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LADKI BAHIN YOJANA Bruised by a populist promise

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GST receipts' growth picks up again, but still off target

Revenues surpass ₹1.87 lakh crore in October, marking the second highest monthly collections; despite improved figure, the accruals so far continue to undershoot Budget 2024-25 estimates

Vikas Dhoot
NEW DELHI

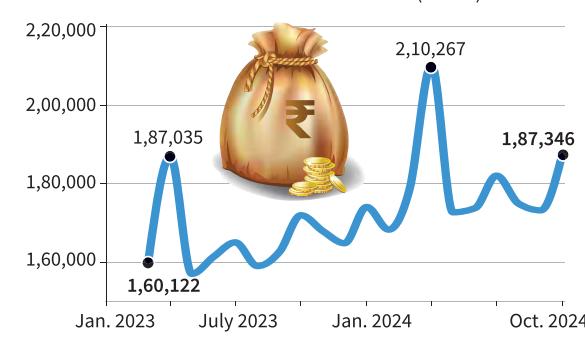
India's Gross Goods and Services Tax (GST) collections surpassed ₹1.87 lakh crore in October, marking the second highest monthly collections on record, with growth rebounding to 8.9% in October from September's 40-month low uptick of 6.5%.

Net revenues, after factoring in refunds, grew at a slower pace of 7.9% to a tad over ₹1.68 lakh crore in October. However, this also marked a recovery from September's growth rate of 3.9% which was the slowest so far in 2024-25.

Last month's GST revenues were only eclipsed by the April 2024 collection of ₹2.1 lakh crore. Despite the improved growth figure,

Revenue resurgence

The chart shows India's Gross Goods and Services Tax (GST) collections from March 2023 to October 2024 (in ₹ cr)



GST revenues so far continue to undershoot the Budget 2024-25 math, which factored in a rise of about 11% in net revenues.

In October, growth in gross revenues from domestic transactions improved to 10.6% from about 6% a month earlier, while import revenues

grew at a much milder pace of 3.9% in October, halving from September's 8% uptick. Net domestic receipts in October, from transactions in September, were up 8.7%, almost double the 4.5% recorded in the preceding month.

Overall revenues from GST, prior to refunds, in

the first seven months of this year, now stand at ₹2.74 lakh crore, 9.4% over the corresponding period of 2023-24. Net revenues, after refunds, are also up 9% at over ₹1.27 lakh crore, show official numbers.

Deep variations
Amid the headline improvement in domestic transactions, variations among States deepened significantly relative to the previous month, with a dozen States growing faster than the 10.6% national average growth in domestic revenues, a dozen underperforming that pace, and five States recording a contraction in gross GST receipts from a year ago.

CONTINUED ON
» PAGE 8

Cong. stands exposed over 'unreal' promises made during polls: PM

Devesh K. Pandey
NEW DELHI



Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday hit out at the Congress, stating that the party was now realising the hard way that making "unreal" promises during election campaigns was easy but implementing them properly was tough or impossible.

The statement came after Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge advised the party's State units to make only those promises that were financially viable.

"Campaign after campaign they promise things to the people, which they also know they will never be able to deliver. Now, they stand badly exposed in front of the people! FalsePromisesOfCongress," Mr. Modi said in a series of posts on X.

"Check any State where the Congress has govern-

ments today – Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, and Telangana – the developmental trajectory and fiscal health is turning from bad to worse. Their so-called guarantees lie unfulfilled, which is a terrible deceit upon the people of these States," he said.

"In Karnataka, Congress is busier in intra-party politics and loot instead of even bothering to deliver on development. Not only that, they are also going to roll back existing schemes," Mr. Modi said.

CONTINUED ON
» PAGE 8

Sickness, infirmity are grounds for bail in PMLA case, says SC

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court has highlighted that sickness and infirmity of an accused are grounds for bail even under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002 (PMLA).

A three-judge Bench headed by Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud, in a recent order, highlighted the leeway given to an ailing accused under the anti-money laundering law while allowing interim bail to Amar Sadhuram Mulchandani, former chairperson of Seva Vikas Co-operative Bank.

The proviso to Section 45(1) of the PMLA specifically contemplates that a person who "is sick or in-

Apex court grants interim bail to ex-chairperson of Seva Vikas Co-operative Bank

firm" may be released on bail if the Special Court so directs.

Section 45 of the PMLA covers bail. Clause (1) of the section is stringent – the accused would get bail only if the court was satisfied there were reasonable grounds for believing they were not guilty. Further, the court should be satisfied that the accused would not commit any offence while out on bail.

"It is evident that the petitioner fulfils the threshold required for being enlarged on bail," the top court concluded.

possible task.

However, the proviso to Clause (1) allows courts the discretion to exempt persons below 16 years, women, and the sick or the infirm from these dual conditions for bail, providing humane relief.

In the current case, the court noted that Mr. Mulchandani was 67 years old and had already spent nearly a year and three months in custody.

"At present, there is worsening of cardiac function as compared to previous reports," the court order recorded medical reports on him.

"It is evident that the petitioner fulfils the threshold required for being enlarged on bail," the top court concluded.

Thaw in ties



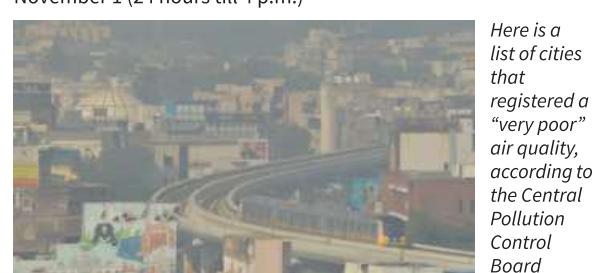
Traditional practice: Indian and Chinese troops exchanged sweets at several points along the Line of Actual Control on the occasion of Deepavali.

The exchange took place a day after the countries completed disengagement in eastern Ladakh. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT (REPORT ON PAGE 8)

99 cities recorded 'poor' air quality a day after Deepavali

Peak Pollution

Ambala in Haryana registered the highest AQI value of 367 on November 1 (24 hours till 4 p.m.)



City	AQI value	Prominent pollutant	City	AQI value	Prominent pollutant
Ambala, Haryana	367	PM2.5	Gurugram, Haryana	309	PM2.5
Amritsar, Punjab	350	PM2.5	Ghaziabad, U.P.	306	PM2.5
Delhi	339	PM2.5	Kurukshetra, Haryana	306	PM10
Hajipur, Bihar	332	PM2.5	Lucknow, U.P.	306	PM2.5, PM10
Khurja, U.P.	320	PM10	Chandigarh	302	PM2.5
Moradabad, U.P.	320	PM2.5			
Bikaner, Rajasthan	312	PM2.5			

Here is a list of cities that registered a "very poor" air quality, according to the Central Pollution Control Board

Ninety-nine of the 265 cities for which Air Quality Index (AQI) data were available on the Central Pollution Control Board website reported "poor" air quality on Friday (data for 24 hours prior to 4 p.m. on this day).

An AQI value of 200 or above corresponded to "poor" quality.

Thirteen cities, including Delhi, Gurugram, and Ghaziabad in the National Capital Territory Region, recorded "very poor" air quality – AQI of 300 or above.

Defying firecracker ban
Ambala in Haryana recorded the highest AQI of 367 followed by Amritsar in (350), while Delhi's

average AQI was 339.

These 24 hours corresponded to the period when Deepavali revellers took to burning crackers, defying a ban on it in places such as Delhi. People burnt crackers before 4 p.m. on Thursday as well.

On Thursday, the number of cities that had "very poor" and "poor" air quality was relatively fewer – six, including Delhi (second highest AQI of 328), and 43, respectively. On Wednesday, a day prior to Deepavali celebrations, only Delhi registered "very poor" air quality with an AQI of 307. The number of cities with "poor" AQI was even fewer – 24, almost all of them in North India.

Large cities such as Mumbai, Chennai, Bengaluru, Hyderabad, and Kolkata registered a "moder-

ate" AQI on Friday, but even among them, the AQI values had jumped from those registered on October 30.

Data from 2023 corresponding to Deepavali celebrations show that Delhi's AQI was high at 358 on November 12, corresponding to a "very poor" air quality, jumping from 218 ("poor") the previous day.

Similar to this year, 53 and 85 cities had "very poor" and "poor" AQI respectively on November 12-13 as compared with eight and 42 cities the previous day.

Pollution during winter
In cities such as Delhi and others in northern India, pollution levels peak during the winter season due to emissions from vehicles, industries, garbage burn-

ing, and construction work, besides stubble burning after the paddy season in neighbouring States, with particles being trapped in the cold air.

Unfavourable winds in the early winter months that don't flush the pollutants out also lead to a faster build-up. Firecracker burning has also contributed to exacerbating air quality during this period.

On Friday, Delhi's Anand Vihar station recorded its 10th highest concentration of PM2.5 this year (273.04 micrograms per cubic metre) if 24-hour values were considered.

All nine others were in January, when winter peaks in the city.

BAN GOES UP IN SMOKE

» PAGE 2

EC gives go-ahead to appoint Alka Tiwari as Jharkhand CS

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI



Ahead of the Jharkhand Assembly election, the Election Commission (EC) has accepted the proposal of the State government to appoint 1988-batch IAS officer Alka Tiwari as the next Chief Secretary.

Ms. Tiwari, who belongs to the Jharkhand cadre, is currently the senior-most IAS officer in the cadre, sources said.

Prior to this, the EC had also consented to the proposal of a five-month extension of former Chief Secretary Lalbiakluanga Khiangte's tenure, the sources added.

The EC had approved the appointment of Ajay Kumar Singh as the DGP of Jharkhand on October 21. The Assembly poll is scheduled to be held in Jharkhand in two phases on November 13 and 20.

MORE REPORTS
» PAGE 9

Ban on firecrackers goes up in smoke, winds come to national capital's rescue

City wakes up to 'very poor' quality air on Friday after firecrackers went off across Capital on Deepavali night; winds prevent air from deteriorating to 'severe' category, say experts; Gopal Rai credits residents with bursting 'fewer' firecrackers; BJP accuses AAP of defaming 'Sanatana Dharma traditions'

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Air pollution in the national capital on Friday morning was 14 times higher than the permissible limit prescribed by the World Health Organisation (WHO), according to the official data.

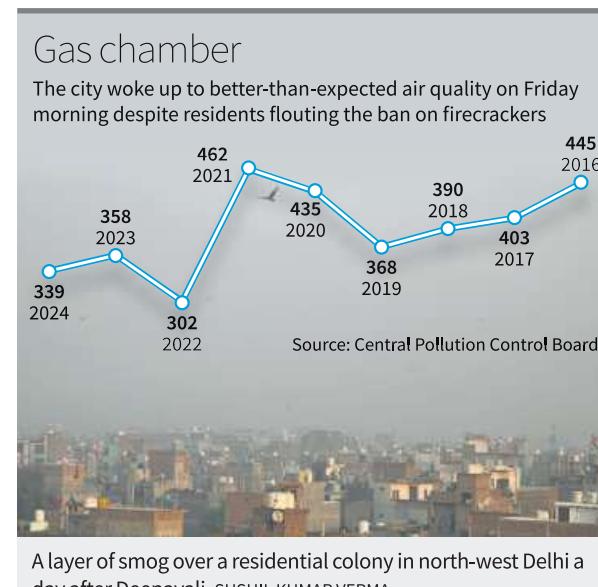
With city residents openly flouting the ban on firecrackers notified by the Delhi government on October 21, Delhi's overall 24-hour average air quality index (AQI) settled at 339 ('very poor'), up from 328 ('poor') a day earlier, as per the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB)'s official bulletin. A higher value of AQI suggests an increase in air pollution.

However, experts said the AQI had spiked even higher on the night of Deepavali but was mitigated by winds that blew across the Capital through the night.

Ahead of Deepavali, official forecasts showed that Delhi's AQI could deteriorate to the 'severe' category on Friday due to firecrackers.

The air pollution peaked around 2 a.m. on November 1 due to firecrackers. However, the wind speed had picked up from Thursday evening and flushed out the pollutants," said Sachin Ghude, a scientist at the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology, Pune.

According to the Central government's Air Quality



A layer of smog over a residential colony in north-west Delhi a day after Deepavali. SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

PM2.5 more than 120 times the safe limit in parts of city

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Parts of the city saw PM2.5 levels spiking 100-120 times the WHO limit, as per CPCB data. In Vivek Vihar, PM2.5 was 1,853 micrograms per cubic meter at 12 a.m. on Friday, which is about 123 times the WHO's permissible limit of 15 micrograms per

cubic meter.

Bhavreen Kandhari, an environmental activist, said the ban on firecrackers should have been notified a year ago. "The planning of the ban was flawed as the government announced it in September and notified it a month later. By this time, retailers had stocked and sold the firecrackers."

Meanwhile, the contribution of stubble burning in neighbouring states to PM2.5 (a chief pollutant) in Delhi on Thursday was 27.6%, the highest proportion recorded this paddy harvest season, according to the Early Warning System for Delhi, the national capital's air quality is likely to be in the 'very poor' category Friday night onwards as meteorological conditions are likely to be 'extremely unfavourable'.

to the Union Ministry of Earth Sciences data.

Air pollution spikes in Delhi and many other parts of north India every winter mainly due to meteorological factors such as lower wind speed, drop in temperature, pollution from firecrackers, and stubble burning.

Political slugfest

The better-than-expected air quality on Friday morning led to a war of words between the ruling Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) and the BJP.

Delhi Environment Minister Gopal Rai credited people with bursting 'fewer' firecrackers this Deepavali and thanked them. He said those who burst firecrackers this year "will be convinced to light diyas" on the next Deepavali. He also said the government has increased water sprinkling across the Capital to control bad air.

However, the BJP accused the ruling party of defaming "Sanatana Dharma traditions". It said that the pollution was caused by "local factors" and not by firecrackers, as suggested by the AQI on Friday. Delhi BJP chief Virendra Sachdeva asked AAP to tender an apology to the Hindu community. An AQI between zero and 50 is considered 'good', 51 and 100 'satisfactory', 101 and 200 'moderate', 201 and 300 'poor', 301 and 400 'very poor', and 401 and 450 'severe'.

Most of the distress calls were received between 5 p.m. on October 31 and 5 a.m. on November 1, the official also said.

DFS chief Atul Garg said, "We were fully prepared to tackle any and every situation, having deployed fire-fighting units at key locations. We had cancelled the leaves and day offs of all our personnel and were ready to help everyone

Code red

Delhi Fire Services received around 280 fire-related calls between 5 p.m. on October 31 and 5 a.m. on November 1.

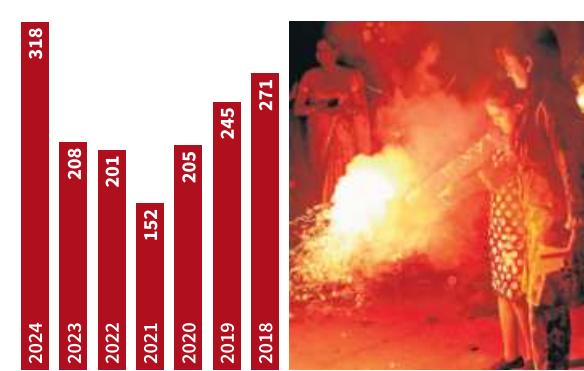


Photo: PTI | Source: Delhi Fire Services

Firefighters receive record number of calls over 12 hours

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

across the city."

A Delhi Police spokesperson said, "Several teams were constituted to ensure the implementation of the ban. Additional forces were deployed to carry out proactive patrolling in hotspots and seizure of firecrackers."

'Police apathy'

However, members of several residents' welfare associations said the ban was flouted with impunity.

Sonali Chandra, a C.R. Park resident, said she had a verbal spat on the area's WhatsApp group with a few neighbours who were bursting firecrackers all through the night. "The police station is barely 500 metres away from our apartment, yet when some neighbours were bursting crackers throughout the night, no action was taken," she added.

The Delhi Fire Services (DFS) received 318 distress calls on Deepavali night, the highest in the past 13 years, said a senior official, attributing the surge to the extensive use of firecrackers. Of the total calls, 280 were fire-related, of which three incidents – two in Sarangpur and one in Daryaganj – turned out to be fatal.

Most of the distress calls were received between 5 p.m. on October 31 and 5 a.m. on November 1, the official also said.

DFS chief Atul Garg said, "We were fully prepared to tackle any and every situation, having deployed fire-fighting units at key locations. We had cancelled the leaves and day offs of all our personnel and were ready to help everyone

Hospitals report over 280 cases of burn injuries on Deepavali

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

Hospitals in Delhi reported over 280 cases of burn injuries largely caused by firecrackers on Deepavali, officials said on Friday.

Safdarjung Hospital, which has the largest burn unit in the country, recorded the highest number with 117 cases on Thursday, followed by 48 at All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), and 19 at Lok Nayak Hospital.

Of the total patients at the three medical facilities, 102 suffered minor burns and were treated on an outpatient basis, while 15 patients with major burns were admitted.

Twenty patients treated for burn injuries were younger than 12.

Officials attributed 86 cases to firecrackers and 31 to *diya* burns. Five required surgery due to severe hand injuries from firecrackers.

Lok Nayak Hospital, the largest facility run by the Delhi government, treated 19 burn cases during Deepavali. Dr. Sameek Bhattacharya, Professor and

20 patients treated for burn injuries at the city's medical facilities were younger than 12

Head of the Department of Burns and Plastic Surgery at RML Hospital, said the facility received 44 patients with Deepavali-related burn injuries from October 31 to 11 a.m. on November 1, most of whom suffered burns to the face and hands.

Notably, six of the patients were from one family. They suffered burns after explosive materials stored in their house for making crackers caught fire, Dr. Bhattacharya said.

On Wednesday, Safdarjung Hospital received 18 burn cases, with nine patients being admitted and as many treated for minor burns.

Eye injuries were also reported at several places with the RP Centre for Ophthalmic Sciences at AIIMS receiving 50 such cases on Thursday and an additional 30 cases the following day.

40-year-old man, nephew shot dead in Shahdara

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

were attacked, said an officer.

While the three were rushed to the hospital, Sharma and his 16-year-old nephew, ~~who were declared~~ were shot dead after two men opened fire at them in Shahdara on Thursday, the police said. Sharma's son, 10, who was also shot at, sustained injuries.

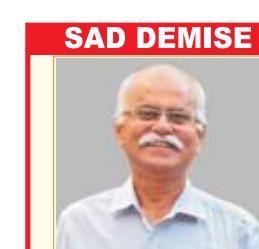
The incident caused political stir with the Aam Aadmi Party questioning the L-G's ability to handle law and order in the city.

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OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE

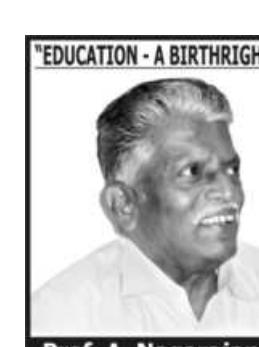
DEATH



We regret to inform the sad demise of founder and senior partner of MSSV & Co.,
S. RAMASUBRAMANIAN
DOB: 29-12-1952
DOD: 31-10-2024

Staff & Partners of MSSV & Co., and family members

DEATH ANNIVERSARIES



Prof. A. Nagarajan,
B.Sc., D.M.I.T., M.Sc (Engg.),
PGDM (IIMA)

Family, Friends & M.I.T Fraternity

IN MEMORY OF YOUR LOVED ONE

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OSRTC
ODISHA STATE ROAD TRANSPORT CORPORATION, BHUBANESWAR
No: 9298/ MIS-971/2024

Request For Proposal (RFP)

The Chairman-Cum-Managing Director, Odisha State Road Transport Corporation (OSRTC), Bhubaneswar has invited a Request for Proposal (RFP) For the Selection of Service Provider for Supplying NCMC Compliant Electronic Ticket Issuing Machines (ETMs) & Automated Passenger Counting System (APCS) on a monthly rental basis to Odisha State Road Transport Corporation, Bhubaneswar through the e-tendering process. The interested firms/ agencies should upload their proposals online bids on the GeM Portal may be obtained at the Government e-Marketplace (GeM) from Dt.02.11.2024 to Dt. 22.11.2024 up to 3:00 PM and the same will be opened on Dt.22.11.2024 at 5:00 PM at OSRTC conference hall. For any doubt, agencies/ firms may contact 0674-2530208 or 0674-2530649 to address the issue during Office hours or by email at osrtc@nic.in or osrtccorp@gmail.com. The details of the terms & conditions are available on the website www.osrtc.in, www.osrtc.org & the GeM Portal. The Authority reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals without assigning any reason thereof.

By order of the Chairman-cum-Managing Director, Additional Secretary (Operations), OSRTC, Bhubaneswar

CAD-1511: OIPR-38002/11/0005/2425

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Tender Notice Inviting E-Tender for Civil & Elect. Work
NIT No. : 04/IGIMS/Engg. Cell/CW/2024-25
(Only through E-tendering process on website www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in)

IGIMS, Patna inviting percentage rate (for Schedule items) & Item Rate (for Non-Schedule items) tender through e-tendering process for the following works. Intending bidders must be registered with e-procurement cell on www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in.

