****S. Dipak Ragav**

GUWAHATI

**S**enuran Muthusamy has a strong bond with India. His forefathers were from Nagapattinam (Tamil Nadu) and he made his Test debut during South Africa's tour of the country in 2019.

Muthusamy, though, had a forgettable time in the two matches he played six years ago and figured in just five more Tests after that.

The 31-year-old, back in India again, found a place in the playing XI for the second and final Test at the ACA Stadium. He made it count with a maiden century to power his team to a massive first innings total of 489 on Sunday.

India's openers, Yashasvi Jaiswal and K.L. Rahul, survived a testing spell by the Proteas' new ball bowlers to end the day at nine without loss.

Muthusamy, who displayed resolute defence and capitalised on the loose deliveries, found a perfect partner in Marco Jansen, who swung for the fences and smashed a career-best knock of 93 (91b, 6x4, 7x6).

The duo, which added 97 off just 107 deliveries for the eighth wicket, put the visitors in a commanding position after they resumed at 247 for six.

When the day began, the home team would have fancied its chances of knocking over the South African lower-order given that it had a relatively new ball at its disposal.



Sunday special: Muthusamy's century contained 10 boundaries and two sixes. RITU RAJ KONWAR

**SCOREBOARD****SOUTH AFRICA — 1ST INNINGS**

Aiden Markram b Bumrah 38 (81b, 5x4), Ryan Rickleton c Pant b Kuldeep 35 (82b, 5x4), Tristan Stubbs c Rahul b Kuldeep 49 (112b, 4x4, 2x6), Temba Bavuma c Jaiswal b Jadeja 41 (92b, 5x4), Tony de Zorzi c Pant b Siraj 28 (59b, 3x4, 1x6), Wiaan Mulder c Jaiswal b Kuldeep 13 (18b, 2x4);

**SENURAN MUTHUSAMY**

c Jaiswal b Siraj 109 (206b, 10x4, 2x6), Kyle Verreyne st. Pant b Jadeja 45 (122b, 5x4), Marco Jansen b Kuldeep 93 (91b, 6x4, 7x6), Simon Harmer b Bumrah 5 (17b), Keshav Maharaj (not out) 12 (31b, 1x4); Extras (b-8, lb-8, nb-4, w-1): 21; Total (in 151.1 overs): 489.

**FALL OF WICKETS**

1-82 (Markram, 26.5 overs), 2-82 (Rickleton, 27.2), 3-166 (Bavuma, 57.2), 4-187 (Stubbs, 63.1), 5-201 (Mulder, 67.2), 6-246 (de Zorzi, 81.1), 7-334 (Verreyne, 120.3), 8-431 (Muthusamy, 138.1), 9-462 (Harmer, 143.1).

**INDIA BOWLING**

Bumrah 32-10-75-2, Siraj 30-5-106-2, Nitish 6-0-25-0,

**WASHINGTON SUNDAR**

29.1-4-115-4, Jadeja 28-2-94-2.

**INDIA — 1ST INNINGS**

Yashasvi Jaiswal (batting) 7 (23b, 1x4), K.L. Rahul (batting) 2 (14b); Total (for no loss in 6.1 overs): 9.

**SOUTH AFRICA BOWLING**

Jansen 3.1-1-9-0, Mulder 3-3-0-0.

Instead, what followed over the next two hours was good old attritional cricket as the overnight batters, Muthusamy and Kyle Verreyne, dug their heels in.

covers and followed it up with two cuts to the boundary off Ravindra Jadeja.

At the other end, Muthusamy was decisive in his footwork, getting on to the frontfoot and nudging the ball around.

Though the pitch was at its best for batting, Rishabh Pant's defensive fields did not help as it allowed the opposition to take singles without much risk.

The spinners, too, could have been more aggressive and relied on their guile to snare the batters, but instead let the game drift.

Only 69 were scored in the morning session as

Muthusamy and Verreyne negotiated it without being separated, setting the platform for the carnage that followed in the next two sessions.