SI. No.	Name of works	Estimated cost (Rs.)	Times of Completion of work
01	Civil work for laying of Kota Tiles and Chequered Precast Floor tiles flooring on footpath and internal pathways of OPD and Ward block front area at IGIMS Patna-14. (Re-Tender of NIT 13 /IGIMS/Engg. Cell/CW/2024-25)	Rs. 64,22,607/-	3 Months
02	Construction of one more floor on existing (G+1) Dhamashala Building near Engineering Cell for Class room of Deptt. of Physiotherapy at IGIMS, Patna-14. (Re-Tender of NIT 20/IGIMS/Engg. Cell/CW/2024-25)	Rs. 98,00,000/-	5 Months
03	Construction of boundary wall from new residential type B&C to RIO at IGIMS, Patna.	Rs. 1,11,00,000/-	5 Months

The last date of submission of complete tender document on line through www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in is 25 / 11 / 2024 up to 3:00 P.M. Undersigned reserve the right to accept / reject any or all tenders without assigning any reason. Prospective bidders are advised to regularly visit www.igims.org and www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in for Corrigendum / Amendments etc., if any, it will be notified on these portals only and no separate advertisement will be made. Other details can be viewed on Institute web site. www.igims.org and www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in

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Chhath Puja:
Delhi govt.
declares holiday
on November 7

The Hindu Bureau

NEW DELHI

Delhi Chief Minister Atishi on Friday declared a public holiday on November 7 for Chhath Puja celebrations.

The announcement came hours after Delhi Lieutenant-Governor V.K. Saxena wrote to the Chief Minister requesting her to declare a holiday on November 7. Making the announcement on X, Atishi wrote, "Delhi government has decided to declare a holiday on November 7 so that our brothers and sisters of Purvanchal can celebrate the festival with pomp and show."

Timings
DELHI

SATURDAY, NOV. 02	RISE 06:34 SET 17:36
RISE 07:10 SET 17:54	
SUNDAY, NOV. 03	
RISE 06:35 SET 17:35	
RISE 08:08 SET 18:32	
MONDAY, NOV. 04	
RISE 06:36 SET 17:34	
RISE 09:07 SET 19:17	

Delhi Weather	max	min
Delhi City	34	18
Safdarjung	34	18
Palam	31	18

Delhi Palam Today
34°C The dry weather to continue. Severe pollution level to continue. Morning will be pleasant with mist and haze. Day will be warm.

Delhi Palam Tomorrow
35°C Morning will be slight cool with mist and haze. Day will be warm. Night will be pleasant. Mostly dry weather to prevail.

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THE HINDU

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12 years on, sacked Maruti workers seek reinstatement

Demonstrators gather under the aegis of Maruti Suzuki Struggle Committee; protesters were among the 546 permanent workers dismissed from their jobs in the aftermath of the violence at the company's Manesar plant

The Hindu Bureau
GURUGRAM

'Deepavali of struggles': Sacked workers of Maruti Suzuki India Ltd. during a protest in Manesar, Haryana, on Friday. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Around a hundred sacked workers of Maruti Suzuki India Limited, the largest automotive manufacturer in the country, held a demonstration at Industrial Model Township, Manesar, here on Friday evening to mark "Sangharsh Ki Diwali" (Deepavali of Struggles) seeking reinstatement.

The protesters were among the 546 permanent workers dismissed from their jobs in the aftermath of the violence at the company's Manesar plant in 2012. The violence had left a senior manager dead and several workers injured.

The demonstration was held under the aegis of Maruti Suzuki Struggle Committee, as part of their indefinite sit-in in

support of their demands since September 18. Noted human rights lawyer Nandita Haksar also took part in the demonstration.

Surender Kaushik, a committee member, said 426 sacked workers did not face any criminal charges for the violence, and were seeking

their reinstatement for over a decade now. He was a Quality Inspector at the company for five years before he was dismissed. "... I have failed to find a job over these 10 years and now earn my livelihood doing odd jobs... We cannot celebrate Deepavali since we don't have a regular job," he said.

Another protester Khusiram said the case on their reinstatement has been pending in a Gurugram court for more than eight years.

"Many of our fellow workers have died during these years. At this age, it is difficult for us to find job..." said the Bhiwani resident, who was a fitter at the plant when the violence broke out.

Sacked without inquiry'

In a memorandum to the CM through Manesar Sub Divisional Magistrate, the committee alleged that they were sacked without any internal inquiry and notice, and their names did not figure in any FIR. They said the local administration had been issuing threats. IMT Manesar Additional SHO Ravi said no pressure was being mounted on the protesters.

Food inflation dampens Deepavali cheer for middle class

Ashna Butani
NEW DELHI

A vendor waiting for customers at Garhi village. SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

Poonam Devi, 48, says the rising cost of groceries has changed her family's diet drastically. She is substituting *panneer* with potatoes this festive season while tomatoes and pulses have vanished from their plates altogether. "I'm trying to do the best I can with as little onion and garlic as possible," she says.

Ms. Devi, who lives in Garhi, a middle-class locality nestled in the middle of posh apartment blocks in south Delhi's East of Kailash, takes on odd jobs, such as stitching sequins onto dupattas for ₹2-3 a piece, to supplement the ₹17,000

monthly income of her husband, who works in a private company. She says that on top of paying inflated prices for food items, finding work has become difficult over the past year. "We spend ₹6,500 on rent, ₹2,000 on electricity and

gas, and stretch the remaining ₹8,500 for food, education fees of our children, clothing and other necessities. Of all these expenditures, food is the only category where we see a scope to make further cuts," says Ms. Devi.

Like Ms. Devi, others in the same economic bracket are also looking to cut corners. Sapna Das, 63, who works as a hospital attendant, said she could not afford new clothes this festive season.

Reducing purchasing power is having a spiral effect in these low-to-middle-class housing colonies. "Business this season has been around 35% less than last Deepavali. Since there is food inflation, people are cutting down on clothes and gift items," says Hari Lal, 43, at his women's clothing shop.

Prices to ease'

Meanwhile, in Azadpur Mandi, Asia's biggest fruit and vegetable market, prices have slowly started to drop, and the same is expected to reflect in the local markets soon, says Ashok Kaushik, president of the tomato traders' association at the wholesale vegetable market. "Due to incessant rain in Maharashtra, the prices of some crops had increased drastically. But now that winter is setting in, we are expecting prices of most perishable vegetables to stabilise over the next few days," he adds.

Delhi Court acquits 3 in 2017 murder case, says police probe dubious, can't be brushed aside

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

A Delhi court has acquitted three men accused in an attempt to murder case seven years ago, highlighting serious doubts over the police investigation that could not be "brushed aside".

In an order pronounced on October 9, Additional Sessions Judge Atul Ahlawat of Karkardooma Court ordered the acquittal of Faeem Kureshi, Naeem Kureshi and Hanif Khan, who were accused of thrashing and firing at Mohd. Alam in October 2017.

Terming the lapses in the investigation, including the failure to record the testimony of the person who called the police helpline number and that of a police witness, as "highly dubious and suspicious", the court also noted handwriting variations in the documents submitted by the police. "Therefore, it does not inspire any confidence, and the possibility of the accused being falsely implicated in the present case cannot be ruled out," the

The court pointed out
lapses, including the failure
to record the testimony
of the person who called
the police helpline and
that of a police witness

court said. It added that the prosecution's case was "untrustworthy".

The court observed that animosity is a double-edged sword and it can cut both sides – it can be a ground for false implication, it can also be a ground for assault.

The court added that according to the complainant Alam, his brother Shakil reached the spot after he was fired upon by the accused persons, but there were some changes in his brother's testimony in which Shakil said he witnessed the entire incident, including the scuffle, and Faeem shooting Alam. The court highlighted that the clothes worn by the victim at the time of the incident were never sent to the Forensic Science Laboratory for examination which has dealt a serious blow to the prosecution's case.

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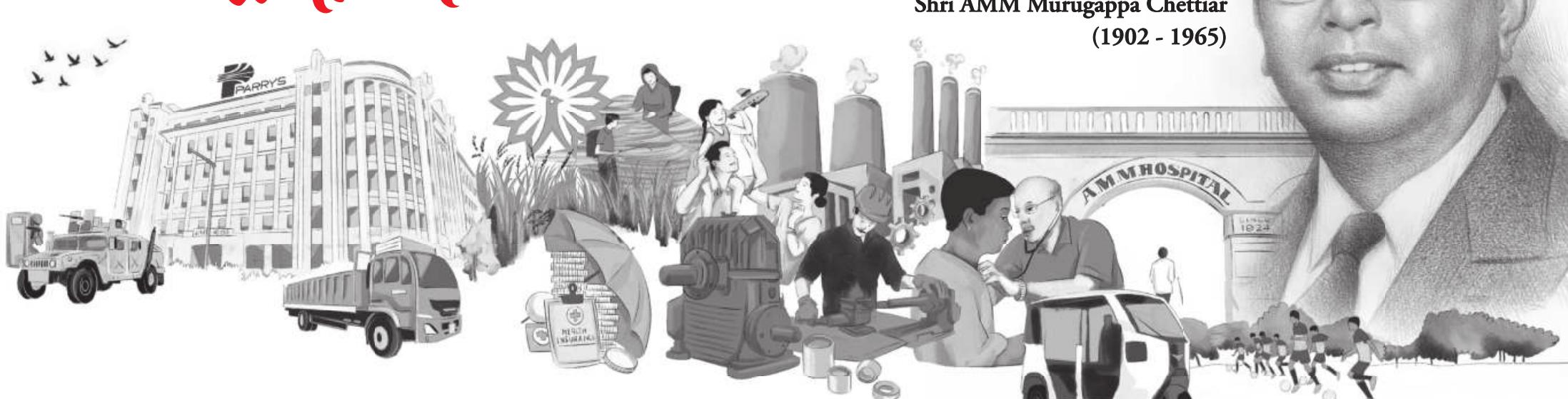
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To Sir,
with love



Fresh out of college, with dreams in my eyes, and ambition in my heart, I stepped into the portals of Dare House. The peacock welcomed me, as did the inspiring bust of Shri AMM Murugappa Chettiar. The goosebumps were generous, the legacy, humbling.

I came to know that he was a farsighted businessman, who saw opportunities even during casual conversations. That was how Ajax Products Limited came about. Eventually, he went on to establish robust businesses with unshakeable ethics.

I also learnt that he was as noble as he was astute. He furthered his father's interest in philanthropy, along with his brothers. Thus was born AMM Charities Trust, later called the AMM Foundation, the CSR arm of the Group.

I'm inspired by how the Group not just builds businesses, but also empowers communities.

As the Group observes Founder's Day, I pause to pay tribute to this great man. I'm truly awed at the conviction in his heart, the pursuit of excellence, and the fiery focus on growth and success... stellar values that time has indeed bowed down to.

Sir, your words, which you lived by yourself, will always inspire us - "Do not go where the path may lead, go instead where there is no path and leave a trail."

IN BRIEF



Shah unveils Gujarat's largest waste-to-energy power plant

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Friday inaugurated a 15 megawatt (MW) power plant in Gujarat, which will use solid waste to generate electricity. The facility, set up at a cost of ₹375 crore near Piplaj village on the outskirts of Ahmedabad under Public Private Partnership (PPP) model, is the largest waste-to-energy power plant of Gujarat, the State government said in a release. Mr. Shah, who is on a visit to his home State since Thursday, inaugurated the 15 MW plant in the presence of Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel and Health Minister Rushikesh Patel.

Delhi L-G eases qualification for govt. jobs for Sikh riot victims

Lieutenant-Governor V.K. Saxena approved the relaxation in educational qualifications for recruitment of victims of the 1984 Sikh riots to the posts of multi-tasking staff (MTS), Raj Niwas said in a statement on Friday. After the approval, the minimum educational qualification will be reduced from Class X to Class VIII, making a larger number of candidates eligible for the posts. The decision for the relaxation has been pending for decades. The L-G has also directed the departments concerned to explore the possibility of providing employment to the children of deceased or aged applicants.

Man, his two sons axed to death by kin in M.P.

The Hindu Bureau
BHOPAL

A man and his two sons were allegedly axed to death and another injured by their extended family members over a land dispute in Madhya Pradesh's Dindori district, the police said on Friday.

According to the police, the incident took place on Thursday at Lalpur Sani village under the Gadasarai police station limits when Dharm Singh Maravi and his three sons were attacked by his cousin Ghanshyam Maravi. Station in-charge Durga Prasad Nagpure said Dharm and his two sons – Shivraj and Raghuraj – died, while his third son, Ramraj, was injured and is undergoing treatment. An FIR against seven persons has been registered under murder and other relevant charges.

Rajasthan eases process to extend lease period for quarrying minor minerals

The Hindu Bureau
JAIPUR

In a step towards decentralisation of power in the mining sector, the BJP government in Rajasthan has given authority to mining engineers to extend the lease period to quarry minor minerals. The decision will save thousands of leaseholders their time and money.

With the simplification of the process for extending the lease period, leaseholders will not be required to apply at different levels, and may approach the local assistant engineers in the Mines and Minerals Department for the purpose. The development conforms to the BJP government's emphasis on "ease of doing business". Principal Secretary (Mines and Petroleum) T. Ravikanth on Friday said a notification issued recently had reduced the security amount for auction of plots

Minor minerals found in Rajasthan include marble, masonry stone, limestone, granite, feldspar, quartz and silica sand

measuring less than one hectare from ₹10 lakh to ₹2 lakh, which would enable more to apply for lease. For the extension of lease period, the leaseholders were earlier required to apply in the offices of the Mines Director, Additional Director (Mines) and Superintending Engineer (Mines and Minerals). Mr. Ravikanth said the leaseholders can also deposit the security amount in five instalments after the extension of quarry licence period till 2040.

The minor minerals found in Rajasthan include masonry stone, limestone, marble, granite, feldspar, quartz, and silica sand.

other, he said.

"Obtaining information pertaining to the privacy of the wife without her knowledge and consent cannot be viewed benignly. Only if it is authoritatively laid down that evidence procured in breach of the privacy rights is not admissible, spouses will not resort to surveillance of the other," the court said.

"One may wonder if marital misconduct, which has to be made out for obtaining relief, may become impossible to prove. It is not so. It can very well be established and proved by appropriate means and, in exceptional cases, the court can even take it upon itself to unearth the truth. Law cannot proceed on the premise that marital misconduct is the norm. It cannot permit or encourage

Congress approved book 'glorifying' culprits of Godhra incident: Minister

Press Trust of India
KOTA (RAJASTHAN)

Rajasthan Education Minister Madan Dilawar on Friday accused the previous Congress government of approving a book "glorifying" the culprits of the 2002 Godhra train incident.

The State government has recalled the books – *Adrashya Log* by Harsh Mander and *Jeevan Ki Bahar* by Madhav Gadgil – which were dispatched to libraries of government schools under the Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan.

Adrashya Log has a chapter on the 2002 Godhra train incident. Mr. Dilawar said the books were selected by the previous Congress government.

The Minister further said the recalled books were not part of the school syllabus and were supposed to be kept in the school library.

gering riots in the State.

Meanwhile, *Jeevan Ki Bahar* book was recalled for reportedly using "indecent" words to describe reproduction in animals.

"This book (*Adrashya Log*) was selected and approved during the previous State government's reign. Without any thought and understanding, the culprits of the Godhra incident are glorified in it," Mr. Dilawar said.

Books replaced

Mr. Dilawar, who is the Ramganjamdi MLA, said the books have been recalled and replaced with *Vaccine Ki Gatha* by Sajan Singh Yadav and *Chidi Ko Moti Ladio*, a Rajasthani publication.

The Minister further said the recalled books were not part of the school syllabus and were supposed to be kept in the school library.

U.P. CM insulting Scheduled Castes by calling them 'Harijan', dividing society, says Nagina MP

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Aazad Samaj Party founder Chandra Shekhar Aazad. FILE PHOTO

Union government had issued an advisory to all State governments asking them not to use the word 'Harijan'.

Speaking to *The Hindu*, he added, "Is Mr. Adityanath, who holds such an important constitutional post, not aware of these decisions. Or are the SC people being insulted by deliberately using the word 'Harijan'?"

Mr. Aazad recently wrote a letter to the Chief Secretary seeking details of SC/ST officials holding key posts in the government.

Spousal privacy is fundamental right, evidence obtained by violating it is inadmissible, says HC

The Hindu Bureau
MADRASI

"Privacy as a fundamental right includes spousal privacy as well, and evidence obtained by invading this right is inadmissible," the Madras High Court of the Madras High Court has held.

The court was hearing a civil revision petition filed by a woman. Her marriage to her husband was solemnised in 2003, and the couple have two children born through wedlock.

Alleging cruelty, adultery, and desertion by the woman, the man had filed a petition for dissolution of marriage before a sub-court in Paramakudi in Ramanathapuram district. He had furnished the call detail records of his wife. She had filed an application seeking rejection of



Law cannot permit or encourage snooping by one spouse on the other, the Madras Bench of the Madras HC said. FILE PHOTO

age snooping by one spouse on the other," the court observed.

Breach of privacy'

The court said the husband had stealthily obtained the information pertaining to the call history of his wife. He was not the owner of the device or the registered user of the SIM card. He had clandestine custody of it, probably for a short while. There had been a clear breach of the privacy of his wife, the court said.

It said in light of Sections 63 and 39 of the *Bhartiya Sakshya Adhiniyam*, 2023, and Section 79 A of the *Information Technology Act*, 2000, a person desirous of relying on any electronic record as evidence must submit a certificate at the time of filing of the electronic record.

2 assaulted: Naga outfits give Manipur govt. 48 hours to arrest members of Arambai Tenggol

The Hindu Bureau
GUWAHATI

Three Naga organisations have demanded justice from the Manipur government for the two Naga men who were allegedly assaulted by members of Arambai Tenggol, a Meitei radical group, in the State capital Imphal on Thursday.

The Naga People's Organisation, Senapati District Students' Association, and the Senapati District Women's Association issued a statement warning the N. Biren Singh-led Manipur government of "action to safeguard the community" if it failed to punish those behind the assault within 48 hours. The two Poumai Naga vic-

tims were from Senapati district of Manipur.

The Naga organisations said members of the Arambai Tenggol assaulted Poumai Naga men – V. Hrangao Blesson Poumai and Dalou Poumai – when they were returning after purchasing livestock in Imphal Valley's Thoubal district.

The organisations said the Arambai Tenggol members dragged Mr. Blesson and Mr. Dalou into their Unit 18 camp, tortured them, and seized ₹61,400 from their possession at gunpoint. "Despite producing proof of their identities, they were repeatedly threatened and assaulted with automatic rifles, violating basic human rights and undermining funda-

J&K BJP MLA Devender Singh Rana passes away

The Hindu Bureau
SRINAGAR

BJP leader Devender Singh Rana, 59, who won the recently held Assembly election from the Nagrota constituency in Jammu and Kashmir, died on Thursday night after his health deteriorated at a private hospital in Haryana's Faridabad. Senior leaders from across the political spectrum mourned his death.

A family member said Rana, who was not keeping well, passed away in the hospital in Faridabad. The last rites were performed at a cremation ground in Jammu's Shastri Nagar on Friday afternoon. Rana is survived by his wife, two daughters, and a son.

Battle of slogans intensifies as U.P. byelections near

Mayank Kumar
LUCKNOW

It's a battle of slogans in Uttar Pradesh in the run-up to the byelections to nine Assembly seats, with the Samajwadi Party (SP) coming up with a new battle cry – 'Judenge toh jeetenge' (United we will win) – in response to Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath's controversial remark, 'Batenge toh katenge'.

In the recent past, Mr. Adityanath used the slogan, 'Batenge toh katenge', at a number of public rallies, pushing for broader unity among Hindus while referring to the political unrest in neighbouring Bangladesh and elsewhere.

Dismissing the disqualification petition, Mr. Tawadkar ruled a member of the Assembly shall not be disqualified where his original political party merges with another political party.

"Para 4 of the 10th Schedule of the Constitution does not contemplate merger of the political party to the legislature party. Such a merger is contrary to the object of the 10th Schedule of the Constitution. In the present case, there is no dispute that the original political party [Congress] has not merged," Mr. Chodankar said in the plea.

He said disqualification on the ground of defection does not apply in case of merger.

gra, and Meerapur in Muzaffarnagar district.

SP State secretary Vijay Pratap Yadav recently put up posters with the slogan at various locations in Lucknow. "As is the viewpoint of the person, so is his slogan," SP chief Akhilesh Yadav posted on X, sharing the posters. "Our [SP] slogan and agenda are about positive and constructive politics aimed at bringing peace and love in society against the divisive and negative politics practised by the BJP. Our core idea of PDA [pichada, Dali, and alpasankhyak] also calls for unity in society," SP spokesperson Sunil Singh Yadav 'Sajan' said.

The BJP, on the other hand, said its slogan is about broader unity in society and aimed at constructive politics. "New slogans always come up with time. We envisaged 'Sabka saath, sabka vikas'. Yogi used the slogan, 'Batenge toh katenge', as a call for broader unity. This has forced parties like the SP, which divided society and looked for development of a few, to make up new slogans. Rest assured, they will not succeed," Rakesh Tripathi, State BJP spokesperson, said.

Siddaramaiah slams Centre over tax devolution

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Highlighting the need for justice in the devolution of taxes yet again, Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Friday said that Kannadigas should be aware of the fact that although the State is contributing more than ₹4-lakh crore through taxes, it is only getting ₹55,000 crore to ₹60,000 crore from the Centre. "We are only getting 14 paise to 15 paise for every one rupee of our contribution," he said.

In his address at the 69th Karnataka Rajyotsava, Mr. Siddaramaiah said Karnataka is facing injustice because it is a progressive State. "Karnataka is the second largest contributor to the Central tax revenue after Maharashtra. Under the federal system, there should not be any injustice just because Karnataka is a progressive State. No one should milk a milch cow completely dry, or else the calf will be malnourished," he said.

Despite these constraints, the government did not compromise on welfare schemes, he said. "MPs must raise this issue at the Centre. When we demand justice, they are politicising the issue. We should launch a movement to get our rightful dues," he said.

Calling upon people to take pride in Kannada and put it to daily use, he said: "Karnataka has more than 200 languages and whatever language people speak here, they all are Kannadigas."

TTD Board has members from four southern States for regional inclusion

G.P. Shukla
TIRUMALA

In a widely anticipated move, Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu recently announced a new Trust Board for the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) – which oversees the operations of the Lord Venkateswara temple – with 25 members from various backgrounds and States.

The new Board is believed to reflect the coalition government's commitment to diversity, with representatives from Telangana, Tamil Nadu, and Karnataka, ensuring broader regional inclusion.

As expected, media baron and founder chairman of TV5 news channel B. Rajagopal Naidu has been appointed TTD Board Chairman.

Former CJI on board
Former Chief Justice of India H.L. Dattu's appointment marks a first for the TTD Board, aligning with the coalition's goal of enhancing the board's credibility and stature.

Alongside Justice Dattu, 23 members have been named, including three MLAs from the Telugu Desam Party (TDP) – Jyothula Nehru (Jaggampeta), Vemireddy Prasanthi Reddy (Kovur) and M.S. Raju (Madakasira).

Former Union Minister Panabaka Lakshmi and senior TDP leader Nannuri Narsreddy have also been accommodated along with other TDP stalwarts such as Koteswara Rao from Rajahmundry, Nandyal district president Rajasekhar Goud, and Janga Krishnamurthy from Palnadu.

Acknowledging the Jana Sena Party's role in the coalition, its vice-president B. Mahendra Reddy, founding member Anugolu Rangaare and art director and JSP chief Pawan Kalyan's confidant Anand Sai have been given berths.

Vemireddy Prasanthi Reddy and Janga Krishnamurthy, who transitioned from the YSRCP to the TDP along with Saurabh Bora, a financial expert from Maharashtra, and industrialist P. Ramamurthy (a confidant of Tamil Nadu CM M.K. Stalin), both members in the previous administration, have retained their positions.

Kodakara case: LDF seeks to exploit allegation against BJP

Ex-BJP leader alleges that 'black money' stolen from Kerala was for party's campaign for Assembly polls in 2021; CM asks police to explore reinvestigation option; 22 persons were held in the case

The Hindu Bureau
THIRUVANATHAPURAM

The Left Democratic Front (LDF) government on Friday raced to politically exploit the damning "disclosure" by an expelled Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader that the ₹6 crore of "black money" stolen from a car at Kodakara in Thrissur district in the run-up to the 2021 Assembly election was part of a significant tranche of secret electioneering funds for the BJP.

Meanwhile, the Communist Party of India (Marxist) State secretariat has decided to make the Kodakara hawala case a key issue in the byelection in Kerala. It has also called for a reinvestigation into the case.

On Thursday, a former office secretary of the BJP in Thrissur, Tirur Sathesh, stirred the pot by alleging that the "black money" from Karnataka was meant for the BJP's electioneering purposes. He said he had safeguarded the cash bags at the BJP's Thrissur office, allegedly in the presence of party State president K. Surendran. Days later, in a mafia-style ambush operation, anonymous persons stole the cash as it was being transported on a car. The Kerala police arrested 22 persons in connection with the heist, but reportedly found scarce evidence to link the money to the BJP



LDF-backed candidate P. Sarin filing nomination papers for the Palakkad Assembly byelection on October 24. X@CPIMSPK

leadership conclusively. Mr. Sathesh said he had not told the police about the BJP's alleged link to the black money at the party leadership's instance.

The secretariat meeting in Thrissur on Friday highlighted the need for effectively utilising the Kodakara case against the BJP in the Chelakkara, Palakkad, and Wayanad constituencies. Participants expressed concern over the allegations made by the United Democratic Front (UDF) claiming a deal between the BJP and the CPI (M) and stressed the need for urgent action to counter such claims.

The CPI(M) noted that the revelations made by Mr. Sathesh were serious and decided to check the legal scope for a reinvestigation.

Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan has asked the police to explore the legal options for a reinvestigation. The government and Opposition have accused the

Enforcement Directorate (ED) and the Income Tax (IT) Department of "back pedalling on the police report that flagged a clear money-laundering case".

Disclosure

The recent disclosure, along with the controversies surrounding Union Minister of State for Petroleum Suresh Gopi, have reportedly placed the BJP on the defensive. The secretariat decided to utilise this situation against the BJP in the bypolls.

The secretariat meeting also sought to investigate whether the 'effect' of the Kodakara scam benefited the BJP in the recent Lok Sabha election in Thrissur.

Cong.-BJP deal

Mr. Govindan said that though the Leader of the Opposition was alleging a deal between the CPI(M) and the BJP, the real deal was between the Congress and the BJP. He also accused the Leader of the

Opposition of attempting to cover up the case.

In the Kodakara scam, accusations had earlier been raised about a potential cover-up bid by the government. The police had previously indicated that investigation had not yielded testimonies linking key BJP leaders with the case. However, with the recent revelations by Mr. Sathesh, crucial evidence had now emerged. The meeting assessed that if the government decided to proceed with a reinvestigation, it could benefit the CPI(M) politically.

The controversial "expose" by the former office secretary of the BJP in Thrissur, Tirur Sathesh, triggered a demand for a comprehensive re-investigation by the Opposition.

Opposition charge

The disclosure prompted Leader of the Opposition V.D. Satheesan to cite the police's clean chit to the BJP as another telling example of the CPI(M)'s collusion with the Sangh Parivar-led Union government to save the outwardly opposing parties from discomfiting criminal investigations by the State and Central law enforcement agencies.

Mr. Surendran termed the controversy a short-lived byelection propaganda by the Congress and the CPI(M) to disadvantage the BJP.

(With inputs from Thrissur bureau)

Priyanka to resume her campaign on November 3

The Hindu Bureau
KALPETTA

Congress leader and United Democratic Front (UDF) candidate Priyanka Gandhi Vadra is set to commence the second phase of her campaign for the Wayanad Lok Sabha bypoll on November 3. According to a release from A.P. Anil Kumar, MLA, Ms. Vadra will hold a public meeting at 11 a.m. along with her brother, Rahul Gandhi, in Mananthavady on the day.

In addition to the joint meeting with Mr. Gandhi, who will also address a public gathering at Arikkode in Malappuram district at 3 p.m. on the same day, Ms. Vadra has planned several corner meetings throughout the region. Her itinerary includes a meeting at Valad at 1 p.m., another at Korom at 2.30 p.m. in the Mananthavady Assembly constituency, and a corner meeting at Thariyode in the Kalpetta Assembly constituency at 4.45 p.m.

Ms. Vadra will continue her campaign with a corner meeting at 10 a.m. on November 4 in the Sultan Bathery Assembly constituency. She will then proceed to Pulppally at 11 a.m., followed by a meeting near Mullankolly at 11.50 a.m. in the constituency. The campaign will also include corner meetings in Mutttil at 2 p.m. and Vythiri at 3.50 p.m. in the Kalpetta Assembly constituency.

Ms. Vadra is expected to boost the UDF campaign. She is scheduled to campaign in Kerala until November 7.

Two TMC MLAs allege attacks by party members

The Hindu Bureau
KOLKATA

Mr. Mahato also alleged an attack by workers close to local party strongman Sheikh Shahjahan.

"The miscreants hurled bricks at our car when we were returning from Kali Puja celebrations at 8 p.m. on Thursday," Mr. Mahato said. He alleged he was attacked by the supporters of local TMC leader. "They attacked us because they are opposed to the replacement of Mr. Shahjahan by Mizanur Rahman as the block president for Sandeshkhali Block 1," Mr. Mahato said.

Two people have so far been arrested in this matter.

India's first analog space mission kicks off at Leh in Ladakh

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

India's first Mars and Moon analog mission at Leh in Ladakh, IIT Bombay, and supported by Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council, this mission will simulate life in an interplanetary habitat has been inaugurated.

Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), AAKA Space Studio Pvt. Ltd, the University of Ladakh, IIT Bombay, and the Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council have collaborated in this endeavour.

ISRO on Friday posted on X, "India's first analog space mission kicks off in Leh! A collaborative effort by Human Spaceflight Centre, ISRO, AAKA Space Studio, University of Ladakh, IIT Bombay, and the Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council to tackle the challenges of a base station beyond Earth."

Aastha Kacha, founder of AAKA Space Studio Pvt. Ltd said this mission is designed to simulate extraterrestrial conditions on Mars and the Moon, enabling India to enhance its human spaceflight capabilities.

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जल संसाधन विभाग						
कार्यपालक अधिकारी का कार्यालय						
सिंचाई प्रभासंकार नियन्त्रण विभाग (अररिया)						
(अल्पकालीन पुनर्निवादी आवंत्रित सुचना संख्या - 02 SBD/2024-25						
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बिहार सरकार						
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Core correction

Infrastructure sectors' ebbing output triggers capex growth concerns

Heavy August rains damped industrial activity, resulting in the first contraction in India's factory output since October 2022. The signals for a significant September resurgence do not appear very promising, with the late withdrawal of the southwest monsoon also skewing some activity such as power demand. Output from India's eight core sectors declined 0.8% in September relative to August, and was an insipid 2% higher than last September. These infrastructure sectors constitute about 40% of industrial production, and had contracted for the first time in 42 months in August – the Ministry has revised the de-growth level to 1.6% from 1.8% estimated initially. These sectors have now grown just 4.2% in the first half of 2024/25, almost halving from 8.2% in the first half of last year, and significantly under the 2023-24 growth pace of 7.6%. While year-on-year growth numbers may swing due to base effects, of concern is a consistent decline in the Index of Core Industries (basically the absolute production levels) since May. In September, the index slipped for the fourth successive month – 8% below May's value. Overall industrial output, economists reckon, may come out of the August trough in September but with a weak growth print at best.

This slowdown in industrial activity is worrisome amid anxiety about weakening urban consumption of durables such as cars as well as daily use items, reflected in weak second quarter results of fast-moving consumer goods firms. Though rural demand is seen to be improving after a healthier monsoon, tremors in urban spends will pull the domestic consumption engine of India's growth to sub-optimal levels. Government accounts show that capital spending on public infrastructure projects by the Centre has shrunk 15% this year – although capex spiked in July after the 2024 general election dented the first quarter numbers, the pace receded in August and September. This may explain some of the weak output trends for core sectors such as steel that hinge on construction activity. Poor vehicle sales and cheaper imports may have also weighed in to drag steel output growth to a 33-month low of 1.5% in September, with output at its lowest since December 2023. There may be a tentative recovery afoot in private investments, but public infra spends that have spearheaded growth in recent years need to lead the way. The Centre's ₹1.11 lakh crore capex goal for the year acknowledges this, and it must now ramp up these spends to get closer to, if not entirely meet, that target. This would be critical to keep growth ticking along and push back concerns about India entering a cyclical slowdown.

Safe worship

Safety regulations must be enforced strictly in places of worship

The explosion of firecrackers during a temple festival ritual in Kasaragod district of Kerala, which left over 150 people injured, could have been averted with greater caution and adherence to safety regulations. That such an accident took place in a State where similar events have occurred at regular intervals in the last 40 years tells a story of unlearnt lessons. In February this year, a blast in a firecracker storage unit, during a temple fete in Kochi, claimed two lives and left 25 injured. Eight years ago, the Kerala High Court made the observation of an "unhealthy culture" glamourising every religious festival and ceremony with the use of fireworks and an elephant parade. The only saving grace in the accident on October 29, at the Anjootambalam Veererkavu temple in Neeliswaram, was that there was no loss of life. Some arrests have been made, two inquiries ordered and a special team is probing the accident. The State Human Rights Commission has initiated an investigation and sought an official report in 15 days.

In the given instance, two of the arrested persons allegedly ignited the firecrackers, with one of them said to have ignored the warnings of onlookers. The crackers were close to a shed where explosives were stored. In 2016, in the worst pyrotechnics tragedy in the State, 100 people died during a festival at the Puttingal Devi temple in Kollam district. It resulted in the High Court and the Union government issuing a number of directives. Days after the Centre amended the rules of the Explosives Act, the Revenue Minister of Kerala, K. Rajan said these posed an "open challenge" to the conduct of the Thrissur Pooram. On October 23, a Kerala Cabinet meeting expressed the view that the amendments would make it impossible to have the display of fireworks, a permanent fixture in religious festivals in the State, and that this should be conveyed to the Central government. The amendments, that were notified on October 11, included having a 200-metre distance between the site of the fireworks and the place of storage, and people watching from 100 m afar. Six months ago, there were protests when the authorities permitted fireworks, as part of the Thrissur Pooram, but only during the day. Even in 2016, an all-party meeting that was held following the Puttingal Devi temple accident, did not favour a complete ban on fireworks. This was the stand of the High Court too, in March 2024, while quashing an official order against the use of fireworks in a few temple festivals. In such a complex situation, there is no option but to strictly enforce safety norms. Even so, there are some who still argue that "cultural practices" should be balanced against safety norms. But clearly, no activity that endangers the safety of devotees can be allowed in any place of public worship.

Exactly 20 years ago, in the summer of 2004, I fell in love again. First with a tree, then with a mountain, and, eventually, with a whole biosphere. On an exploratory journey in Coonoor, Tamil Nadu, my husband and I landed in a beautiful colonial bungalow with an enormous blue gum eucalyptus at the entrance. Until that moment, I had thought of the species as foreign, as invasive, as water greedy. All its negative labels disappeared as I gazed in astonishment at the girth of this giant, its ghostly branches, and its perfectly balanced canopy. Soon, we had a second home in the Nilgiris, and a new commitment to the conservation of this remarkable ecozone.

The Nilgiri biosphere is the first UNESCO-declared biosphere in the country, covering over 5,500 square kilometres across the three States of Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu. From the iconic Doddabetta, rising 2,637 metres into the sky, to the 260-m depth of the Moyar gorge, it encompasses a rich biodiversity. It has endemic flora and fauna seen nowhere else in the world, such as the medicinal *Baeolipis nervosa* plant used by the Irula tribe, the Nilgiri Chilappan, and the star-eyed bush frog.

More human activity, new challenges
Of late, this biosphere has seen more human activity than ever before. Known primarily for its colonial-era tea plantations, it now boasts a thriving agriculture and tourism economy. While both sectors bring in much-needed livelihoods, they have also brought in new challenges.

The tourism is less sustainable than local communities and the State would like, with day-trippers adding to the waste and the traffic snarls. Farmers increasingly use heavy pesticides and fertilizers, which contaminate once-pristine water sources.

In the face of such rapid change, local communities have galvanised themselves to protect their home. Many civil society organisations in the district have innovated for sustainability, such as 'Clean Coonoor', a public-private partnership that creates a circular economy for growing solid waste. And the Keystone Foundation, which empowers indigenous and local communities for climate resilience.

The State government and the district administration too have advanced aspirations for the Nilgiris, including the three hill stations of Ooty, Coonoor and Kotagiri, which attract visitors from across the country.

They plan to go carbon neutral, stop plastic waste, conserve endemic species such as the Nilgiri tahr that roam the high shola grasslands and reduce invasives such as *Lantana camara* and pine to restore native shola species in the valleys.

Alongside, there is an increasing interest in the



Rohini Nilekani
Chairperson, Rohini Nilekani Philanthropies and the author of 'Samaaj, Sarkaar, Bazaar – A Citizen First Approach'

culture and the history of the ancient Nilgiris. The settlements of the indigenous Toda community, who have lived in the Blue Mountains for millennia, are a must on the tourism trail. Unfortunately, only a few hundred people remain today, a frail link to the ecological knowledge of ancestors past.

Conservation success, helping the state

A measure of the success of conservation efforts is in the numbers of wild animals that thrive in the Nilgiri Biosphere, the largest protected forest expanse in the country with safeguarded areas including Mudumalai and Mukurthi.

Increasing wildlife numbers have led to wide dispersal outside protected areas. Wildlife is everywhere now, in new ecological niches created by global warming. Plants and animals have successfully adapted to living almost incognito among us. The best example is that of the elusive leopard, which has developed quite an appetite for domestic dogs.

You can find the Indian gaur in the tea plantations, wild pigs in the garbage dumps, and sloth bears and leopards prowling around bungalows at night. Last year, a rather clever sloth bear broke into our home, wandered around the house, and, no doubt, disappointed by the lack of food, left the house by jumping from the first-floor balcony. We were away, but our CCTV cameras recorded the entire adventure.

Neighbours have had wild encounters too, with porcupines and mouse deer, elephants and leopards. Surprisingly, people seem to have adjusted to this development, though human-wildlife conflicts hit the news ever so often.

This is part of an emergent global culture where billions of people are becoming nature lovers. They are rediscovering wonder. Citizen science has become a movement. Thanks to democratising technologies, people can share the beauty around them with one click; they can raise issues of concern, about shrinking habitats and human-animal conflict.

Clear evidence has emerged through the work of non-governmental organisations such as the Nature Conservation Foundation and WWF, that simple, yet powerful, technologies, which include early warning systems through mobile phone-based alerts, cameras and GPS tracking of animals, have helped reduce dangerous wildlife encounters.

When animals are so widely loved and so closely tracked, poaching becomes much riskier. Poaching thrives in secrecy, away from the public gaze. When tourists and wildlife enthusiasts wish to immerse themselves in wilderness, there is economic incentive locally to ensure that nature flourishes.

If we want to continue to conserve this unique biosphere, it must be with the help of society, of

the *samaaj*. We have to align also with the *bazaar* – represented by plantations, farmers, traders and the tourism industry. The state, including the Forest Department, cannot be the sole steward of the wild.

It is impossible for *sarkaar* to take whole and sole accountability, even if the Wildlife (Protection) Act 1972/The Wildlife (Protection) Amendment Act, 2022 says all wild animals belong to the state. The perception that animals are the government's responsibility creates a great disaffection in the public mind. Farmers get angry with the forester. Plantation owners become wary. "If these are your animals, you keep them. Why are they eating my crops, or injuring our workers?"

Yet, hard boundaries, fences and walls are neither feasible nor desirable to keep animals inside the forests.

Instead, what if we assumed that we are all in this together? What if we created a trust network of everyone interested in the conservation of our biodiversity? What if we took advantage of all emerging technologies such as sensitive cameras, satellite imagery, sensors and artificial intelligence, both within and outside of protected areas? What if all citizens of our country were engaged in the regeneration of our natural wealth?

The pivotal role of storytelling

As I have discovered in my 40-year ecological journey, to conserve nature, we first must learn to love. To love, we have to sense. It is not a mere intellectual exercise. If we see the beauty and the frailty of the wild, its flora and fauna – from the tiniest ant to the mightiest elephant, our wonder is ignited. We want to protect, to nurture and be nurtured.

Not everyone can visit every area of wilderness they wish to explore.

Storytelling by the few who can is critical to the process of creating communities for conservation. Our ancestors in the Nilgiris knew this well. In Sigur and Vellerkombai, the rock art created thousands of years ago still celebrates the relationship between humans and animals.

Charcoal and chalk have been replaced by cameras and pixels, but the urge remains the same. To share, to connect, to preserve.

Tomorrow, November 3, is International Day for Biosphere Reserves. In a first such documentary, we at Rohini Nilekani Philanthropies, together with Felis Films, are proud to present *The Nilgiris - A Shared Wilderness*. We have dedicated this film to the communities of the Nilgiris and to Forest Departments across the biosphere. *DailyPressNation*

We hope it will spark more curiosity, evoke more affection and spur more action across *samaaj*, *sarkaar* and *bazaar* for the continued protection of the precarious and precious Nilgiris.

Zeroing in on methane diplomacy, at COP29



Rakshit Shetty
a Research Analyst at the Takshashila Institution, Bengaluru

From November 11 to 22, 2024, world leaders will gather in Baku, Azerbaijan, for the 29th Conference of Parties (COP29) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). Dubbed the "Finance COP", representatives from every country will, for the first time in 15 years, set a new global climate finance goal, known as the "new collective quantified goal" or NCQG. The host country, Azerbaijan, has put forward an action agenda, which includes pledges to increase battery storage capacity six-fold, dramatically expand electricity networks, and cut methane emissions from organic waste.

Methane's climate impacts are severe, accounting for around 30% of global warming since the pre-industrial era, and its atmospheric concentration is rising rapidly. Crucially, on a 100-year timescale, methane has 28 times greater global warming potential than carbon dioxide and is 84 times more potent on a 20-year timescale.

This means that cutting methane is one of the most effective levers we have to slow near-term temperature rise and buy time for the longer-term CO₂ reductions needed to stabilise climate change.

Common ground between U.S., China
Despite tensions in their relationship, the United States and China have found common ground in addressing non-CO₂ greenhouse gases such as methane. The two countries joined hands with the United Arab Emirates at COP28 (in Dubai, in November-December 2023) to sponsor a summit on methane and other non-CO₂ emissions.