Post-tea, Jadeja had Verreyne stumped, giving the hosts a small opening. But Jansen had other ideas and turned the contest on its head by employing the long handle. He was so brutal that he broke three bats during his innings!

The 25-year-old made his intentions clear right from the start, sweeping Jadeja over wide midwicket and long-on for two maximums. Against Kuldeep,

he put on his dancing shoes to loft the ball over the bowler.

Muthusamy soon joined the party, depositing Washington Sundar over the fence for a six. A slog-swept six and a flick to fine-leg off Kuldeep quickly took him to 98, and he brought up his century with a couple off Siraj in the next over.

The early sunset has already cost vital overs in this Test. India now needs to come up with something extraordinary in the remaining three days to avoid a dark shadow from engulfing its fortunes.

Growing in confidence Verreyne was far from confident against the quicks, Jasprit Bumrah and Mohammed Siraj, who kept targeting the stumps.

The wicketkeeper-batter managed to survive and grew in confidence once the spinners were introduced. Verreyne punched Kuldeep Yadav off the backfoot through

the spinners, too, could have been more aggressive and relied on their guile to snare the batters, but instead let the game drift.

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## IN BRIEF



## Murad and Taijul spin Bangladesh to a series sweep

Left-arm spinners Taijul Islam and Hasan Murad led Bangladesh to a 2-0 series sweep over Ireland with a commanding 217-run victory in the second Test in Mirpur on Sunday.

**The scores:** Bangladesh 476 & 297/4 decl. bt Ireland 265 & 291 in 113.3 overs (Campher 71 n.o. Tector 50, Murad 4/44, Taijul 4/104). **PoM:** Mushfiqur. **PoS:** Taijul.

## Abhinav wins men's 25m pistol gold at the Deaflympics

Abhinav Deshwal won India's 15th medal in shooting at the Deaflympics, clinching the gold in the 25m pistol event in Tokyo on Sunday with a record in qualification. He shot a score of 44 in the final to edge out South Korea's Seung Hwa Lee, who finished with 43. Serhii Formin of Ukraine won bronze while the other Indian shooter Chetan Hammant Sapkal finished fifth.

## East Bengal bows out of AFC Women's Champions League

East Bengal was on Sunday eliminated from the AFC Women's Champions League group stage after a 0-3 loss to PFC Nasaf of Uzbekistan in Wuhan. Diyorakhon Khabibullaeva (18th and 90+8) struck a brace while Zarina Norboeva found the target in the 52nd minute.

## LIVE TELECAST

**India vs South Africa:** 2nd Test, day 3, Star Sports 2 & Jio-Hotstar, 9 a.m.  
**Chess World Cup:** FIDE YouTube channel, 3 p.m.  
**Serie A:** DAZN, 1.15 a.m. (Tuesday)  
**LaLiga:** FanCode, 1.30 a.m. (Tuesday)

## Indian Navy tops pool in style

Sports Bureau  
NEW DELHI

Indian Navy topped Pool D with a 4-1 win against Railways Sports Promotion Board in the last league match of the SNBP 61st Nehru hockey tournament at the Shivaji Stadium.

With both Navy and SRPB having already booked their spot in the last four, the match was of interest only to decide the pool topper and both teams played at less than 100% to preserve energy.

and avoid injuries.

A barren first quarter was followed by both teams scoring once to go level at half time.

With neither team trying too hard, Navy finally pumped in three more in the final quarter.

It will take on defending champion Petroleum SPB while RSPB will face Indian Air Force in the semifinals.

**The results (Pool D):** Army XI 0 drew with RCF 0; Indian Navy 4 (Ajinkya Jadhav, Sundar Panday, Sushil Dhanwar, Kuldeep) bt RSPB 1 (Shesha Gowda).

## Fitness necessary but need more players with unique personalities too: Gade

Sports Bureau  
NEW DELHI

As one of the legends of badminton, Peter Gade shared the spotlight in his prime with some of the biggest names in the sport.

Now as co-founder of the Legends' Vision, the Dane hopes to spread his passion around the world.

In its 10th year now and returning to India with the Legacy Tour after eight years, the Legends' Vision has on-boarded Saina Nehwal and Carolina Marin as

the first women stars associated with the project.

"We started this 10 years ago and now we believe this is the right place and time to expand it, the second coming of the vision."

**Growing powerhouse**  
"India is a growing powerhouse in badminton with several exciting players coming up and it's a privilege to work with Saina Nehwal to build something meaningful here," Gade told the *The Hindu* in an

exclusive chat on the sidelines of launching the community project 'A Racquet's Second Life' that aims at encouraging people to donate used rackets for the less privileged.

A multiple World Championships medallist and one of the most successful men on the professional tour, Gade, now a coach, admitted the sport has changed a lot.

"I think it has become a lot more fitness oriented but we have to also remember that the number

of tournaments have also increased. In that sense it's getting closer to tennis, where players are travelling with a huge support group.

"But I think it will be good if along with fitness, there is a lot more personality also seen."

"Now, everyone follows everyone else and there are no secrets but I would love to see more players with distinct skills and individuality because that's what makes the sport exciting," Gade declared.

## KIUG across seven cities from today

Press Trust of India  
JAIPUR

As many as 5,000 athletes will compete in the fifth edition of Khelo India University Games (KIUG), scheduled to commence in Rajasthan on Monday.

Athletes from more than 230 universities will compete in 24 disciplines, including one demonstration event, in the annual event which will take place in Jaipur, Udaipur, Jodhpur, Kota, Ajmer, Bharatpur and Bikaner.

The new sports included in KIUG this year are canoeing, kayaking, cycling, and beach volleyball.

**Medal favourites**  
Among those who will be favourites to win medals in their disciplines are double Olympian swimmer Srihari Nataraj and leading archers Bhajan Kaur, Parneet Kaur and Aditi Gopichand Swami.

Srihari, competing in his second KIUG, will take part in six events.

## Head shapes up as a solution for Australia's opening woes

## THE ASHES

Agence France-Presse  
PERTH

Travis Head may have bat-ted himself into a permanent role as Australian opener after his swash-buckling 123 against England, casting doubt on the future of an ageing Usman Khawaja.

The 38-year-old Khawaja failed to open in either innings in Perth because of back spasms, paving the way for Head to seize the opportunity with all guns blazing.

His 123 from just 83 balls drove Australia to a crushing eight-wicket victory, with the knock hailed as one of the best in Ashes history by skipper Steve Smith.

Australia has been searching for a new opener since David Warner retired

order, in the second.

Weatherald fell for a second-ball duck first up, but did enough with a composed 23 alongside Head to warrant another crack in the second Test at Brisbane.

What happens next with an out-of-form Khawaja remains to be seen, with Smith non-committal when asked if his days were numbered.

"Let's just digest this first I think, you know the last couple of hours has been pretty incredible," he said after the game.

"It's probably too early to say anything on that."

"He's not moving particularly well in there, the old fella," he added.

"Unfortunately he just pulled up a bit lame early on in the game, and that happens when your back goes."

"I've been there myself when your back seizes up,

and it's not a nice place to be."

Khawaja came under fire for playing golf on the eve of the Test, although Cricket Australia boss Todd Greenberg stressed the back problem was pre-existing.

Head said opening for Australia at home had been "brewing for a bit", having done the job several times on overseas tours.

"Played a lot of cricket with Jake (for South Australia), so I was pretty keen to take some pressure off him."

"I just felt like the moment was right," he said.

"I was pretty bullish around the fact that I felt like I could do it. I'm always putting my hand up."

"I'm not going really aggressive at it, but I put my hand up. If the team requires it, I'm more than happy to do it and keep the option there."