That month, in November 2023, China also released its first national plan for controlling methane emissions. While the plan eschewed specific mitigation targets in favour of capacity building, it signalled China's acceptance of methane as an area for action and cooperation with the U.S.

India, the world's third-largest source of anthropogenic methane emissions behind China and the U.S., has an opportunity to leverage the U.S.-China methane partnership to gain

The Baku meet is an opportunity for India to fast-track its efforts in reducing methane emissions

sector-specific financing and capacity-building support.

According to the India Third Biennial Update Report to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the country emitted 409 million tons of CO₂-equivalent methane in 2016 (excluding land use and forestry), with agriculture accounting for 74%, waste for 14%, energy for 11%, and industrial processes for 1%. Methane's detrimental effects go beyond its impact on climate change. Fires at waste dumpsites, for example, can cause significant spikes in air pollution. In 2022, a two-week fire at Delhi's Bhalswa dumpsite led to particulate matter concentrations reaching 30% to 70% above baseline levels at nearby air quality monitoring stations.

But the dominance of agriculture, particularly livestock and rice cultivation, is what makes India hesitant to announce economy-wide methane reduction targets or sign the Global Methane Pledge championed by the U.S. and the European Union at COP28, which seeks to cut emissions by 30% from 2020 levels by 2030. However, the U.S.-China focus on methane creates an opening for India to seek targeted assistance for reducing emissions from specific sectors such as waste management.

Waste management programmes
The Indian government has developed a strong regulatory framework for waste management, but weak local capacity hampers implementation. However, it is working to expand innovative solutions across the country. A notable example is the model pioneered in Indore, Madhya Pradesh, which pairs citywide organic waste sorting with a large biomethane plant that produces fuel for buses. The government is also promoting the Galvanizing Organic Bio-Agro Resources Dhan (GOBARdhan) scheme, which incentivises cattle waste utilisation and clean energy production in villages. These initiatives are part of the broader Swachh Bharat Mission-Urban 2.0 programme to improve solid waste management. However, cities need more support to scale up organic waste management to

its full potential. In the agriculture sector, the government is implementing climate-resilient practices through the National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA). These include methane reduction techniques in rice cultivation, which can contribute to substantial emissions reductions. The National Livestock Mission also promotes practices such as green fodder production, silage making, chaff cutting, and total mixed ration to reduce methane emissions from livestock.

An opportunity in the U.S.'s plan

This is where COP29 and India's methane diplomacy come in. The U.S.-China methane partnership, while limited compared to their past cooperation, still creates an opening for India to seek concrete assistance for its methane mitigation efforts. In particular, India can leverage the U.S. methane push to gain financing and capacity-building support for reducing emissions from its waste sector, which produces over 14% of its methane. India's 2016 inventory estimates these sources as producing around 4% of India's methane emissions. But underlying data quality (emissions factors as well as waste stream volumes) is poor. Satellite monitoring on Delhi and Mumbai, for instance, suggests that emissions levels are 50%-100% above commonly used estimates and that dumpsites alone account for more than a quarter of Mumbai's greenhouse gas emissions.

Methane may be a side issue in the overall COP29 agenda, but it presents a significant opportunity for India to fast-track its efforts in reducing methane emissions. The Government of India has laid the groundwork with its existing policies and initiatives.

However, to effectively scale up the implementation of proven technological solutions worldwide, India now requires targeted international support in financing, capacity building, and technical assistance. By leveraging the U.S.-China methane partnership and proactively seeking this support at COP29, India can tap into the resources needed to accelerate its progress in methane abatement.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Case pendency

When it comes to the issue of case adjournments and pendency, it is not always about the vacancy of judges. There are also other reasons such as an inordinate delay in getting instructions, the filing of

counters, no penalty or no warning for absentees from the standing counsel-respondents side, the cost of the judgement (the fee of advocates), and exploiting loopholes in the judgment process. In looking for solutions,

every case should have a time-bound framework; mega *adalahs* should be organised; arbitration and mediation should be encouraged; demerit points must be issued for unnecessary postponement of cases; extra courts should be set up and there should be an adequate case-judge ratio.

P. Sumanth Sai,
Hyderabad

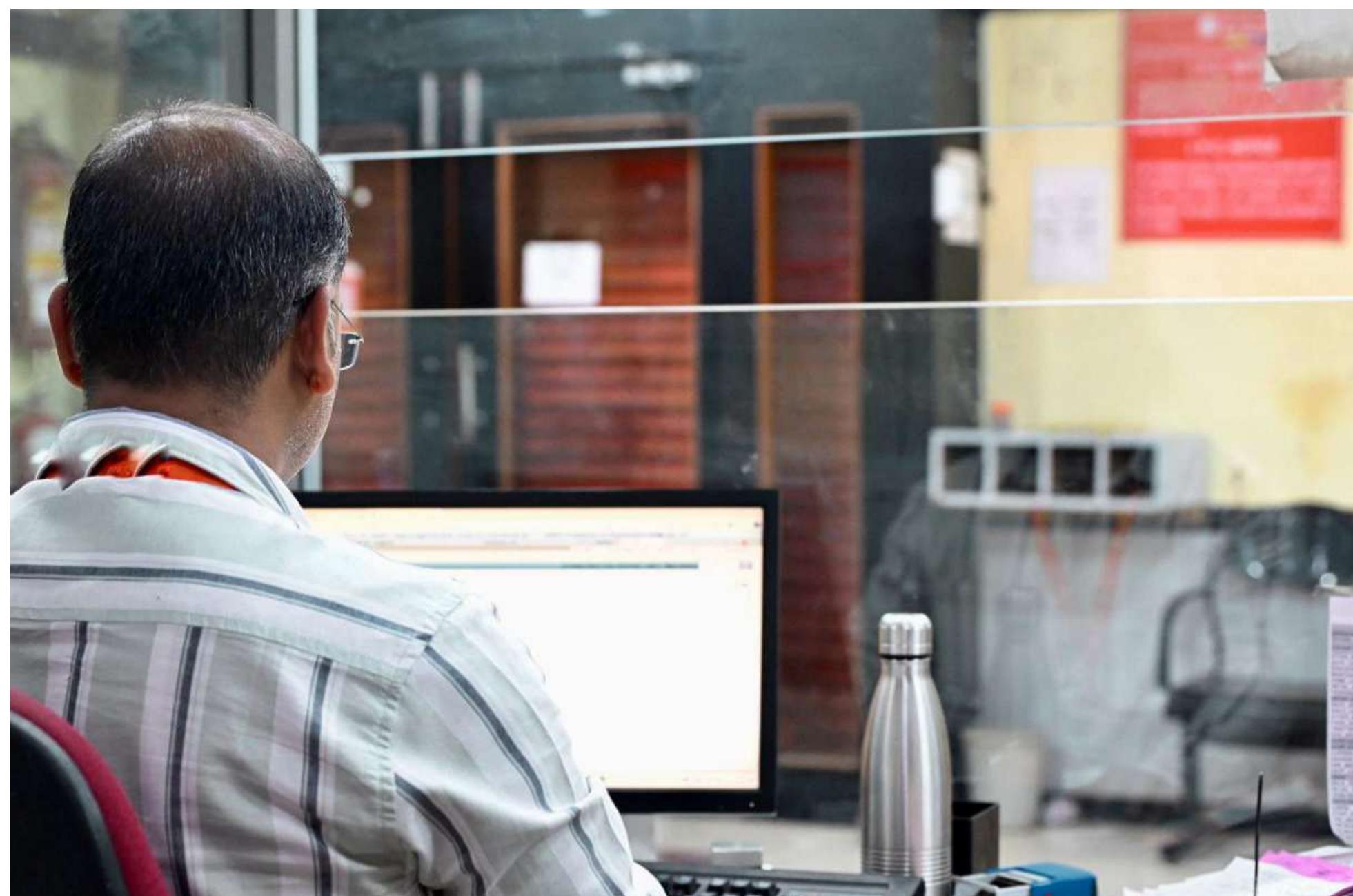
Focus on air pollution
The appeals to use less fireworks during Deepavali

do not seem to be working. It only highlights the need to educate people on the ill-effects of fireworks as the law alone is not enough to bring about a change. Air pollution is already very high in the country and is a silent killer. People must be

made aware of the dangers of air pollution to one's health. The move for change must begin on multiple fronts in order to see that the message reaches every one.

V. Padmanabhan,
Bengaluru

GROUND ZERO



A bank employee in Maharashtra. EMMANUEL YOGINI

Bankers bruised by a populist promise

The Maharashtra government rolled out the Majhi Ladki Bahin Yojana in August 2024 and is counting on it to gather votes from women. Ever since the scheme was introduced and beneficiaries began thronging banks, there have been several attacks on public sector bank employees. Vinaya Deshpande Pandit reports on a scheme that has caused law and order problems and created fear among employees

Ashish Singh cannot twitch his nose. It is fractured, swollen, and, worse, a constant reminder of the day when he was attacked at his workplace.

A few weeks ago, Singh, the branch manager of a public sector bank in Maharashtra, was at work when a woman and her family members walked in. They stood in queue, waiting to link their Aadhaar with their account, which is mandatory for beneficiaries of the Majhi Ladki Bahin Yojana, a government scheme. When Singh requested them not to let the children jump with their sandals on the sofa meant for senior citizens, one of the women got angry, he recalls. "She hit me with a high-heeled sandal," he says. The entire family then proceeded to assault Singh. The office staff rushed to get police help.

The incident was captured on the bank's CCTV camera. Singh flicks out his phone and shows a 10-second clip of the footage. He has deleted the rest because it is "too traumatic".

Soon after the incident, Singh was transferred abruptly and is now the manager of another branch of the bank, located within a 100-kilometre radius. He is aggrieved – he was supposed to be the bank manager for three years but was shunted out in just three months.

"I was not even asked if I wanted to move out. Those who helped protect me were also transferred. What was our fault? That we stood against those who attacked us and filed an FIR (first information report) against them?" he asks. "I feel like I am guilty even though I am the victim here."

Growing attacks

The attacks on bank employees began soon after the Maharashtra government rolled out the Mukhyamantri Majhi Ladki Bahin Yojana, one of its flagship schemes, in August 2024. Under this, the government provides a monthly financial benefit of ₹1,500 to women through direct benefit transfers. Women between 21 and 65 years, who are permanent residents of the State, and have an annual family income of less than ₹2.5 lakh are eligible. The number of beneficiaries is 2.34 crore.

The government had said "financial assistance under the Majhi Ladki Bahin Yojana 2024 will be transferred directly to the selected applicant's bank account." Days after the scheme was introduced, public sector banks across the State started disbursing the amount to beneficiaries.

Maharashtra's current Mahayana government that consists of the Bharatiya Janata Party, the Eknath Shinde-led Shiv Sena, and the Ajit Pawar-led Nationalist Congress Party is banking on the scheme to come back to power, following the Assembly elections this month. However, there are issues in implementation. Employees of public sector banks, who are an instrumental part of making the scheme successful, have been getting attacked and assaulted across the State by customers, borrowers, the public, and political elements. Fourteen FIRs have been filed across the State since August, but bank unions say that the

Whenever the government wants to bring about populist schemes, they should take banks and financial institutions into confidence.

PANDURANG DEVKAR
Bank employee

number of assaults is actually three times higher. "Several fights have taken place over the counter," says a union representative. A high-level meeting at the Secretariat was held on October 29 on the problem, but the attacks continue.

The video of a young man using foul language and trying to charge at a branch manager in Dombivli went viral. In Jalna, a local leader of the youth wing of the Swabhimani Shetkari Sanghatana, a farmers' union, allegedly assaulted a branch manager at Varud Budruk in Jafarabad taluka over a delay in payment of grants to farmers and women. Again, the video went viral on social media. "We taught him a lesson in 'Swabhimani style,'" local party workers told the media later.

Many bank employees say the police have failed to invoke Section 121 (causing grievous injuries to deter a public servant from their duty) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita in several FIRs. Instead, the police have filed watered-down FIRs, which makes it easy for the accused to get immediate bail, claim the employees.

While the government has been trying to placate the bank employees, who are worried for their safety, many aspiring political leaders have also been at the forefront of these assaults, to gain quick public support, and have been live-streaming their attacks on their social media accounts. Many bank employees claim police apathy. Notices have been put up in banks, warning people of strict legal consequences if they attack bank employees. But the malady is deeper,

according to experts.

Mounting service charges

One of the main conditions of the scheme is that the bank account has to be linked to the beneficiary's Aadhaar card. While several women had opened bank accounts, especially during the launch of the Jan Dhan Yojana, a financial inclusion programme of the Government of India launched in 2014, several accounts were dormant or were without KYC documents, explains Devidas Tuljapurkar, General Secretary of Maharashtra State Bank Employees' Association. (KYC or 'know your customer' is a mandatory process to verify customer identity and prevent fraudulent activities.) "When these women went to banks in the hope of getting ₹1,500, they were asked to update their KYC details or link their accounts with their Aadhaar. Some of them say they lost some money due to the automatic charges levied on the dormant accounts," he says.

In Loni Kalbhor, a village about 11 km east of Pune in western Maharashtra, Suguna Lonkar was aghast when she went to the bank to claim benefits under the scheme and found that a ₹92,000 penalty had been imposed on her account. She had been running a small business. The account became dormant from 2020 after she went bankrupt. Lonkar learned that approximately twice each month, ACH (Automated Clearing House) return charges of ₹354 had been imposed on her account. (ACH transactions are electronic money transfers between financial institutions that are often used for payroll, bills, taxes, and other financial activities.) In addition, other charges were levied. When the government transferred money under the Ladki Bahin Yojana, the penalty finally stood at ₹89,503.

There are service charges for all bank services, including closure of an account. When such charges are automatically debited, bank employees cannot reverse them. When hundreds of beneficiaries throng the banks at the same time to claim benefits under schemes such as this, the responsibility of breaking this news falls on the branch employee. The employees fall in the line of fire. Interviews with bank employees and account holders reveal how people are desperate for the money, and feel that they have been cheated. According to bank employees' unions, during the election season, the government is keen to show that it has disbursed the money.



Policymakers think that since banking is digitised, staff members are not needed. That is not true. We need more tech-savvy staff to help those approaching banks.

VITTHAL MANE
Convenor of United Forum of Bank Unions

Banks are short-staffed and cannot deal with the serpentine queues. As patience wears out and service provision takes time, employees are sometimes assaulted.

The problems in banks

Tuljapurkar says this is "commodification of poverty and helplessness". He says the poor are vulnerable and want to take whatever help the state offers. During election time, the political leaders take advantage of this helplessness. "This is election season. Why are bank employees being attacked now? It didn't happen earlier. Today, bank employees are well-off. They are paid better than before. The people who come to public sector banks are often poor. There is a financial gap between them. The poor believe that banks don't fulfil their demands. In fact, they believe that they are the ones that create impediments. So, there is anger against the system," he argues.

Tuljapurkar says this is a larger systemic issue that needs to be addressed. "It is cruel that the banks don't employ security guards for the safety of their own branch staff. If the government does not provide protection, the bank management should. In a recent meeting, the State government told the SLBC (State Level Bankers' Committee) that it disburses ₹8,000 crore through these banks and that the banks should spend on security," he adds.

Vitthal Mane, convenor of United Forum of Bank Unions, says public sector banks are understaffed, which is why employees are being attacked. "Though processes are digitised, the people who come from rural areas or who are poor approach banks. Policymakers think that since banking is digitised, staff members are not needed. That is not true. We need more tech-savvy staff to help those approaching banks. That is why we had organised a dharna in Mumbai. We made three demands: there should be new recruitment; safety must be ensured; and strict action must be taken against the culprits."

The Hindu repeatedly contacted the SLBC representative, Satish Kumar, but he did not answer our detailed queries. However, an official who is not authorised to speak to the media admits that the issue is of serious concern. "This is a big issue and banks have been taking cognisance of it," the official says. The minutes of the meeting held at the Maharashtra State Secretariat on October 29, with the subject line, 'Details of the meeting held for the bank transactions related to Mukhyamantri Majhi Ladki Bahin Yojana, chaired by Honourable Secretary of Women and Child Development department on 29/10/2024 at 3 pm', reads: "For the implementation of Mukhyamantri Majhi Ladki Bahin Yojana, there is a massive crowd in the banks for opening bank accounts of the beneficiary women, linking the bank accounts with Aadhaar, doing KYC, the demand that the installment should not be adjusted against pending service charges or loan installments."

The minutes of the meeting say that according to the Convenor of United Forum of Banks Union, "inappropriate incidents" were taking place against the bank employees "during this rush." The note emphasises the need for adequate security measures and seeks Standard Operating Procedures from the banks that ensure the deducted banking service charges are refunded. It seeks more coordination of the police, the administration, and the banks for better security.

The government acknowledges that there is an issue and has said that a remedial plan should be in place. But there is no clarity yet on whether the banks will appoint private security guards or whether they expect the State machinery to provide security to the branches.

As of now, the addition of new members to the Mukhyamantri Majhi Ladki Bahin Yojana has stopped due to the Model Code of Conduct, which is in place as Maharashtra goes to the polls on November 20. Public sector bank employees are busy with election duty and bank responsibilities and say they live in the hope that they won't be attacked any more.

Political issue

Meanwhile, the Opposition has slammed the government over the lack of financial planning while rolling out the scheme. "The previous Uddhav Thackeray government had rolled out a loan waiver of ₹36,000 crore for the farmers of Maharashtra. How did that not lead to any strain on the bank employees?" says Shiv Sena (Uddhav Balasaheb Thackeray) MP Sanjay Raut. "Whether it was the note-ban decision or the Mukhyamantri Majhi Ladki Bahin Yojana, they have been brought about without any financial planning and only for electoral benefits. When we come to power, we will fit it in the legal and financial framework."

Even as the government tries to stop the attacks, employees are worried. The police acted swiftly to register a case against Pandurang Devkar, a bank employee, but he still fears for his life. "I was followed, abducted, and taken to a crematorium. I was beaten black and blue with rods and sharp weapons," Devkar says.

"Whenever the government wants to bring about such populist schemes, they should take the banks and financial institutions into confidence. They should let us know about their plans, take feedback from us, and then introduce these schemes. That way, there will be better coordination and less stress on banking structures," he adds.



A view of the crowd gathered during a programme of the Mukhyamantri Majhi Ladki Bahin Yojana, in Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar in Maharashtra. ANI

Names and details have been withheld to protect identities

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From Page One**GST receipts' growth picks up, but off target**

On a year-on-year basis, revenues were flat in Uttarakhand, while they shrank a sharp 33% in Arunachal Pradesh, 8% in Nagaland, and 5% in Manipur, which was a moderate improvement from the 33% shrinkage in the strife-torn State's GST revenues during September. Himachal Pradesh and Chhattisgarh clocked a contraction of 2% and 1%, respectively, in October.

Kerala, by contrast, recorded the highest growth at 20%, followed by Gujarat, whose revenues grew 17% after staying flat in September. Four States' revenues rose 15%, including Haryana and West Bengal, while Maharashtra and Bihar reported a 14% growth in GST receipts.

Among the States that witnessed weaker revenue growth, the poorest performance came from the erstwhile State of Jammu and Kashmir as well as Sikkim, with just 2% growth, followed by a 3% rise in Jharkhand, and just 4% in Tamil Nadu.

"While many large States have recorded an increase above 9%, some of them and many of the smaller States have shown a below average increase, which would be an area of concern for them," said M.S. Mani, partner at Deloitte India.

Jump in refunds

Refunds to domestic taxpayers jumped 42.8% in October, from about 24% in September, improving for the third straight month. However, export-related refunds of GST collections contracted 2% in October, compared to a 3.9% spike in the preceding month.

Overall refunds were 18.2% higher than last October, slowing for the second successive month. Mr. Mani, however, felt that the refund levels were healthy and indicate stabilisation of the refund process and reduction in rejections due to interpretative issues. In July, refunds had contracted by over 19%.

'Cong. stands exposed over unreal promises'

"In Himachal Pradesh, salaries of government workers are not paid on time. In Telangana, farmers are waiting for the waiver they promised. Previously, in Chhattisgarh and Rajasthan they promised certain allowances which were never implemented for five years. There are numerous such examples of how the Congress works," Mr. Modi said.

"We saw recently how the people of Haryana rejected their lies and preferred a government that is stable, progress oriented and action driven. There is a growing realisation that a vote for Congress is a vote for non-governance, poor economics, and unparalleled loot. The people want development and progress," he said.

Congress general secretary K.C. Venugopal told the media, "In Karnataka, we are implementing our promises in a greater way. We are implementing our promises; that is the real model of Congress promises. In Karnataka, whatever we promised we are implementing, anybody can examine it. The Prime Minister's statement is wrong."

The Prime Minister's comments triggered a volley of reactions from senior leaders including Mr. Kharge and Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu.

Questioning Mr. Modi's promise of creating two crore jobs every year and *acche din* in a post on X, Mr. Kharge said, "Lies, Deceit, Fakery, Loot & Publicity are the 5 adjectives which best describe your Govt!"

At a press conference, BJP MP and former Union Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad earlier referred to Mr. Kharge's remarks to say that the Congress chief had now realised that announcements should not be made without proper financial/budgetary provisions. "Now the question arises whether he has passed this lesson on to their leader Rahul Gandhi or not," Mr. Prasad said.

Not a big fan of 10 Janpath bungalow, says Rahul

The Hindu Bureau

NEW DELHI

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Friday said he was "not a big fan" of his official residence, 10 Janpath, as his father and former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi was an occupant of the bungalow when he was assassinated.

Rajiv Gandhi was assassinated in Tamil Nadu's Sriperumbudur on May 21, 1991. "My father died [while he was living] here, so I am not a big fan of this house," Mr. Gandhi is seen telling his nephew, Rajan Gandhi, in a video released on Friday. The video also shows Mr. Gandhi interacting with workers painting the bungalow.

Bibek Debroy, PM's Economic Advisory Council Chairman, no more**Vikas Dhoot**

NEW DELHI

Noted author, economist and Padma Shri awardee Bibek Debroy, who had been the Prime Minister's Economic Advisory Council Chairman since 2017, passed away on Friday morning at the age of 69.

Mr. Debroy was also a member of the NITI Aayog, which had replaced the erstwhile Planning Commission, till mid-2019, and had wide-ranging interests beyond economics. He was also a Sanskrit scholar who had translated the Bhagavad Gita, the Vedas, the Ramayana and the Mahabharata; and was working on a project to translate the Puranas as well that remained incomplete.

The veteran economist, who had been ailing for a few weeks, had been admitted to the AIIMS emergency around 10 p.m. on Thursday. Hospital sources said he had "subacute intestinal obstruction" and expired at 7 a.m. on Friday. Leaders across the political spectrum paid lofty tributes to Mr. Debroy.

"Dr. Bibek Debroy Ji was a towering scholar... Through his works, he left an indelible mark on India's intellectual landscape. Beyond his contributions to public policy, he enjoyed working on our ancient texts, making them accessible to the youth," Prime Minister Narendra Modi wrote in a post on X.

Congress leader Jairam Ramesh called Mr. Debroy "a man of unusually wide-ranging interests" who was "first and foremost a fine theoretical and empirical economist who worked and wrote on various aspects of the Indian economy". President Droupadi Murmu said the country has lost an eminent public intellectual and termed his understanding of India's social, cultural and economic landscape as "exceptional".

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman noted that Mr. Debroy "profusely participated in policy making". "He was prolific in translating Sanskrit to English – our epics and puranas. His book *Sarama and Her Children* showed his uncanny knack in extracting nuggets from our ancient texts. Bibek, you had so much more to do and to complete – for all our sake!" wrote Ms. Sitharaman.

Warm, affable and erudite, Mr. Debroy remained a prolific author and co-



BIBEK DEBROY (1955-2024)

luminist even after joining the NITI Aayog, continuing to shed light and seek on an eclectic variety of issues, including but not restricted to arcane and archaic legislation, and the Indian Railways' history and operational nuances.

In his recent public speeches, Mr. Debroy had mooted the need for the country to expeditiously conduct the population Census that has been overdue for a few years, and to revisit key economic metrics, including the poverty line definition.

Early years and career
After his schooling at Ramakrishna Mission School, Narendrapur, Mr. Debroy had studied at Presidency College, Kolkata, followed by the Delhi School of Economics and Trinity College, Cambridge. Starting with a teaching stint at his alma mater Presidency College, Mr. Debroy had worked at the Gokhale Institute of Economics and Politics in Pune, followed by the Indian Institute of Foreign Trade in the national capital.

The economist also spent a year with the Department of Economic Affairs in the Finance Ministry in the mid-1990s, but one of his longest serving roles was the directorship of the Rajiv Gandhi Institute for Contemporary Studies (RGICS) between 1997 and 2005.

At RGICS, a report steered by Mr. Debroy and published in 2005, had created a flutter in the first year of the Manmohan Singh-led UPA regime by naming Gujarat, then under Chief Minister Narendra Modi, as India's top State on an index to measure economic freedom.

Haryana MLAs won seats with an average vote share of 48%**The Hindu Bureau**

NEW DELHI

Successful candidates in the recent Haryana Assembly elections won their seats with an average vote share of 48% of the total votes polled; this was higher than in the 2019 election when winners garnered an average vote share of 44%.

When all registered voters are considered, the winning candidates won their seats with an average 33% share, meaning that the new MLAs represent a third of the State's electorate, on average.

According to an analysis by the Association for Democratic Reforms and Haryana Election Watch, around 44% of winners swept 50% or more of the total votes polled in their constituency. The other 56% won with less than half of the votes polled. Only three of the winners had a margin of victory of less than 1,000 votes; another three winners had a margin of victory above 30%.

Of 12 winners with declared criminal cases, 11 won their seats with a vote share of 50% or more. Of the 78 winners with clean backgrounds, only 29 won more than half of the votes polled in their constituencies.

Also, eleven of the 12 winners with declared criminal cases won against a runner-up with a clean background; of these, three winners scored a victory margin above 25%.

A whopping 86 winners in the Haryana poll are crorepatis, with a net worth of more than ₹1 crore. Of these, 37 won more than half of the votes polled. Three of the four non-crorepati winners also had a vote share of 50% or above.

Among the 30 re-elected MLAs, none got less than a 30% vote share.



People waiting for their turn to cast vote. FILE PHOTO

Cong. slams EC, says it may take legal route to expunge remarks

The Opposition party's response comes days after the poll panel rejected allegations of irregularities in the recently concluded Haryana polls

The Hindu Bureau

NEW DELHI

The Congress on Friday made a sharp rebuttal to the Election Commission's response to its complaints on the Haryana Assembly election, saying that the poll panel's goal was to "strip itself of the last vestiges of neutrality", then it was doing a "remarkable job" at creating that impression.

The principal Opposition party's response came days after the EC rejected allegations of irregularities in the recently concluded Assembly polls and said that the party was raising "the smoke of a generic doubt" about the credibility of an entire electoral outcome as it did in the past.

In its letter, the Congress claimed that the EC's response was written in a tone that is condescending and indicated that it may take legal recourse to expunge such remarks if the poll panel persists with such language.



K. C. Venugopal

the language used, and the allegations made against the INC compel us to submit the counter-response," the letter said.

The Congress leaders claimed that every reply from the EC now seemed to be laced with *ad hominem* attacks on either individual leaders or the party itself. They said the Congress's communications confined themselves to issues and were written with a regard for the high office of the Chief Election Commissioner and his brother Commissioners.

Condescending tone'
"However, the EC's reply is written in a tone that is condescending," the letter said. "Judges who write decisions do not attack or demonise the party raising the issues. However, if the EC persists then we shall have no choice but to seek legal recourse to expunge such remarks," it added.

2 non-locals injured after being shot at in Kashmir

The Hindu Bureau

SRINAGAR

Suspected militants fired upon and injured two non-locals in the Mazhama Magam area of Budgam in Kashmir on Friday evening.

Sanjay and Usman, both from Uttar Pradesh, were working on a project of the Jal Jeevan Department on the banks of Nallah Sukhnag when they were targeted by unknown gunmen, who fled the area after the firing.

The victims were shifted to a hospital, officials said. Initial reports suggested that one of them sustained a bullet injury in the arm and the other, in the leg. Their condition was stated to be stable.

Officials said that security forces have launched a major search operation to trace the attackers. This is the fourth attack on non-local workers in J&K in the past month. Earlier, militants shot dead a non-local in Shopian and injured another in Pulwama's Tral. In Ganderbal, a militant attack left seven, including six non-locals and one local doctor dead.

Elephant deaths: officials await autopsy reports; activist demands CBI probe**Mehul Malpani**

BHOPAL

Post-mortem examinations and various other tests on all 10 elephants that have died since Tuesday in Madhya Pradesh's Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve (BTR) have been conducted and the wildlife officials are now waiting for the results to ascertain the exact cause of death, officials said on Friday.

Post-mortem on nine elephants was performed on Thursday while one examination was conducted on Friday.

Tests done

A senior official told *The Hindu* that viscera and three other tests have also been conducted.

Chief Minister Mohan Yadav also held an emergency meeting with the top officials and directed a high-level team to visit the tiger reserve. He has asked Minister of State for Forest Dilip Ahirwar, PCCF and head of State Forest Force Aseem Shrivastava, and Additional Chief Secretary Ashok Varnawal to visit the



Looking for clues: Police and Forest officials at the Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve after the death of 10 elephants. FILE PHOTO

forest and submit a report in 24 hours, an official at the Chief Minister's Office told *The Hindu*.

The official said the CM was informed that reports would come in four days and that investigation on other aspects will continue till then.

Four elephants of a herd of 13 were found dead on Tuesday by the patrolling staff of the BTR, while the five tuskers who were found in critical conditions also succumbed in the next two days. Apart from this, the wildlife officials recovered one more dead ele-

phant while searching the area on Thursday. The elephants were found at BTR's Salakhaniya Beat of Khitauli and Pataur core ranges. All the 10 elephants were females.

The sudden deaths prompted the authorities to launch a probe by different teams but the officials have so far suspected that the animals died due to toxicity after consuming *kodo* millet.

"Samples are collected and shall be sent to School Of Wildlife Forensic and Health, Jabalpur, forensic lab. Veterinary doctors al-

so indicated the reason for death is related to chances of mycotoxins associated with *kodo* millet. The veterinarians are also consulting experts of the Indian Veterinary Research Institute, Bareilly; the Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradoon; the State Forensic Science Laboratory, Sagar; and the Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology, Hyderabad to get in-depth details about the said mycotoxins," Additional Principal Conservator of Forests (Wildlife), L. Krishnamoorthy said on Thursday night.

Meanwhile, wildlife activist Ajay Dubey has raised suspicion on the deaths and the official claims, and has demanded a probe by the Central Bureau of Investigation. Speaking to *The Hindu*, Mr. Dubey said foul play cannot be ruled out and that he might approach the Madhya Pradesh High Court with his demand.

Mr. Dubey also claimed that the wildlife officials did not act in time after the four dead elephants were found.

Patrolling resumes at Demchok, to begin in Depsang on weekend**Dinakar Peri**

NEW DELHI [JOHN FOR MORE-https://www.hindu.com](https://www.hindu.com)

The Indian and Chinese Armies started coordinated patrolling along the Line of Actual Control in Demchok since 2017 and that the latest agreement is only to restore the ground situation to the pre-April 2020 situation, it is not clear upto what point the Indian Army will get to patrol in the Demchok area.

This comes after disengagement was completed on Wednesday in both these areas located in eastern Ladakh, the final friction points from the 2020 stand-off between the two countries. The resumption of patrolling is a significant step in returning to the status quo of pre-April 2020.

Officials from both sides verified the completion of disengagement on the ground in both the areas, Army sources said. Ground commanders, at the rank of Brigadier and below, held meetings on Wednesday to work out the modalities for patrolling. In order to avoid face-offs between patrols and prevent clashes, the timing and frequency of patrols will be coordi-

nated. However, given that there has been a stand-off going on at Demchok since 2017 and that the latest agreement is only to restore the ground situation to the pre-April 2020 situation, it is not clear upto what point the Indian Army will get to patrol in the Demchok area.

At Depsang, where the situation is much more complex, patrolling is expected to resume over the weekend. At least technically, this means that the Indian Army should be able to resume patrols up to the Patrolling Points 10, 11, 11A, 12, and 13 in the area, which it last managed to access in January 2020.

With disengagement now completed at all the friction points of the stand-off that began in May 2020, the next step is to work out new patrolling norms and resume patrolling at other friction points as well, such as Galwan, Patrolling Point 15 and 17A in the Gogra Hot Springs area, and the north and south banks of the Pangong Tso.

This had led to a heated debate on the Gujarat model of development, and amid unease in the Congress ranks, Mr. Debroy eventually moved on to the Punjab Haryana Delhi Chamber of Commerce and Industry or PHDCCI. A two-year stint at the industry body was followed by a long stint at the Centre for Policy and Research from 2007 till he became part of the Centre's think tank after Mr. Modi's government assumed office in 2014.

Mr. Ramesh recalled that Mr. Debroy had a special skill for lucid exposition that would make laypersons easily understand complex economic issues. "Bibek was also a very prolific, and always thought-provoking, commentator in the media," he said.

(With inputs from Bindu Shajan Perappadan)

FIR lodged against Shiv Sena (UBT) MP

An FIR was registered in Mumbai under Sections 79 and 356(2) of the BNS against Shiv Sena (UBT) MP Arvind Sawant after Shiv Sena leader Shaina N.C. complained that he had used derogatory language against her.

Neelam Gorhe, Shiv Sena leader and Deputy

Chairperson of the Maharashtra Legislative Council, asked the Election Commission to take immediate action.

She said: "Arvind Sawant's statement reflects how low and contemptible the perspective of Uddhav Thackeray's party and its leaders are towards women in the State." Issuing a warning that they will not tolerate disrespectful comments at women, Dr. Gorhe demanded that Mr. Sawant publicly apologise to Ms. Shaina.



Shaina NC at Nagada police station to register a case against Arvind Sawant on the derogatory comments passed by him. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT



Tough fight: NCP chief Ajit Pawar is contesting against his nephew Yugendra Pawar. PTI

Families battle their own in Maharashtra Assembly polls

Purnima Sah

MUMBAI

The upcoming Maharashtra Assembly election is set to be the arena for some bitter family battles, with at least five constituencies seeing clashes between close relatives.

There is a high-octane fight brewing in Baramati, where the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) chief Ajit Pawar is contesting against his nephew Yugendra Pawar, who is representing the NCP (SP). In Aheri, NCP Minister Dharmarao Baba Atram will face off against his daughter Bhagyashree Atram-Halgekar who has joined the NCP (SP). Yet another fight between families split by the NCP divide is happening in Sindhkhedraja, where Rajendra Shingne who recently joined the NCP (SP) is battling his niece Gayatri Shingne of the NCP.

In the Loha-Kandhar constituency, the NCP's Prataprao Patil Chikhalikar is taking on his brother-in-law, Shyamsunder Shinde of the Peasant and Workers Party. In Nashik's Chandwad constituency, BJP candidate Rahul Aher is contesting against his brother Keda Aher, an Independent candidate.

In the Lok Sabha election, the battle lines between the NCP factions were drawn in the family turf of Baramati, with Mr. Ajit Pawar fielding his wife, Sunetra Pawar, against his cousin Supriya Sule, daughter of party patriarch Sharad Pawar.

The Aheri constituency in Gadchiroli district will witness a heated battle between Mr. Atram and his daughter. In fact, it's a triangular fight among the Atrams of the Aheri royal family, with the sitting MLA's nephew, former BJP Minister Ambirishra Atram, throwing his hat in the ring as an Independent candidate. Mr. Dharmarao Baba Atram asked voters to throw his daughter and son-in-law into the Pranhita river for treachery. His daughter had an impassioned response: "When my father was abducted in 1991 by Naxalites, it was Sharad Pawar who made his safe release possible. I am paying gratitude for saving my father's life by joining the NCP [SP]." In Nanded, Mr. Chikhalikar, a former BJP MP, has joined the NCP. His brother-in-law, Mr. Shinde won the previous Assembly election with Mr. Chikhalikar's support. This time, they are set to clash, in a fight that originated during an Agricultural Produce Market Committee election.

CARTOONSCAPE | SOUMYADIP SINHA

**ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS****528 in fray for 2nd phase of Jharkhand polls**

Altogether 528 candidates are in the fray for the second phase of Jharkhand Assembly polls after 32 aspirants withdrew their nominations on Friday, an election official said. In all, 38 Assembly constituencies will go to polls in the second phase on November 20.

Initially, 634 aspirants submitted nomination papers from October 22 to 29, but after scrutiny, 74 nominations were rejected. On Friday, 32 candidates withdrew their papers, leaving 528 in the fray, Chief Electoral Officer K. Ravi Kumar said. Dhanwar constituency registered the highest number of candidates at 24, while Deoghar recorded the lowest at 7, he said. Former Jharkhand Minister Satyanan Jha 'Batul' also withdrew his nomination. PTI



QQ The CM's vision of development is flawed. Roads, bridges, connectors are built and then taxpayers' money is used to fill potholes

KEDAR DIGHE Shiv Sena (UBT) candidate against Eknath Shinde

47,392 proud centenarians eligible to vote

A total of 47,392 centenarians are among the more than 9.7 crore citizens in Maharashtra who are eligible to vote in the November 20 Assembly polls, according to the Election Commission data. As per the figures, there are 22,22,704 voters in the age group of 18-19. PTI



QQ In 2019, Hemant Soren declared his date of birth, yet in 2024, he appears to have aged by seven years in just five. What magic is this?

SANJAY SETH Union Minister of State for Defence

Maharashtra marches to a new beat, issues not getting primacy

Despite agrarian distress and unemployment levels, these may not turn out into issues debated in this election, say experts; key to power will likely be decided by the Vidarbha region where Congress and BJP are directly pitted against each other.

IN FOCUS**Vinaya Deshpande Pandit**

MUMBAI

With rebellions, internal squabbles within the Mahayuti and the Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA), and the confusion over nominations, the Maharashtra Assembly election, slated to take place in a single phase on November 20, have confounded many pollsters. Just like the confusion about the seat-sharing formula, the fights will also be clearer only after the last day of the withdrawal of nominations on November 4.

Currently, looking at the nominations which have been filed by the official candidates, rebel Independent candidates, and the smaller parties, Maharashtra is slated to have many multi-cornered fights.

Interestingly, despite the agrarian distress and the unemployment levels, these may not become poll issues, say experts. The key to power will likely be decided by Vidarbha where both the Congress and the BJP are directly pitted against each other. The party which will dominate in the 62 seats in Vidarbha will likely hold the key to Maharashtra's power equation.

This is the first State election where the factions of the Shiv Sena and the Nationalist Congress Party will contest in an all-stakes fight against each other in



Colours aplenty: Scarves, flags and promotional materials of various political parties kept on display inside a shop in Lalbaug, Mumbai. EMMANUEL YOGINI

their traditional strongholds. Sharad Pawar will push to maintain his stronghold on the sugar-rich western Maharashtra belt. The land of education and sugar barons holds the key to 70 of the 288 seats. The Ajit Pawar-led NCP will fight in over 53 seats.

"There seems to be a clear advantage to Sharad Pawar, particularly in western Maharashtra. He has chosen the candidates very strategically. He has good support in the younger population. In terms of the appeasement of communities as well, he has given tickets to Marathas and Dhangars to get his poll equations right," said Vivek Bhavsar, political commentator and senior journalist.

"This time, it is not one election in Maharashtra. The State faces 288 elec-

tions in 288 constituencies. It will truly be an unprecedented election which will be a nightmare for the pollsters as nobody is in a position to predict the outcome. My assessment is that, like the 1999 elections, there will be several Independent candidates who will emerge as winners. And after the results, they will become the kingmakers, leading to the possibility of horse-trading. Even smaller margins will flip the game in the State," Girish Kuber, Editor, Lok-satta, told *The Hindu*.

Women's vote

The Mahayuti government banks on the success of the Mukhyamantri Majhi Ladki Bahin Yojana to garner the votes of women.

"It will primarily help [Chief Minister] Eknath

An unpredictable matchup

Table shows major alliances contesting in the 2024 Maharashtra Assembly polls and the number of seats each party won in the State election in 2019.

Mahayuti	Contesting seats	Seats won in 2019
Bharatiya Janata Party	148	105
Shiv Sena	83 (tentative)	56
Nationalist Congress Party	53 (tentative)	54
Republic Party of India (Athawale)	1	-
Jan Surjya Shakti	2	1
Rashtriya Yuva Swabhiman Party	1	-
Rajarshi Shahi Vikas Aghadi	1	-
Maha Vikas Aghadi		
Indian National Congress	103	44
Shiv Sena (UBT)	96	-
Nationalist Congress Party (SP)	87	-
Peasants and Workers Party of India	5	1
Communist Party of India (Marxist)	5	1
Samajwadi Party	2	2
Communist Party of India	1	-
Others		
Maharashtra Navnirman Sena	136	1
Vanchit Bahujan Aaghadi	110	-

MVA have claimed that they will be able to carry ahead the momentum of the Lok Sabha election results where the MVA had received wider support.

But months after the elections, that impact seems to have waned away, say experts.

While the Congress feels encouraged that it will lead in the Vidarbha region, the BJP believes it will be able to work its way through the region. "I don't see the effect of Lok Sabha elections. Had the Maharashtra elections been held with the Haryana elections, things would have been different. But now, welfarism will come into play," said Mr. Kuber, adding that the Manoj Jarange Patil factor might not have a wider impact on the election results.

Raj's Sena vs Uddhav's Sena: Deepavali gala of one sparks fireworks from the other; ball is now in the court of the EC

Purnima Sah

MUMBAI

The Election Commission (EC) on Friday took cognizance of the Shiv Sena (UBT)'s formal complaint filed against the Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS) chief Raj Thackeray's son Amit Thackeray for allegedly violating the Model Code of Conduct (MCC) with his Deepavali programme held at Shivaji Park on Thursday.

In a letter to the State's Chief Electoral Officer, Shiv Sena (UBT) deputy secretary Sachin Parasnaik complained that the MNS had violated the MCC by celebrating Deepotsav in a State-owned space, insisting that the entire expenses incurred on the event be included as part of the election expenditure of Mr. Amit Thackeray, the MNS candidate from the Mahim constituency.

The EC has set an expenditure limit of ₹40 lakh per candidate in an As-



Amit Thackeray is the Maharashtra Navnirman Sena candidate from the Mahim constituency. EMMANUEL YOGINI

Shiv Sena (UBT) takes exception to the Deepotsav organised by the MNS in a public park

sembly election.