## Cummins' likely return would boost the Australian pace attack in remaining Tests

Associated Press  
PERTH

Australia's bowling attack may be overhauled with Pat Cummins saying he's "half a chance" to be fit in time after missing the Perth Test.

Cummins hasn't played a Test since Australia's 3-0 sweep over West Indies in the Caribbean in July because of a lower back issue.

"It's feeling good," Cummins said during a brief commentary stint during the first test. "It's on track and pulling up pretty well. I'm pretty hopeful and it's probably better than it was a few weeks ago."

Cummins said he was disappointed to miss the opening match but that was better than potentially missing the entire series.

"There were probably times where I thought I wasn't going to play a game," Cummins said. "It's been tough. The whole

the English may again go for a similar attack but aim to bowl at a different length.

The batting was problematic for the English, with five-wicket collapses in each innings costing them precious momentum. England was bowled out for 172 and 164 despite being in commanding positions at times and set Australia a target of 205 for victory. The Australians reached that quickly.

"To be honest I thought 200 was a good score, I thought it was a very defendable score," coach Brendon McCullum told the BBC. "We've got some work to do, no doubt. But one thing we won't be changing is our blueprint, we'll stay true to that."

Skipper Ben Stokes said his team needed to move past the crushing defeat quickly as the second Test has become a must-win for the tourists.

cricketing world is watching, and you just wish you were out there."

Cummins and Josh Hazlewood both missed the Perth Test, leaving Mitchell Starc as the only member of the regular pace triumvirate. In a player-of-the-match performance, Starc took a career-best 7-58 in the first innings and finished with a 10-wicket haul for the match and a stunning catch.

Brendan Doggett took

five wickets on debut and likely would be the bowler to make way if needed.

England took five seamers into the Perth Test, relying on express pace to rattle the Australians. It worked in the first innings, but backfired in the second when Travis Head took on the short-pitch bowling and won.

With the Gabba also a venue that offers extra pace and bounce, and it being a day-night format,



# There should have been more Indian shuttlers at the top now

Saina expresses her concern over the gradual slowdown of the sport in the country; the veteran player urges the new generation to train in groups for healthy competition and to resist the rush for instant success

## INTERVIEW

### Saina Nehwal

Uthra Ganesan

**S**aina Nehwal was a trailblazer for Indian badminton on the court and now she is ready to do the same off it. Nehwal has become the first women badminton star, along with Spaniard Carolina Marin, to associate with the Legends' Vision, an ambitious project by four legends of the sport.

Envisioned by Lin Dan, Lee Chong Wei, Peter Gade and Taufik Hidayat, the vision aims to go beyond competitions, trophies and prize money and focuses on four core ambitions: enhancing junior development, enriching communities, expanding participation, and driving innovation across the sport. Now in its 10th year and returning with its Legacy Tour to India, the project has launched 'A Racket's Second Life' in the country to spread the game among the less privileged kids.

Saina spoke to *The Hindu* on the sidelines of the launch of the project. Excerpts:

**What exactly is the Legends' Vision and how did your association with this tour come about?**

It's a programme that has been around for 10 years but I only joined it last year. Their motto is to promote the game all over the world. And they are launching in India, for the first time ever, 'A Racket's Second Life', which invites donations of used rackets for someone who cannot afford to buy. We believe that even those who don't know much about the game will want to play and learn more about it if they get a racket in hand and start playing.

A game grows when everyone is learning and playing it regardless of the level. When I was coming up, Gopi sir gave me a racket and that meant so much for me, I wanted to prove myself worthy of it. I am sure there will be many youngsters who will think they can become something in the sport with a racket in hand.

**But do you think that Indian badminton has hit a speed-breaker?**

Yes, there is a little bump, especially among the girls. The boys are still doing well, Lakshya is doing extremely well. I think everybody is different; some bodies are capable of doing extraordinary

early on, others take time. Maybe in 10 years, a new kid will come along with a group who is doing well.