"The Model Code of Conduct is applicable in the entire State. The Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation, however, has

given its consent to the MNS to celebrate Deepotsav at the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Park, which is under the civic body's jurisdiction. The MNS has displayed the party banners, installed gates, and put up lanterns in the area. This is a clear violation of the MCC," Mr. Parasnaik said.

"MNS candidate Amit Thackeray was present at

the venue at the time of inauguration of Deepotsav. The expenses of Deepotsav should be included in the election expenses of MNS candidate from Mahim assembly seat, Amit Thackeray, as per the stipulated rules," he said, adding that the EC should initiate strict action against the officials responsible for illegally allowing party campaigning in public spaces.

In its reply, the EC said that an investigation into the matter has begun, adding that it has sought a response to the allegations from the MNS.

Defending Mr. Amit Thackeray, MNS leader Balasaheb Nandgaonkar said: "We have been holding the Deepotsav here for many years. This has no connection with Amit Thackeray's campaign. The Shiv Sena (UBT) is objecting to a Hindu festival as it has stopped following the Hindu ideology. They must now officially change their reli-

In Soren's Jharkhand, Hindus are becoming outsiders, says Sarma

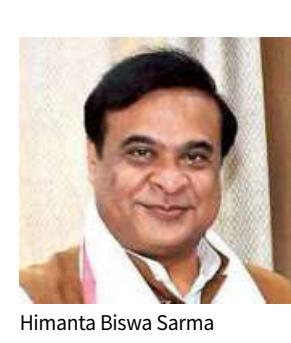
Amit Bhelari

PATNA

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Friday lashed out at Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren for being engaged in selective hospitality. He challenged Mr. Soren to push back Ghulam Ahmad Mir, Jharkhand Congress in-charge from the State, and then he would also leave.

His statement has come amid the political debate over the entries of many BJP leaders in Jharkhand. Mr. Soren has raised this issue several times calling them outsiders during public meetings.

While speaking in Garhwa, Mr. Sarma said, "Is a green card given to a particular community? First Mir [Ghulam Ahmad Mir] should be pushed back, and then you push me as well." "You cannot run this country by appeasing a particular community," he added. "Today, Hindus have become outsiders. If



Himanta Biswa Sarma

fan Ansari and Alamgir Alam are not outsiders but Shivraj Singh Chouhan and Himanta Biswa Sarma have become outsiders. Let BJP form the government, we will legally throw out all the Bangladeshi infiltrators from Jharkhand," Mr. Sarma said.

Meanwhile, BSP candidate from Hussainabad, Kushwaha Shivpujan Mehta lodged a complaint against Mr. Sarma accusing him of creating communal tension.

Mr. Sarma had said in a public meeting that Hussainabad would be made a district, but its name would be changed if the BJP was voted to power.

IN BRIEF



Rajesh Kumar Singh takes charge as Defence Secretary

Rajesh Kumar Singh took over as Defence Secretary at South Block, New Delhi, on Friday. He took over from the incumbent, Giridhar Aramane, a 1988-batch IAS officer of the Andhra Pradesh cadre who retired from service on Thursday after a two-year stint. Before taking charge, Mr. Singh laid a wreath and paid homage to the fallen heroes at the National War Memorial in New Delhi. He is a 1989-batch IAS officer from the Kerala cadre, and had assumed the charge as Officer on Special Duty (Defence Secretary-designate) on August 20. Earlier, Mr. Singh was holding the charge of Secretary, Department for Promotion of Industry.

Noted fashion designer Rohit Bal passes away at 63

Rohit Bal, one of India's most celebrated fashion designers, died on Friday at a south Delhi hospital following a heart attack, Fashion Design Council of India president Sunil Sethi said. He was 63. Mr. Bal was admitted to the intensive care unit of a private hospital in Gurugram for cardiac issues in December 2023. In October 2024, he presented his collection at the Lakme Fashion Week X FDCI 2024 grand finale. "He had a cardiac arrest... heart failure. Rohit was a legend, we are completely shaken right now. We are trying to work out details for the cremation tomorrow," Mr. Sethi said. PTI

India spells out finance needs for biodiversity, conservation

Jacob Koshy
NEW DELHI



Indian officials at the conference said that lot of ground needs have to be covered for the implementation of NBSAP. AFP

India expects to spend around ₹81,664 crore on biodiversity and conservation from the financial year 2025 to 2030. From 2018 to 2022, India spent ₹32,207 crore, and to meet the higher financing requirements would require funds from sources beyond routine government expenditure, the country stated in its updated submission at the ongoing 16th edition of Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) in Colombia (COP-16).

The expenditure from 2018 to 2022 was purely that expended by the Centre as allocations to various Ministries or statutory bodies for the conservation and biodiversity-linked programmes.

Indian officials at the conference said international finance would be necessary to meet these goals. "I would like to men-

India silent after U.S. imposes sanctions on 19 Indian entities

Officials have not commented on whether the issue had come up for discussion in a phone call between National Security Adviser Ajit Doval and his U.S. counterpart, Jake Sullivan

Suhasini Haidar
NEW DELHI

India has not responded directly to the U.S. decision to put 19 Indian entities under sanctions for providing "dual-use" technologies to Russia.

Calling them "Third-Country Sanctions Evaders", the U.S. Treasury Department on Wednesday imposed sanctions on nearly 400 companies and individuals from 17 countries. On Friday, however, India's Ministry of External Affairs declined to comment, despite several requests for a reaction to the sanctions imposed on a number of Indian companies by the U.S. in a single action against Russia.

Officials also did not comment on whether the issue had been discussed in a phone call between National Security Adviser Ajit Doval and his U.S. counterpart, Jake Sullivan, on Thursday.

A readout from the U.S. White House said the two Advisers had discussed "regional security developments, underscoring the need for further efforts to



National Security Adviser Ajit Doval with his U.S. counterpart, Jake Sullivan, in New Delhi in this June 17 photo. PTI

ensure stability in the Indo-Pacific region and globally", but made no mention of the U.S. action over Russia-linked companies in India.

Closer collaboration

"They also discussed further opportunities for closer collaboration in key domains, including clean energy supply chains and defence cooperation," the readout added, highlighting "progress in the bilateral partnership", through the Initiative on Critical and Emerging Technology (ICET) launched by them in 2023.

The Modi government has thus far not responded to U.S. Treasury sanctions against a number of Indian entities for links to Russia and Iran since 2022, holding only that India "does not recognise unilateral sanctions". According to the U.S. Treasury Department, the U.S. will now freeze all property of the sanctioned companies and owners in the United States and ban all transactions by U.S. citizens with them.

"The United States and our allies will continue to take decisive action across the globe to stop the flow of critical tools and technologies that Russia needs to wage its illegal and immoral war against Ukraine," Deputy Secretary of

the Treasury Wally Adeyemo, said, announcing the sanctions.

The call between the two NSAs, which followed the announcement, came days after India and China announced they had disengaged in the last two pending friction points on the Line of Actual Control, indicating a thaw in ties after four years of a military stand-off. The NSAs spoke amid escalating tensions between India and Canada over the Nijjar killing case, and recent accusations that Home Minister Amit Shah had directed the killing of the Canadian Khalistani activist last year.

When asked, the U.S. State Department spokesperson said the allegations, made by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police Commissioner as well as the Deputy Foreign Minister in public comments, were "concerning", and the U.S. government would "continue to consult with the Canadian government about those allegations". The Ministry of External Affairs has thus far not commented on the latest allegations from Canada or the U.S. statement of "concern".

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Delhi, Bengaluru firms among those facing sanctions

Kallop Bhattacharjee
NEW DELHI

From the neighbourhoods of Delhi and Uttar Pradesh to Bengaluru and Hyderabad, the individuals and entities facing Russia-related sanctions by the U.S. Treasury Department are scattered across the country.

An initial assessment reveals that nearly all the entities are well-established companies in their respective domains. They are active in areas such as providing airport support to small and large aircraft and helicopters, spare parts for machines, production of machine tools, IT support, commodities trade and business consultancy service providers.

They are suspected of providing dual use goods that are in the Common High Priority List of the U.S. Department of Commerce.

The two individuals who appear in the list are Sudhir Kumar from New Delhi and Vivek Kumar Mishra from Chhattisgarh. As per the website LinkedIn, both are directors in Ascend Aviation.

According to its website, the company deals with a wide range of aircraft-related consumables, ground

support, and spare parts. Another company, Denvas Services Private Ltd. of Delhi, has been accused of being run by several Russian nationals "involved in defence procurement schemes". The U.S. Treasury Department has said that it has been used by Russia to procure "U.S. origin" microelectronics for use in its advanced conventional weapons.

The Bengaluru-based Emsystech has been accused of sending over 800 shipments of electronic integrated circuits and capacitors made with precious metal tantalum to a Russian entity that is active in producing control systems and radio-electronic items.

The Hyderabad-based Lokesh Machines Ltd., a machine tools manufacturer, has been accused of collaborating with a Russian defence agent, Alikhanov or Dimitri Vladimirovich Alikhanov.

The Gurugram-based Innovio Ventures has been accused of sending "over 200 shipments, including electronic integrated circuits and multilayer ceramic capacitors to Russia-based end-users" that included Russian military entity Testkomplekt.

Naga group urges Centre to finalise peace deal this year

JOIN FOR MORE - <https://telegram.me/DailyPressNation>

Vijaita Singh
NEW DELHI

The Naga National Political Groups (NNPG) said on Thursday that the Union government should finalise the Naga peace pact according to the terms of the agreement signed with the group in 2019, the provisions of which include a separate page in the Indian passport for the Nagas and a bicameral legislature in Nagaland.

The NNPG said the political solution reached with the Union government fully recognised the Naga identity, with a separate page in the Indian passport, a separate contingent of Nagas in all international events, and an enhanced representation in both Houses of Parliament.

The NNPG, which is the second group after the influential Isak-Muivah faction of the National Social-

ist Council of Nagaland (NSCN-IM) to engage in peace talks with the Union government, signed an "Agreed Position" on October 31, 2019, with the then Naga interlocutor, R.N. Ravi, currently Tamil Nadu's Governor.

The NNPG hopes that the Government of India will complete the signing of the agreement in 2024 itself," a statement by the NNPG, which comprises seven groups, said.

It said the 'Agreed Position' had the status of an "intergovernmental agreement" as the NNPG working committee had signed it with Mr. Ravi, who was holding a Cabinet rank in the government.

FAITH

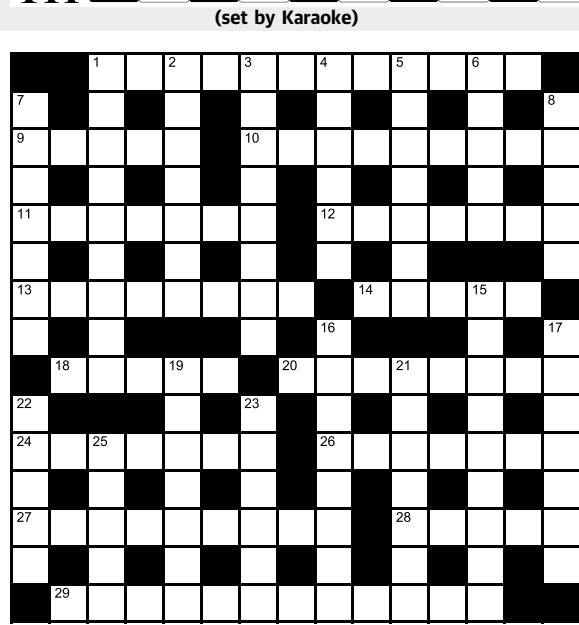
Garuda, essence of Vedas

Life is always inlaid with happiness and sorrow. One seeks material wealth only to realise one cannot enjoy many things money can buy because one's health does not permit it. One should not measure happiness by sensory gratification or by the end of one's worldly troubles; true happiness lies in working towards and attaining liberation. Vaikuntam (constantly being in the presence of Perumal, like the nityasuris) and serving the Lord is true happiness.

How does one attain such a state? Perumal is the paramporul (Supreme Being) but our senses cannot perceive this. We can learn about Him only through the Vedas, and the personification of Vedas is Garuda, said Velukkudi Ranganathan in a discourse.

Referred to as Periya Tiruvada (as he carries Perumal on his shoulder), Garuda is a devotee, friend, the vehicle, the seat, the dhwaja (flag, meaning whoever comes under it will be offered protection), protective cloak and also serves as a fan. He serves the Lord in every situation, showing bhaktas the way forward to serve Him, who is always fond of His devotees and will not brook anyone treating them with disfavour, as Duryodhana did. When Krishna chose to partake of Vindhya's hospitality, rather than Duryodhana's, the Lord stated that as per sastras, one cannot eat in an enemy's house. The Kaurava prince replied, "There is no enmity between us." To this, Krishna said, "Not directly. However, you hate the Pandavas, who are my bhaktas. How can I overlook that?" Nammazhwar too says God will protect His devotees. It is Garuda who brings Perumal tirelessly whenever bhaktas call him. It is Vishnu Himself who asked Garuda to be His vehicle.

TH CROSSWORD + 14320

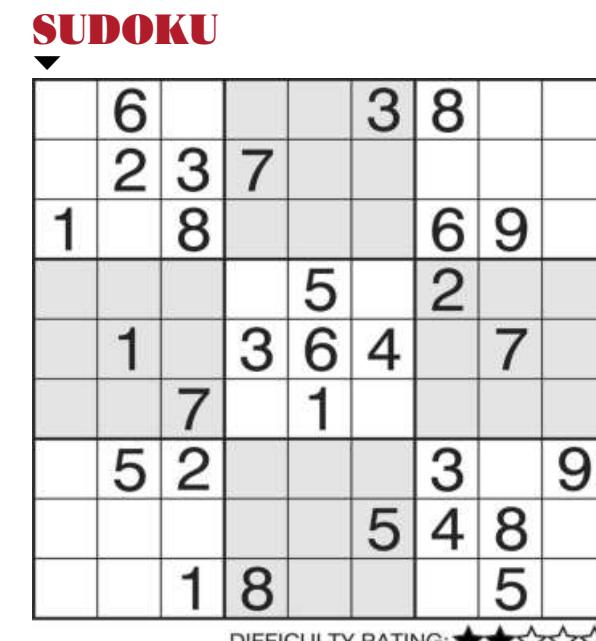


- To solve this puzzle online, get across to our crossword site. <https://qrgo.page.link/jppTn>
- SCAN TO PLAY**
- 14 Saint remains with mass (5)
18 A sailor's back bone (5)
20 Bad choice to accommodate sailors near a road built along a cliff (8)
24 Answer, [6-10] + 9. Extremely stupid! (7)
26 Compounds found primarily inhabiting near a few rivers' banks (7)
27 Spooner's dark bird, it's closely connected (5-4)
28 Suffer from hot dog (5)
29 How athletes struggle with selectors primarily to outshine other performers? (5,3,4)
- Down**
- Cast irons used for breakfast item (9)
 - Very active time without money and pride (2,3,2)
 - He deliberately wrecks boat at sea in criminal ruse (8)
 - Distressing experience of motor dealer (6)
 - Manicurist's accessories in essential treatment eliminate side effects basically (4,3)
 - Index number finally depends on state essentially (5)
 - Danger mixing drug in Molotov cocktail (7)
 - Abandon dens, I mean (5)
 - Reportedly lay off revolutionary to intimidate an institution that is immune to criticism (6,3)
 - Lazy person is very drunk, let out after party (2,6)
 - Earl's daughter and son in drill getting problem on skin (7)
 - From the inside of Rome, atabrin is produced (2,5)
 - Ancient artefact disfigured in hotel (7)
 - One enthralled by crazy incentives (5)
 - Money returned for curling substance (6)
 - Girl breaks into salad bar (5)

Across

- Race from ill-tempered Ukraine maybe (5-7)
- Sleeping place of birds basically too small to move (5)
- Fickle mind to enter into bar for summer drink (9)
- Watson is confused about drug that is elementary (2,5)
- Make off with bachelor in a moment leaving parents heartily (7)
- Face rascal without fear ultimately in conference (8)

SUDOKU



DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★☆

G	C	E	G	H	D	S	K
6				3	8		
2	3	7					
1	8			6	9		
				5	2		
1	3	6	4		7		
	7		1				
5	2			3	9		
				5	4	8	
1	8				5		

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Solution to previous puzzle

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

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

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Solution to previous puzzle

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

IN BRIEF



Pratim Sengupta takes charge as MD, CEO of Bandhan Bank

Bandhan Bank Ltd. announced that Partha Pratim Sengupta has taken charge as MD & CEO of the private lender effective Friday. He has led large businesses in various domains, including business, credit, and technology. Ratan Kumar Kesh, who was the interim MD & CEO, will resume his role as the ED and COO. From 2020 to 2022, Mr. Sengupta was the MD & CEO of Indian Overseas Bank. He has spent over three decades at the State Bank of India.

India, Saudi Arabia eye fintech, clean hydrogen

India and Saudi Arabia are eyeing collaboration in emerging fields such as fintech, new technologies, energy efficiency, clean hydrogen, textiles and mining to further boost trade and investment ties, as per an official statement on Friday. These areas were discussed during the recent visit of Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal to Riyadh. Bilateral trade between the two countries stood at \$43 billion in 2023-24 against \$53 billion in 2022-23. PTI

Sundaram Home Finance net contracts to ₹44 crore in Q2

Sundaram Home Finance standalone net profit for the September quarter shrank year-on-year to ₹44 crore from ₹59 crore. Disbursements climbed 27% to ₹1,543 crore. The emerging business segment, comprising small business loans and financing to the affordable-housing market, registered disbursements of ₹42 crore. "Our strong disbursement growth was driven by our continued expansion in tier 2 and 3 towns," said MD D. Lakshminarayanan in a statement.

An ancestral village and its bond with a prodigal son

K.C. Vijaya Kumar
CHENNAI

A country road snakes past coconut groves, the rare paddy farm and homes, both ancient with wooden rafters and Mangalore tiles, and modern with embellishments procured through the money-order economy bolstered from West Asia. This is perhaps a regular vista in any Kerala village linked to a nearby town and Madapeedika is no exception. But this is no ordinary road.

Located in Kerala's northern parts, popularly known as Malabar, and shoe-horned between the coastal town of Thalassery and the former French enclave of Mahe, now a part of Puducherry, Madapeedika has a bus-stop fringed by bakeries and provision shops. It is a junction with one road heading back towards Thalassery, another moves to Chokli, the third to Paral and Mahe and the fourth, a bit narrow, leads into the adjoining villages.

This specific pathway not just tapers into a sylvan landscape but it also guides us towards the ancestral roots of T.P. Gopalan Nambiar, the corporate patriarch, who passed away in Bengaluru on Thursday (October 31).

Popularly known as 'BPL' Nambiar in this part of Kerala, a nomenclature linked to the firm he headed for a large part, he has always drawn respect and awe from the people of his home-village.

Grandmothers with long memories often recall his younger days as a lad clambering up the little hillock, plucking mangoes and also keeping an eye on cashew fruit in the terraced plantations. Naughty and rooted were the terms



In awe: T.P. Gopalan Nambiar has always drawn respect and awe from the people of his home village. @RAJEEVRC_X

As BPL diversified, Mr. TPG Nambiar got busy but he found time to make a dash to his village

they often used to describe a young Mr. TPG Nambiar.

Years later, as he grew and evolved and kept Bengaluru as his base while having a BPL factory in Palakkad, the village still remained close to his heart.

And it was no surprise when some residents in and around Madapeedika in Kodiyeri Panchayat, got opportunities to work in the Palakkad establishment. As BPL diversified, Mr. TPG Nambiar got busy but he found time to make a dash to his village.

He would drive down from Bengaluru and it was his benevolence that helped the village get a road leading all the way into the hinterland close to the old home where his re-

Oct. car sales straddle middle lane

Strong sport utility vehicle (SUV) and utility vehicle (UV) sales bolster growth for Mahindra & Mahindra and Toyota Kirloskar Motor; market leader Maruti Suzuki also sees 19% uptick in UVs amid a 5.1% drop in local sales

Lalatendu Mishra
MUMBAI

Hopes of a broad-based festive rebound for the sluggish automobile sales so far this year, remained remiss as India's top three passenger car makers, Maruti Suzuki India, Hyundai Motor and Tata Motors, experienced either a tepid uptick, or a flatline trajectory in October.

However, automakers with a strong SUV and UV line up such as Mahindra & Mahindra and Toyota Kirloskar Motor, reported substantially higher sales.



Silver lining: Maruti's utility vehicle (UV) sales increased by more than 19% to 70,644 units in October. PTI

Passenger vehicles (PV) market leader Maruti Suzuki India Ltd. sold a total of 2,06,434 units in October, up 3.62% year-on-year. The

higher sales were on account of a 5.1% rise in exports to 33,168 units, and a 90%-plus increase in sales to Toyota at 10,136 units.

But the market leader's domestic sales contracted 5.12% to 1,63,130 units, even as its utility vehicle (UV) brands such as Brezza, Ertiga, Fronx, Grand Vitara, Invicta, Jimny, XL6 saw a growth of over 19% to hit 70,644 units, indicating a persistent preference for SUVs and UVs over cheaper sedans and hatchbacks.