I think we were very lucky that way, 10-15 years back, me, (P.V.) Sindhu, (Kiddambi) Srikanth, (H.S.) Prannoy, (Parupalli) Kashyap, Sai Praneeth, Guru Sai Dutt, Ajay Jayaram, all of us were doing extremely well. Every time we participated in a Super Series event, we would be confident at least one of us would win a medal.

I feel it took them some time to come into the circuit but in the last one to two years, there has been a lot of improvement from some of the girls. Unnati (Hooda) and Anmol (Kharb) are doing well. We should give them some time. Every country goes through this, including China. In Korea, earlier there were no players, now suddenly one player is dominating. We will have to

wait and see how it goes.

**There are two ways of developing talent - cyclical, where one generation is brilliant across the board, like yours. Then there is a gap before the next generation succeeds. The other is continuous, where the next generation is already even as the previous one is still reaching its peak, something like China. What do you think we need to do to move from the former to the latter?**

Honestly, it's a question for me too. Badminton has grown a lot in India, coaches have been coming for many years. Actually, more foreign coaches are entering now. And honestly, some more players at the top should have started by now. I think the coaches can

give a better answer to where the mistakes are happening.

The players now have everything. We didn't have trainers or physios or even enough quality coaches, there would be one looking after 40 players. Competition exposure was also less, and moreover, we didn't have social media to be aware of what or how others were performing. It can't be that the players don't have the ability either; they are all very good. Maybe it's just taking a little time. There is also impatience. People want immediate results, they are not able to stay in one place for long, they keep changing their training venues and partners seeking instant success.

Most of them are not training in a group. If you train in a group, the results will come. Every player has a different game so you get to train against different players. And you keep pushing

each other. There is also competition within the group.

Girls like Akarshi (Kashyap) and Malvika (Bansod) have been playing on the circuit for 5-6 years. I don't understand this because if you are not progressing, it's a big question. At the same time, I have seen Unnati who has improved a lot in the last one to two years, she is playing consistently in semis and finals of Grand Prix. Tanvi (Sharma) is also playing really well.

I feel we have missed the bus somewhere. We are getting a lot of support. There are so many foundations who are supporting, along with a lot of schemes. As a player, I can only think about where a player went wrong on the court. But the 'missing bus' part and why it is taking so much of time, maybe coaches can answer better.

**What about you getting into full-time coaching, especially now that you already have one (Kashyap) in the family?**

I can see his condition. He trains from 4 a.m. to 1 p.m. and everyday he is frustrated over someone or the other. Coaching is tougher than playing, you have to put so much effort and time and your entire self into it. But it's also about passion. I will just wait and see.

I have been in sports for so many years, played at the highest level, so we have already seen so much stress. I want to be with my family for some time. My parents didn't really do anything except be with me, now I want them to enjoy life. But you never know after three to six years, I might want to go back to the game. Now I do motivational talks and if any of the youngsters want, I try to support them, tell them to come and play.

**Badminton is played by everyone but what do you think needs to be done to attract viewers?**

I still feel the marketing can be much better. Both the Indian and the international federations need to do much more so that people come and watch tournaments. When you talk about cricket or football World Cups or the tennis Grand Slams, you see the events promoted almost a year in advance and there is constant talk about it, information and promotions.

We have the World championships next year and it is the biggest event in the sport. We are also hosting it after 16 years. Given all that, I just feel that maybe we are lacking a little in pushing the tournament across the country. Those who follow closely will know but does the common public know about the event or its importance?



# SCIENCE

# The rational ape: study says chimpanzees reason through their beliefs

A series of five tests showed the chimpanzees didn't simply respond to the latest or loudest clues; instead, they evaluated how relevant and reliable each piece of information was, kept multiple possibilities open, and updated their choices in ways that resembled rational, evidence-based reasoning in humans; this raises fundamental questions

Ipsita Herlekar

**W**hen, in 1960, the British primatologist Jane Goodall first observed chimpanzees at Gombe National Park in Tanzania using twigs to fish termites out of anthills, she was making scientific history. Researchers had until then believed only humans could use tools. Goodall's discovery erased that line as well as raised important questions about what it means to be human.