Hyundai Motor India Ltd. (HMIL) reported domestic sales of 55,568 units compared with 55,128 units a year ago, up 0.8%. Overall, SUVs' contribution to domestic sales remained at 6.82% in the month.

Exports rose 6.7% to

14,510 units, while total sales inched up 2%.

Tata Motors' sales remained almost unchanged at 82,682 units. Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd. sold a total of 96,648 vehicles, including exports, up 20%.

TVS Motor Company recorded a monthly sales of 4,89,015 units of two- and three-wheelers, up 13% from 4,34,714 units in the same month of 2023. .

Tim Cook says Apple's India revenue at all-time high

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

iPhone maker Apple has set an all-time revenue record in India and observed a double-digit growth in iPad sales in the country in the September quarter, the company's top official said on Friday.

Apple reported an over 6% growth in total net sales to \$94.93 billion during the reported period from \$89.49 billion a year ago.

"We also set September quarter segment revenue records in the Americas, Europe, and the rest of Asia Pacific, as well as in a large number of countries, including the United States, Brazil, Mexico, France, the U.K., Korea, Malaysia, Thailand, Saudi Arabia and the UAE, and we continue to be excited by the enthusiasm we're seeing in India, where we set an all-time revenue record," Apple CEO Tim Cook said during the company's earnings call.

Mr. Cook said Apple also opened two new stores – one in Mumbai and the other in Delhi – in India during the quarter.

"We can't wait to bring four new stores to customers in India," he said.

In early October, Apple announced plans to open four more stores in India, in Pune, Bengaluru, Delhi-NCR and Mumbai.

As per Counterpoint Research, Apple iPhone sales accounted for 21.6% market share in value terms in the September quarter in India. It trailed Samsung by a small margin.

TO READ MORE: <https://www.thethinduads.com/2024/10/22/iphone-makes-new-record-in-india>

Festivities trigger buying spree in India, but volumes lag

Reuters

Gold demand in India jumped this week amid festive purchases, although volumes were lower than usual due to the metal's record-high prices.

"Retail buying jumped as consumers want to make purchases during the auspicious period. But many were making token buys because of higher prices," said a Hyderabad-based jeweller.

In India, prices jumped to a record high of ₹79,775 per 10 grams earlier this week, marking a nearly 33% increase since last year's Dipawali.



The share of coins and bars in total sales increased this year than usual as buyers were unwilling to pay increased making charges for jewellery, said a New Delhi-based jeweller.

Indian dealers earlier

this week charged a premium of up to \$1 an ounce over official domestic prices on Dhanteras, inclusive of 6% import and 3% sales levies, but offered a discount later in the week of up to \$5, compared with last week's \$4 discount.

"In volumes, sales were lower this year than last year. However, considering the price rally, even sales with modest volume drops look promising since, in value terms, they are much higher," said a Mumbai-based bullion dealer with a private bank. Dipawali and Dhanteras are festivals when buying gold is considered auspicious.

Sensex rises 0.42% in Muhurat trading

Press Trust of India
MUMBAI

The benchmark Sensex climbed 335.06 points, or 0.42%, to settle at 79,724.12 in a special Muhurat trading session on Friday, starting the new Samvat 2081 on a high note.

Stock exchanges BSE and NSE conducted a special Muhurat trading session from 6 pm to 7 pm on Friday to mark the beginning of the new Samvat Year 2081.

In the last Samvat 2080, which ended on Thursday, the BSE Sensex jumped 14,484.38 points, or 22.31% while the Nifty climbed

4,780 points, or 24.60%.

Investors' wealth rose ₹24.42 lakh crore during this period to ₹44,71,429.92 crore, equivalent to \$5.29 trillion.

On Friday, Sensex opened on a high note and stayed in positive territory throughout the special session on buying in banking, auto, and oil & gas shares.

Among major Sensex gainers, the Mahindra & Mahindra stock saw the highest growth of 3.29%.

Adani Ports gained 1.26%, Tata Motors by 1.14% and Axis Bank by 0.92%. HCL Tech, Tech Mahindra, and ICICI Bank were the losers.

TO READ MORE: <https://www.thethinduads.com/2024/10/22/sensex-rises-0.42-in-muhurat-trading>

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MASTUNG

Five children among 7 killed in Pak. polio vaccine drive bombing



A bombing near a girls' school in western Pakistan killed seven persons, including five children, in an attack targeting police guarding polio vaccinators on Friday. "The police van that came under attack was taking personnel for the protection of polio staff," a senior police officer said. AFP

GABORONE

Botswana votes out ruling BDP party after 58 years in power



Botswana's President Mokgweetsi Masisi (in picture) conceded defeat in polls after his Botswana Democratic Party (BDP) lost by a landslide after 58 years in power. The president-elect is Duma Boko, leader of the Umbrella for Democratic Change (UDC) coalition which passed the 31-seat threshold in parliament. REUTERS

TOKYO

Japan and EU announce new security and defence deals



Japan and the EU announced new security and defence ties in Tokyo. EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell and his Japanese counterpart Takeshi Iwaya unveiled the pact to develop cooperation on joint military drills, the exchange of information related to the defence industry, and space security. AFP

PAIOPORTA

Death toll in Spain floods surpass 200 as more troops join rescue



Rescuers raised the toll in Spain's worst floods for a generation to 205 as officials deployed more troops to search for survivors. The hardest-hit region is Valencia which recorded 491 mm of rain in just eight hours on Tuesday. The government is deploying an extra 500 troops to the stricken areas to bolster the 1,200 already on site. AFP

Israeli strikes on Gaza kill 60, U.S.-led truce talks hobble

Dozens more injured in attacks on regions in the central part of coastal enclave; Lebanon PM accuses Israel of 'stubbornness' in negotiations; Netanyahu says his priority is to enforce security

Reuters

CAIRO/BEIRUT

Israeli air strikes on the Gaza Strip killed more than 60 Palestinians in the past 24 hours, medics said, and Israel also bombarded Beirut's southern suburbs on Friday as a U.S.-led diplomatic push to end the fighting struggled to move forward.

Lebanon's caretaker Prime Minister Najib Mikati accused Israel of "stubbornness" in negotiations, while Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said his priority was to enforce security "despite any pressure or constraints".



Dystopian city: Smoke rising in the adjacent areas of Jabalia in the northern Gaza Strip following an Israeli strike on Friday. AFP

Israel has pressed on with its military offensives against Hamas in the Gaza Strip and Hezbollah in Lebanon despite efforts by Washington to secure ceasefires on both fronts ahead of the U.S. presidential election next Tuesday.

Medics in Gaza said

about 60 people were killed and dozens more injured overnight and into Friday morning in Israeli strikes on the city of Deir Al-Balah, the Nuseirat camp and the town of Al-Zawayda all in the central area of the Palestinian coastal enclave, as well as in the south.

Israel also pummelled Beirut's southern suburbs on Friday morning with at least 10 strikes.

The strikes came after Israel issued evacuation orders for 10 separate neighbourhoods.

The attacks began before the final series of orders were published.

North Korea will stand by Russia until its victory in Ukraine, Pyongyang's Foreign Minister said in Moscow on Friday, as the U.S. has warned thousands of North Korean troops could be sent to combat in the Ukraine conflict in the coming days.

North Korea's Choe Son Hui was in Moscow as the West believes up to 10,000 North Korean troops are training in Russia and are on the brink of entering the more than two-year conflict on Russian troops' side.

She also vowed that North Korea will continue

to develop its nuclear arsenal, with Pyongyang widely suspected of wanting nuclear technology from Russia in exchange for military support.

Neither country has denied the troop deployment reports, with Ms. Son Hui and Mr. Lavrov also not mentioning them in their statements after their talks.

Harris's challenge in the last lap will be to balance the posture and enthuse the base

NEWS ANALYSIS

Varghese K. George

WASHINGTON DC

With the result all set to go down to the wire, the focus of Democrat Kamala Harris in the last week of the presidential poll campaign is on getting sceptics within the camp to get out and vote. Her key allies in this pursuit are former President Barack Obama and independent Senator Bernie Sanders who have made repeated pleas to social groups that traditionally supported the Democrats but are unenthusiastic about voting for Ms. Harris.

More than 60 million votes have already been cast as of Thursday. Voting concludes on November 5. Ms. Harris and her Republican opponent Donald J. Trump are urging the rest not to miss voting, but hesitant supporters may be more a concern for the former than the latter.

Ms. Harris has attempted to stitch together a coalition of extremes – from socialists to neocons and sections of everyone in between. Proponents of many contradictory strands agree that a second presidency of Republican Donald Trump would be far worse for all of them



Kamala Harris

than having Ms. Harris at the top. Key issues that confuse the Democratic base are the party's, and specifically the candidate's, approach towards Israel, the working class and corporate interests. Opinion polls suggested discontent among African Americans and Latinos too – communities that Democratic strategists have traditionally taken for granted.

Independent Senator Bernie Sanders addressed young voters, the working class, Israel critics and Palestinian supporters who are sceptical about Ms. Harris in recent days with the specific warning – "Donald Trump and his right-wing friends are worse."

Mr. Sanders had one message to his supporters – Ms. Harris may not be the best on the question of unrestrained support for Israel Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's expand-

ing war in West Asia and on working-class rights vis a vis corporation, but she is better than Mr. Trump.

By acknowledging the grievance of the party's own base, Mr. Sanders is deviating from the official campaign tone of euphoria, to win over the the disengaged sections back.

In his latest message, Mr. Obama addressed Black men yet again. "As we enter the final moments of the campaign, President Obama reminds us that you are the most credible messengers," campaign group Win With Black Men posted along with a video message from the former President. Mr. Obama had publicly noted a lack of enthusiasm among African Americans and linked that to Ms. Harris being a woman.

Neither Mr. Trump nor Ms. Harris has been able to frame the contest around their most favourable question, immigration and abortion, respectively. Ms. Harris has a bevy of Republicans, particularly neocons, rooting for her, but their impact on the electorate is unlikely to be significant. What could be consequential will be her ability to hold the Democratic camp together and active in the last lap, in swing States.

Trump and Harris extend Deepavali greetings

Varghese K. George
WASHINGTON DC

The U.S. presidential candidates, Republican Donald Trump and Democrat Kamala Harris, extended Deepavali wishes to all, with the former also promising to "protect Hindu Americans against the anti-religion agenda of the radical left".

Mr. Trump termed Prime Minister Narendra Modi a "good friend," accused Ms. Harris and President Joe Biden of ignoring the Hindus and condemned the violence in Bangladesh. "...strongly condemn the barbaric violence against Hindus, Christians, and other minorities who are getting attacked and looted by mobs in Bangladesh, which remains in a total state of chaos," Mr. Trump said in a post on social media.

A shorter message from Ms. Harris said: "Tonight, we join more than 1 billion people across America and around the world lighting diyas and celebrating the fight for good over evil, knowledge over ignorance, and light over darkness...Happy Diwali to everyone celebrating the Festival of Lights." In the evening the Vice President also posted a photo of her residence lit for the occasion.

North Korea vows to stand by Russia until 'victory' in Ukraine

Agence France-Presse

MOSCOW

North Korea will stand by Russia until its victory in Ukraine, Pyongyang's Foreign Minister said in Moscow on Friday, as the U.S. has warned thousands of North Korean troops could be sent to combat in the Ukraine conflict in the coming days.

North Korea's Choe Son Hui was in Moscow as the West believes up to 10,000 North Korean troops are training in Russia and are on the brink of entering the more than two-year conflict on Russian troops' side.

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North Korea will continue to develop its nuclear arsenal, with Pyongyang widely suspected of wanting nuclear technology from Russia in exchange for military support.

Neither country has denied the troop deployment reports, with Ms. Son Hui and Mr. Lavrov also not mentioning them in their statements after their talks.

Hindus in Bangladesh rally seeking protection

Associated Press

DHAKA

Tens of thousands of minority Hindus rallied on Friday to demand that the interim government in Muslim-majority Bangladesh protect them from a wave of attacks and harassment and drop sedition cases against Hindu community leaders.

About 30,000 Hindus demonstrated at a major intersection in Chattogram chanting slogans demanding their rights while police and soldiers guarded the area. Other protests were reported elsewhere in the country.

Hindu groups say thousands of attacks against Hindus have happened since early August when the government of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina was overthrown and Ms. Hasina fled the country following a student-led uprising.

The Bangladesh Hindu Buddhist Christian Unity Council has said that there have been more than 2,000 attacks on Hindus since August 4, as the interim government has struggled to restore order.

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2. O & M Period : 120 (One hundred twenty) calendar months.

3. Date & time of availability of bid document in the portal : 08.11.2024, 10 A.M.

4. Last date/Time for receipt of bids in the portal : 07.12.2024 up to 5.00 P.M.

5. Name & address of the officer inviting Bid : Chief Engineer, Megalift, A-8/2, Bhoi Nagar, Bhubaneswar, Pin -751022

Further details can be seen from the e-Procurement portal <https://tendersodisha.gov.in>

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EASTERN CIRCLE-I, CANTONMENT ROAD, CUTTACK.
Email id :- seccutack@gmail.com

"e" Procurement Notice No.ACE, EC-I/05 of 2024-25

1. Name of Work : Construction of Cement concrete lining of Pundalo Branch Canal from RD .75 Km to RD 14.00 Km
Bid identification No.ACE, EC-I MND 06 of 2024-25

2. Total No. of Work : 1 (One) No. work

3. Tender Paper Cost (Online) (Non-refundable) : Rs.10,000.00 (Ten thousand)

4. Bid details are as follows

Procurement Officer	Bid Identification No.	Tender Cost (Rs. Lakh) (Approx.)	EMD (in Rs.)	Class of Contractor	Period of Completion	Availability of Tender On-line	Date of Opening of Technical Bid (Cover-I)
Additional Chief Engineer, Eastern Circle-I, Cuttack	ACE, EC-I MND 06 of 2024-25	787.55	7,87,600.00	'A' & 'Special'	12 (Twelve) Calendar months	07.11.2024 upto 10.00 hrs.	21.11.2024 at 17.30 hrs. 11.30 hrs.

Other terms and conditions can be seen from the Govt. website www.tendersodisha.gov.in. All corrigendum / cancellation of tender if any, will only be uploaded in the above web site.

Sd/-
Additional Chief Engineer, Eastern Circle-I, Cuttack.
OIPR-32370/11/0007/2425

KERALA IRRIGATION INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION LTD
Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala
Quotation Notice
KIIDC invited sealed super scribed quotation for the Supply of PET Preforms 13.5, 19.5, 27, 32 gms for Packaged drinking water bottles at our plants in Kerala.
Details available in www.kiidc.kerala.gov.in. Managing Director

Corrigendum if any will be issued in TNPL Website and NIC Portal only. Detailed Terms & conditions are available in the tender document which can be downloaded from websites : www.tnpl.com / <https://tnpl.tenders.gov.in/nicapp>

TAMILNADU NEWSPRINT AND PAPERS LIMITED
Kagithapuram - 639 136. Karur Dist.
Tamil Nadu. Ph. : 04324 - 277001 (10 Lines)
NOTICE INVITING TENDERS
Tender No. **Material Description** **Due date**
242513 004118 Procurement of Personal Computer core i3 processor 14.11.2024
242523 002580 Supply of Refiners for Tissue Paper Machine 20.11.2024
Email 242513004118 - purchase.inst@tnpl.co.in
242523002580 - pm5@tnpl.co.in

Corrigendum if any will be issued in TNPL Website and NIC Portal only. Detailed Terms & conditions are available in the tender document which can be downloaded from websites : www.tnpl.com / <https://tnpl.tenders.gov.in/nicapp>

DIPR/4647/Tender/2024 TNPL - Maker of bagasse based eco-friendly Paper

KERALA MEDICAL SERVICES CORPORATION LTD.
(DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & FAMILY WELFARE, GOVT. OF KERALA)
Head Office : Thircaud, Thiruvananthapuram-14,
(Telephone No. 0471-2945600, Fax No. 0471-2945647)
E-mail : projects@kmscl.kerala.gov.in, website : www.kmscl.kerala.gov.in
CIN : U24233KL2007SGC021616
No.KMSCL/Projects/1094/2016 Date : 28.10.2024
E - TENDER NOTICE
Online bids are invited for the CAMC of AC units at various DDWHS's

Sl. No.	Tender reference	Description	Estimated Cost Rs.	EMD Rs.	Tender Cost (Rs.) (Inclusive of GST)
1.	KMSCL/PROJECTS/ET/02/2024	CAMC of Split AC units at various DDWHS's	2,80,000	7,000	560

Tender documents and all other information related to tender and bidding process can be downloaded from the website www.etenders.kerala.gov.in. Last Date 12.11.2024
(Sd/-) Managing Director (Tender Inviting Authority)

KERALA MEDICAL SERVICES CORPORATION LTD
(DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & FAMILY WELFARE, GOVT. OF KERALA)
Head Office : Thircaud, Thiruvananthapuram-14,
(Telephone No. 0471-2945600),
E-mail : edrugs.kmscl@kerala.gov.in,
website : www.kmscl.kerala.gov.in, CIN No. U24233KL2007SGC021616 Date : 01.11.2024
RE-TENDER NOTICE
Online bids are invited from manufacturers/direct importers/ loan licensees on behalf of Department of Health, Govt of Kerala for the Procurement of Drugs for De-addiction Centers for the year 2024-25.
Sl. No. **Tender No. and Date** **Category** **No. of items**
1. KMSCL/ED/De-addiction Drugs/RT/2024/023 dtd.01.11.2024 De-addiction Drugs 04
The last date and time of online uploading of tender will be 15.11.2024, 5.00 pm. The date and time of opening of Technical bid will be 19.11.2024 11.30 am. Tender shall be downloaded and submitted online through the e-tender portal www.etenders.kerala.gov.in. (Sd/-) MANAGING DIRECTOR (Tender Inviting Authority)

Gukesh brooks no complacency as he readies forces for World title assault

The 18-year-old has an opportunity to become the youngest World chess champion, with many observers – including several top players – expecting him to defeat Ding Liren. But Gukesh isn't taking the Chinese defending champion, whom he is yet to beat in a classical game, lightly

P.K. Ajith Kumar

Not often does a teenaged challenger start as the overwhelming favourite against the experienced champion. D. Gukesh is very much conscious of the fact that most people – including some of the world's top players – expect him to beat Ding Liren in the World chess championship match, which begins in Singapore on November 25.

During a recent online interaction with select media, including *The Hindu*, the 18-year-old made it clear that such expectations did not put undue pressure on him. "It doesn't really add pressure," he said. "I am glad that people say this about me and, in general, I am happy with my form. The pressure is just playing in the World champion-

ship. There is no additional pressure because of what people are saying [about my chances]. [Ding] will come with the right spirit. My approach is to treat every game with the utmost respect and energy

GUKE SH

pionship. But there is no additional pressure because of what people are saying [about my chances]."

Contrasting runs of form

People are saying so because of two factors: Gukesh enters the World title match after playing some remarkably solid chess for quite some time, including a superlative display at the Chess Olympiad, where he led India to the team gold in the most convincing of manners; Ding, on the other hand, has been in awful form and questions have been raised about his mental health.

The 32-year-old revealed that he had consulted a psychologist. "It doesn't seem like I've been playing the way I used to," Ding said in a recent interview to Singapore's *The Straits Times*. "The assessment is correct and I don't know if I will ever reach that level again."

He had taken a nine-month break after becoming only the second Asian to win the World chess championship last year, defeating Russia's Ian Nepomniachtchi. "I feel as per normal, the doctor has given some advice," he said. "Recently, I have been playing basketball after dinner, trying not to give myself too much stress."

He said he was feeling okay. "Neither good nor bad," he elaborated. "I'm not at my lowest and have walked out of the darkness from the last one and a half years... I have moved past that now and I feel like I have been playing decent chess but have not been winning."

If you are a fan of Ding, all of that will not make for easy reading. But it may not be wise to write him off easily.

World No. 2 Hikaru Nakamura has gone on record saying that Gukesh's chances against Ding at the World championship are 80-20. World No. 1 Carlsen has said Gukesh has a significant advantage and that if he strikes first, he will win the match without trouble. The five-time World champion from Norway, whose abdication led to the crowning of Ding, believes that denying that first strike could work for the Chinese.

The World championship is a long affair, especially by today's standards. But back in 1984-85, reigning champion Anatoly Karpov took on Gary Kasparov in an all-Soviet Union battle that didn't produce a winner even after five months and 48 games. It took another 24 games in late 1985 before Kasparov began his long reign as the World champion.

That two-year-long World championship match was a classic; it was a thriller even, of the slow-burning variety. Kasparov, in the first stage of the match, was trailing 0-5, and Karpov needed only one more win. But, the younger man fought back from the brink of defeat and staged an astonishing fightback.

The games played by the two Ks from those historical matches are still savoured by fans of classical chess. The Singapore match will be of much shorter duration.

Rules of engagement

It will be played over 14 games: the player who scores 7.5 points will be crowned the champion. If the score remains 7-7, the title will be decided by tie-breakers, by playing games of shorter time controls.



GETTY IMAGES

been a teaser for the World title match.

"On the rest day before the match against China, we thought it was very likely he would play but there was a slight chance that he might not want to because he lost the previous round," said Gukesh. "I was ready for both scenarios, and it was not a huge surprise when he decided to rest that game. It doesn't make a huge difference. Obviously, it's tough for anyone to play after a loss, and it's very understandable that he didn't want to play. We already played in the Sinquefield Cup, so we got a bit of a teaser before the match."