Now, a study published in *Science* on October 30 has suggested that another supposedly uniquely human trait – the ability to weigh evidence, revise beliefs, and change one's mind – may not be ours alone. (This is, of course, setting aside machines.)

A team of experts from the Netherlands, Uganda, the UK, and the US observed 15-23 chimpanzees at the Ngamba Island Chimpanzee Sanctuary in Uganda through a series of carefully designed behavioural tests. The question they were trying to answer was simple: when faced with conflicting clues about where food is hidden, do chimpanzees follow the most recent signal or do they combine information, remember it, and update their beliefs, much like humans do when they think rationally?

#### Five tests

The researchers used five simple tests to examine how chimpanzees revised their beliefs.

"To run this study, we really had to break it down and ask: what is rationality at its roots?" Utrecht University assistant professor and the study's lead author Hanna Schleihau said. "What are its most fundamental components? And how do you test this in a non-verbal way?"

The team used a Bayesian model to generate predictions about the great apes' decisions and compared them with their actual behaviour. A Bayesian model is a statistical way to understand or predict something by continuously updating one's beliefs with new evidence.

The first test checked how chimpanzees responded to strong and weak clues. A strong clue could be in the form of seeing food dropped into a container; a weak clue could be hearing food rattling inside the container. The researchers also switched the order in which these clues appeared.

This way, the team observed that when the strong clue came second, the chimpanzees were more likely to change their original choice, suggesting they weren't simply reacting to the most recent signal but were weighing how reliable each clue could be.

The second test examined whether this pattern held when the team swapped the



A group of chimpanzees in Uganda. USAID AFRICA BUREAU

clues. This time, the strong clue was auditory while the weak clue involved vague movements or traces of food. As before, the chimpanzees consistently favoured the stronger, more reliable clues regardless of when it appeared.

The third test explored how well the chimpanzees remembered the clues. The scientists introduced three containers, one with a strong clue, one with a weak clue, and a third with no clues.

After the chimpanzees picked the container with the strongest clue, the researchers removed it and presented them with the remaining two (somewhat like the Monty Hall problem for humans). The chimpanzees more often than not picked the container with the weak clue rather than the one with no information, suggesting they kept multiple possibilities in mind rather than focus solely on the strongest clue.

Next, the scientists checked whether the chimpanzees could differentiate between information they already had and something new.

The great apes were made to hear either the same sounds of food rattling in a can twice or a new sound the second time. The chimpanzees changed their choice only when the second signal added something new, indicating they could tell old information from genuinely new evidence.

The final test explored how the chimpanzees responded when their initial belief was undermined. When the



This shows that they are aware of the reasons for their choices, a skill that has been believed to be uniquely human

HANNA SCHLEIHAUF  
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR, Utrecht University

scientists presented a "defeater" clue that directly contradicted a prior strong clue, for instance by revealing that a rattling sound had come from a pebble rather than food, the chimpanzees revised their choices. However, they ignored the same "defeater" when it wasn't linked to previous positive evidence.

#### Not uniquely human

Taken together, the tests show the chimpanzees didn't simply respond to the last or loudest clues.

Instead they evaluated how relevant and reliable each piece of information was, kept multiple possibilities open, and updated their choices in ways that resemble rational, evidence-based reasoning in humans.

"This shows [the study] that they are aware of the reasons for their choices, a skill that has been believed to be uniquely human," Prof. Schleihau said.

How would this sort of rational thinking turn up in the everyday lives of

wild chimpanzees? Since this study was carried out in semi-captive conditions and with rescued chimpanzees, the researchers could offer only hypothetical examples.

As Prof. Schleihau said: "Imagine a chimpanzee sees a red fruit on the ground and walks towards a tree because it assumes the fruit must have fallen from there. But when it reaches the spot, it realises the 'fruit' was only a cluster of red leaves. In that moment, the chimpanzee should revise its belief: it should no longer think that this tree is full of ripe fruit."

#### Bigger questions

According to Tetsuro Matsuzawa, a primatologist and former director of Kyoto University Primate Research Institute (and who wasn't involved in the study), it would be extremely difficult to observe such traits in wild chimpanzees in their daily lives because researchers simply wouldn't be able to make enough repeat observations to show reliably that chimpanzees can revise their beliefs in ways demonstrated in the study.

Nonetheless, he added, "This study also raises bigger questions about the evolutionary roots of human rationality. It shows that rational thinking is not limited to humans, and prompts us to ask how much of this ability is shared with chimpanzees and other great apes, a question now brought to the forefront."

(*Ipsita Herlekar is an independent science writer. ipsitaherlekar@gmail.com*)

## THE GIST

▼ The study suggests that another supposedly uniquely human trait – the ability to weigh evidence, revise beliefs, and change one's mind – may not be ours alone

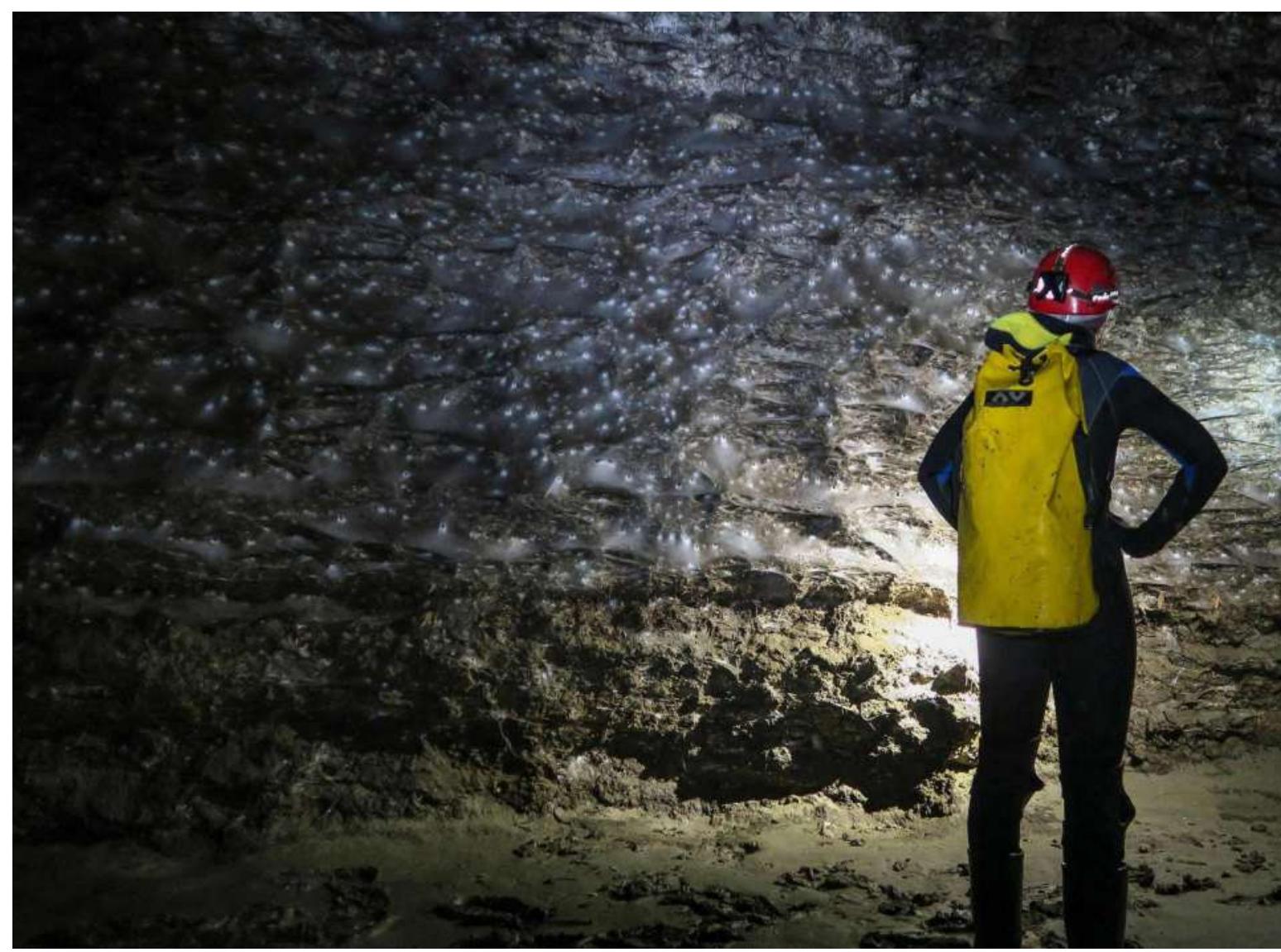
▼ Researchers, however, are unable to clarify what this rational thought process would look like among wild chimpanzees, since the study was carried out in semi-captive conditions and with rescued chimpanzees

▼ Researchers say the study raises questions about the evolutionary roots of human rationality and prompts us to ask how much of this ability is shared with the great apes

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## BIG SHOT



A handout photo taken in 2023 shows a researcher standing in front of the world's largest spiderweb inside the 'Sulphur Cave' at the Greece-Albania border, which scientists reported last week. The web measures over 100 sq. m and hosts some 1.1 lakh spiders. AFP

## QUESTION CORNER

### Random forest: branching possibilities

Vasudevan Mukunth



#### Q: What is a 'random forest'?

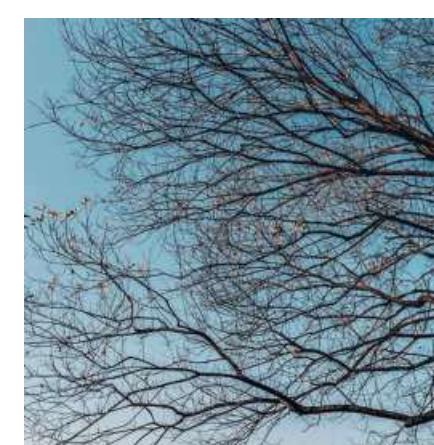
A: A random forest is a machine-learning method that makes predictions by combining the

decisions of many simpler models called decision trees. A decision tree works like a tree from bottom-up. At each node, it asks a question about the data, e.g. "is a person's age greater than 30?". Then, depending on the answer, it moves left or right until it reaches a final decision at a 'leaf'. While single trees are easier to understand, they can also overfit the data, i.e. they may learn small quirks of the training data that don't generalise well.

A random forest minimises this issue by building a large number of trees, each trained on a slightly different random sample of the data.

When asked to make a prediction, every tree gives an answer. For classification problems, the random forest picks the most common answer. For regression problems, it averages the numerical outputs. Because random errors and quirks tend to cancel out when the verdicts of many trees are combined, a random forest is often more accurate than any single tree while still being relatively straightforward to use.

In a study published on November



A decision tree works like a tree from the trunk to the leaves. N UXIAB/UNSPLASH

17 in the journal *PNAS*, for instance, scientists trained random forest models to learn the "chemical fingerprints" of fossils, then based on that made them predict whether some organic molecules present on rocks could have come from lifeforms or natural processes. Thus they reported evidence of photosynthetic microbes from 2.5 billion years ago.

For feedback and suggestions for 'Science', please write to [science@thehindu.co.in](mailto:science@thehindu.co.in) with the subject 'Daily page'