That game in the Sinquefield Cup had ended in a draw. It was the fifth classical game they were playing against each other. Two other games had been drawn, while Ding won twice. Yes, that means Gukesh hasn't beaten Ding yet in a classical game of chess.

In Budapest, China had fielded Wei Yi instead of Ding for the top board clash against Gukesh. The way he won that end-game, converting the small advantage he had slowly into the full point, is an excellent example of the progress Gukesh has made as a player. That was Carlsen-esque.

Adding a layer

Former World No. 3 Anish Giri told *The Hindu* that Gukesh was now a different player. "He has added a solid layer to his play because he was always good at generating chances, at going for uncompromising chess but he didn't have a solid backup," he said. "So now Gukesh is this player who has two modes. He can create a fight and try to do this sort of dogfight type thing, but he can also, if he needs a draw, shut you down. That makes him very strong."

Gukesh's strength was very evident when he won the Candidates tournament – the qualifying event for the World title match – to Toronto earlier this year. After making it to the event at the last minute, following the Chennai Grand Masters, he played superbly to win the Candidates that featured the likes of Nakamura, Fabiano Caruana, Nepomniachtchi and compatriots R. Praggnanandhaa and Vidit Gujrathi.

Gukesh had become the youngest to win the Candidates in Singapore, he has an opportunity to become the youngest World chess champion in history – that too, by beating Kasparov's record for four years.



FIDE/STEVE BONHAGE

STACKING UP



ATP Men's Top 15

#	Player	Age	Points	Events
1	Jannik Sinner	23	11,420	17
2	Carlos Alcaraz	21	7,120	18
3	Alexander Zverev	27	6,805	21
4	Novak Djokovic	37	6,210	19
5	Daniil Medvedev	28	5,230	17
6	Taylor Fritz	27	4,335	21
7	Andrey Rublev	27	4,070	26
8	Casper Ruud	25	3,855	23
9	Grigor Dimitrov	33	3,740	20
10	Alex de Minaur	25	3,725	22
11	Stefanos Tsitsipas	26	3,325	23
12	Tommy Paul	27	3,180	21
13	Holger Rune	21	3,005	24
14	Hubert Hurkacz	27	2,810	21
15	Jack Draper	22	2,800	23

Top Indians ▶

	Sumit Nagal	Rank 84	3 spots
	Rakshith Ramanathan	Rank 298	28 spots



WTA Women's Top 15

#	Player	Age	Points	Events
1	Aryna Sabalenka	26	9,016	20
2	Iga Swiatek	23	7,970	20
3	Coco Gauff	20	5,230	21
4	Jasmine Paolini	28	5,144	19
5	Elena Rybakina	25	4,971	19
6	Jessica Pegula	30	4,705	19
7	Qinwen Zheng	22	4,540	20
8	Emma Navarro	23	3,698	29
9	Daria Kasatkina	27	3,368	24
10	Danielle Collins	30	3,176	21
11	Anna Kalinskaya	25	2,975	22
12	Paula Badosa	26	2,908	20
13	Barbara Krejcikova	28	2,814	16
14	Diana Shnaider	20	2,726	28
15	Jelena Ostapenko	27	2,588	21

Top Indians ▶

	Sahaja Yamalapalli	Rank 287	3 spots
	Shravani Bhamidipati	Rank 300	3 spots

F1 Drivers' standings

#	Driver	Team	Points	Wins
1	Max Verstappen	Red Bull	362	7
2	Lando Norris	McLaren	315	3
3	Charles Leclerc	Ferrari	291	3
4	Oscar Piastri	McLaren	251	2
5	Carlos Sainz	Ferrari	240	2
6	Lewis Hamilton	Mercedes	189	2
7	George Russell	Mercedes	177	1
8	Sergio Perez	Red Bull	150	0
9	Fernando Alonso	Aston Martin	62	0
10	Nico Hulkenberg	Haas	31	0
11	Lance Stroll	Aston Martin	24	0
12	Yuki Tsunoda	RB	22	0
13	Kevin Magnussen	Haas	14	0
14	Alex Albon	Williams	12	0
15	Daniel Ricciardo	RB	12	0
16	Pierre Gasly	Alpine	9	0
17	Oliver Bearman	Haas	7	0
18	Franco Colapinto	Williams	5	0
19	Esteban Ocon	Alpine	5	0
20	Liam Lawson	RB	2	0

F1 Constructors' standings

Pos	Team	Points	Wins
1	McLaren	566	5
2	Ferrari	537	5
3	Red Bull	512	7
4	Mercedes	366	3
5	Aston Martin	86	0
6	Haas	46	0
7	RB	36	0
8	Williams	17	0
9	Alpine	14	0
10	Sauber	0	0

Top Indians ▶

	Max Verstappen
	Lando Norris



Badminton Men's ranking

#	Player	Points	Events
1	Shi Yu Qi	99,315</td	

Weekend Sport



EMMANUEL YOGINI

I want to be a complete batter and a complete spinner: Tanush Kotian's mission statement

The Mumbai all-rounder's consistent match-winning feats have catapulted him into national reckoning. Judging by the challenges he has overcome so far, as well as his clear-headed approach to cricket, the 26-year-old will be keen to test himself on India-A's tour of Australia

Amol Karhadkar

A great bowler can make the ball talk!"

The wallpaper on his mobile phone has the text embossed next to his off-break-bowling action.

"I keep changing the wallpaper but for the last few weeks, I have stuck to this," he says.

They used to pen their frame of mind into a diary once upon a time. For Gen Z, the wallpaper is a sneak peek into their thought-process. And the best place to let a cricketer spell out his mindset is... obviously a cricket ground.

Days after he played a pivotal role in ending Mumbai's 27-year wait for the Irani Cup, one sits down with Tanush Kotian – the lanky all-rounder from Vikhroli, a Mumbai suburb – at the Sharad Pawar Cricket Academy ground.

The facility – a breeding ground for age-group and senior cricketers alike – has been his comfort zone. But it has taken him a struggle of well over a decade to earn his comfort zone.

By the time you read this, he will be a member of India-A – the almost-there group – on its shadow tour of Australia ahead of the Border-Gavaskar Trophy. But making it to the national selectors' targeted pool has been a topsy-turvy ride.

Flashback one

Two years ago, Kotian – who turned 26 last month – was in unsure territory – the kind of position that he loves to have a batter in, ball in hand.



Tanush Kotian fact-file

Born: October 16, 1998

Bats: Right-handed

Bowls: Right-arm off-break

Idol: Karunakar Kotian, father and mentor

Career highlights

2018: First Class debut

2021: Member of Mumbai's triumphant Vijay Hazare Trophy campaign

2022: Player of the Final in Mumbai's Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy win

2024: Player of the Tournament in Mumbai's 42nd Ranji Trophy triumph

2024: IPL debut for Rajasthan Royals

2024: Member of victorious India-A team in Duleep Trophy

2024: Member of Mumbai's triumphant Irani Cup side

2024: Selected to tour Australia with India-A

I was one among dozens of cricketers competing to break into Mumbai's age-group teams. I had to work harder than ever before if I had to survive first, and then succeed

ough he had never been reported in any domestic game. He later discovered that a match referee, in consultation with the on-field umpires, had found just one ball suspicious during the SMA Trophy.

Kotian was never barred from bowling, but that was it! The franchises' interest dropped.

"Now when I look back, I realise that the whole episode triggered my will to succeed at any cost. Someone else may have dropped his shoulders after such an episode but I got more determined to prove all my detractors wrong and show my real mettle," says Kotian.

Earlier in 2022, Kotian – along with fellow all-rounder Shams Mulani – had bailed Mumbai out of a precarious situation against Goa in the Ranji Trophy. That innings of 98 set Mumbai on course for the final and dispelled all the doubts over whether he had it in him at a higher level.

Flashback two

A majority of cricketers in India – especially in Mumbai – are made because of their fathers wanting their kids – not just sons now, thankfully – to achieve what they couldn't.

Tanush was no different. Karunakar – a legend in tennis-ball cricket, 'tennis cricket' in Bambaiya parlance – was a formative influence. Like his father, a young Tanush used to hit the ball hard and run in and bowl as fast as he could. But the youngster gradually developed a fondness for turn-

ing the ball. And unlike most pushy fathers, Karunakar let him be.

"He has always been supportive, never pushy," stresses Tanush. "And him being a cricketer has always been a help. He has helped me analyse my game better. And he knows what's going through my head after a good or a bad day at the ground."

Switching to a "cricket school" – the VN Sule Gurjari School in Dadar – in the seventh grade made him realise the hard yards he needed to put in. "Till then, I was among the better ones in and around Vikhroli. Once I started playing in the top-tier of inter-school, I realised that I was one among dozens of cricketers who were competing to break into Mumbai's age-group teams. I had to work harder than ever before if I had to survive first, and then succeed, at that level."

Working hard was never going to be a problem, especially for a teenager willing to spend 13 to 14 hours away from home every day in his quest to convert his passion into a profession.

Flashback three

Given these struggles, it was no surprise that Karunakar shed tears of happiness at the Wankhede Stadium this March. Tanush had not only helped Mumbai regain the Ranji Trophy but was also adjudged the Player of the Tournament.

"That has been his proudest moment so far. I just hope he will have a few more moments to savour in the next few years," says Tanush.

A return of 502 runs – including a hundred while batting at No. 10 – and 29 wickets catapulted him into national reckoning. It also led Rajasthan Royals to sign him, as a replacement for Adam Zampa, a welcome turn of events after the snub of 2022.

Kotian got just one opportunity to showcase his talent, that too as an opening batter, and wasn't required to bowl. But right through those two months, he chased the three senior spinners – "Ash bhai, Yuzi bhai and Keshav" – for what he terms "learnings for a lifetime".

Those two months were an education. When you have Ashwin, Chahal and Maharaj to learn from – not just by watching them prepare and bowl but even available to chat and help you out in the nets – what more can you ask for?

The present: batting or bowling all-rounder?

While he was thrilled with his IPL experience, the manner in which he was utilised against Punjab Kings in April also led to murmurs in Indian cricket circles about whether he was a batting or bowling all-rounder.

The man himself wasn't surprised. After all, he had been dealing with such queries ever since he broke into Mumbai's under-14 squad in 2013.

Early in his career, when he started visiting coach Rajesh Sanil's nets for batting drills, Sanil gave him advice that he has etched onto his mind.

"Rajesh Sanil sir told me it doesn't matter what number you are batting at, treat yourself as a batsman and build your innings accordingly. Even while bowling, he and Pappa [father] tell me to think like a batter so that I can set the batter up."

"In short, all along I have been told and have thought that I don't want to be a batting all-rounder or a bowling all-rounder. No one should take me lightly in any department. Call me a 50-50 or whatever, I want to be a complete batter and a complete spinner."

As Kotian leaves to pick up his kit-bag, one can't help but think that, given the challenges he has overcome so far and his simple, clear approach to cricket, the 26-year-old will do everything in his power to achieve that ambition.



GAME THEORY

Finals bosses: women's tennis' best season-enders

With the 2024 WTA Finals, featuring the world's top eight singles players and doubles teams, beginning this weekend in Riyadh, we take a look at the most successful women in the prestigious season-ending tournament. Martina Navratilova, with an incredible 21 titles combined (8 singles, 13 doubles), has dominated the event, widely considered the most significant tournament on the calendar after the four Majors.

MOST SINGLES TITLES

Player	Titles	Editions
Martina Navratilova	8	1978-79, 81, 83-86(2)
Steffi Graf	5	1987, 89, 93, 95-96
Serena Williams	5	2001, 09, 12-14
Chris Evert	4	1972-73, 75, 77
Monica Seles	3	1990-92
Kim Clijsters	3	2002-03, 10
Evonne Goolagong Cawley	2	1974, 76
Gabriela Sabatini	2	1988, 94
Martina Hingis	2	1998, 2000
Justine Henin	2	2006-07

MOST DOUBLES TITLES

Player	Titles	Editions
Martina Navratilova	13	1977-78, 80-86, 87-89, 91
Pam Shriver	10	1981-86, 87-89, 91
Billie Jean King	4	1974, 76, 78, 80
Lisa Raymond	4	2001, 05-06, 11
Betty Stove	3	1976-77, 79
Natasha Zvereva	3	1993-94, 98
Lindsay Davenport	3	1996-98
Liezel Huber	3	2007-08, 11
Cara Black	3	2007-08, 14
Martina Hingis	3	1999-00, 2015
Timea Babos	3	2017-19

Martina Navratilova



PICTURE THIS



Bubble bursts

The life of the top-flight manager isn't enviable. Sure, you have the money, the fame, the joy – if you're into that sort of thing – of trying to 'solve' football, even the power to tell superstars exactly where to park

their egos.

But your failings are embarrassingly public, you have 'pundits' questioning your every move and, most uncomfortable of all, you know you're just a string of poor results, or sometimes only a capricious owner's whim, away from the sack.

Erik Ten Hag's time at Man-

chester United ended this week, after a troubled start to the season left the 20-time English champion languishing in the Premier League and Europa League amid major upheaval at the club.

The Dutch coach oversaw a spending spree in the transfer market and won two domestic

cups in his two and a half years before paying the price for United's worst start to a season.

This unfortunately apt photograph of a bubble popping on Ten Hag's head is from last season's visit to West Ham; his end came after last weekend's trip to the Hammers' home, which ended in a 2-1 defeat.

BIG LEAP

Jadeja leaves Zaheer and Ishant behind in India's wicket-takers' list



EMMANUEL YOGINI

Ravindra Jadeja moved to fifth in the wicket-takers' list for India in Tests, going past Zaheer Khan and Ishant Sharma (both 311). The left-arm spinner, after his five-for against New Zealand at Wankhede on Friday, now has 314. Anil Kumble (619), R. Ashwin (533), Kapil Dev (434) and Harbhajan Singh (417) are ahead of Jadeja.

MUMBAI MERI JAAN

Long after Gavaskar-Engineer, it is the turn of Rohit-Yashasvi



AFP

When Rohit Sharma and Yashasvi Jaiswal walked out in the last session, an all-Mumbai opening pair opened India's innings in a Test match at Wankhede after 49 years. Sunil Gavaskar and Farokh Engineer had done so in the first Test against the West Indies at the Big W in 1975.

OCCUPATIONAL HAZARD

Humidity makes it tough for spinners in Mumbai Test



EMMANUEL YOGINI

When it comes to floodlit cricket, bowlers often find it difficult to grip a wet ball. On Friday, it was so humid that the spinners found it challenging to grip the ball because of wet hands. So sweaty were Ravindra Jadeja's palms that at times Virat Kohli was wiping his arms during the veteran's marathon spell on day 1 of the Mumbai Test.

PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

India cancels intra-squad match against India-A ahead of BGT



GETTY IMAGES

India has decided to cancel the three-day intra-squad match with its A-side, in pic, during the upcoming Test tour of Australia as the team management wants to focus on additional net practice. The Indians were scheduled to play a closed-door warm-up match against the Ruturaj Gaikwad-led India-A in Perth from Nov. 15 to 17.

India shoots itself in the foot after dominating most of the day

A combination of reckless batting and decision-making undoes all the good work done by Jadeja and Washington in restricting NZ to a modest 235; Jaiswal, Siraj and Kohli's dismissals see the host slip from 78 for one to 86 for four

NZ IN INDIA**Amol Karhadkar**

MUMBAI

More than 20,000 spectators thronged the Wankhede Stadium, to celebrate the festive week by supporting the Indian Test team when it needed it the most. But as the floodlights were switched on in the dying moments, 13 minutes of mayhem damped the celebratory mood that had prevailed for the home fans for most of the day.

Despite Ravindra Jadeja and Washington Sundar wreaking havoc and restricting New Zealand to a moderate 235, reckless batting and decision-making at the fag end meant India found itself in a spot of bother on day one of the third and final Test.

It all started with Yashasvi Jaiswal – looking as solid as he has ever been throughout the year despite taking 16 balls to open his account – attempting a reverse-sweep off Ajaz Patel, missing it and the ball crashing on to his stumps.

No doubt the sweep and reverse-sweep have been key shots on turning pitches this series. However, with the clock ticking and Jaiswal and Shubman Gill having settled into a nice rhythm after captain Rohit Sharma fell early, the former's shot-selection was questionable.

It was then surprising to



Timber! Rachin is bowled by a beauty from Washington. EMMANUEL YOGINI

see Mohammed Siraj walk out as a nightwatcher. He lasted just one ball, caught plumb in front by one from Ajaz – who by then had settled into a rhythm – that was slower and turned slightly. To add to the debatable decision to deploy him as a nightwatcher, Siraj wasted a DRS review as well.

As if that was not enough, with five minutes remaining for the extended close, Virat Kohli attempted an ambitious single after pushing Rachin Ravindra to mid-on. Matt Henry had a direct hit and Kohli was found short of his crease. In no time was India reduced from a comfortable 78 for one to 86 for four, with a lot hinging on

the remaining batters to keep the weekend and festive mood alive on Saturday.

Until then, however, the fans had a lot to rejoice. Despite Will Young coming good and Daryl Mitchell continuing his love-affair with the Wankhede Stadium, Jadeja came into his element on a turning track. Bowling unchanged from the north end, Jadeja turned his lacklustre form in the series around.

Even though Akash Deep – in place of Jasprit Bumrah – broke the all-leftie opening combination, Rohit stuck with both his off-spinners for most of the opening period. While Washington breached through Latham's and Ra-

chin's defence, R. Ashwin went wicketless for seven overs.

Once Ashwin was replaced by Jadeja, the left-arm spinner ensured he had to be persisted with until the innings got over, with the offies alternating from the other end.

He broke the partnership between Mitchell and Young – that was threatening to take the game away – with one that spun and took the latter's edge to Rohit in the slips. He then followed it up with a quicker one that sneaked through Tom Blundell's gate.

The double strike ensured India had New Zealand in check, despite Mitchell growing in confidence. With Mitchell

SCOREBOARD**NEW ZEALAND — 1ST INNINGS**

Tom Latham b Washington 28 (44b, 3x4), Devon Conway lbw b Akash 4 (11b, 1x4), Will Young c Rohit b Jadeja 71 (138b, 4x4, 2x6), Rachin Ravindra b Washington 5 (12b), Daryl Mitchell c Rohit b Washington 82 (129b, 3x4, 3x6), Tom Blundell b Jadeja 0 (3b), Glenn Phillips b Jadeja 17 (28b, 1x4), Ish Sodhi lbw b Jadeja 7 (19b, 1x4), Matt Henry b Jadeja 0 (2b), Ajaz Patel lbw b Washington 7 (16b, 1x6), William O'Rourke (not out) 1 (1b); Extras (b-1, lb-3, nb-9): 13; Total (in 65.4 overs): 235.

FALL OF WICKETS

1-15 (Conway, 3.2 overs), 2-59 (Latham, 15.6), 3-72 (Rachin, 19.6), 4-159 (Young, 44.2), 5-159 (Blundell, 44.5), 6-187 (Phillips, 52.6), 7-210 (Sodhi, 60.4), 8-210 (Henry, 60.6), 9-228 (Mitchell, 65.1).

INDIA BOWLING

Siraj 6-0-16-0, Akash 5-0-22-1, Ashwin 14-0-47-0, Washington 18.4-28-1.4, Jadeja 22-1-65-5.

INDIA — 1ST INNINGS

Yashasvi Jaiswal b Ajaz 30 (52b, 4x4), Rohit Sharma c Latham b Henry 18 (18b, 3x4), Shubman Gill (batting) 31 (38b, 2x4, 1x6), Mohammed Siraj lbw b Ajaz 0 (1b), Virat Kohli run out 4 (6b, 1x4), Rishabh Pant (batting) 1 (1b); Extras (nb-2): 2; Total (for four wkts. in 19 overs): 86.

FALL OF WICKETS

1-25 (Rohit, 6.5), 2-78 (Jaiswal, 17.2), 3-78 (Siraj, 17.3), 4-84 (Kohli, 18.3).

NEW ZEALAND BOWLING

Henry 5-1-15-1, O'Rourke 2-1-5-0, Ajaz 7-1-33-2, Phillips 4-0-25-0, Rachin 10-0-8.0.

Toss: New Zealand.

Santner being replaced by Ish Sodhi, Mitchell had to bat with a long tail that couldn't negotiate the challenging conditions.

I did not want to lose a single Test series at home'

Amol Karhadkar

MUMBAI

Ravindra Jadeja finds himself in an uncharted territory. Not when it comes to flummoxing the opposition batters with his accurate spin bowling but because of a series lost at home.

In India's last series loss at home prior to this, Jadeja – a rookie – had featured in a solitary Test. No wonder then that despite picking his 14th five-wicket haul – 12th at home – Jadeja had something to rue.

"I was scared of this. I didn't want to lose a single series in India until I played, but it has happened. Whatever I think about, it happens suddenly," Jadeja said after the opening day's play of the third Test against New Zealand here on Friday.

"We have raised our expectations so high that we



Learning curve: Jadeja feels the team has to take the positives from the series loss against New Zealand. EMMANUEL YOGINI

have not lost a single series for 12 years. In that time, I have been involved in only five losses at home. As a team, it is a lesson. We need to pick up positives from this."

While Jadeja admitted

that there was little time to process the batting meltdown towards the end of the day, stating "it all happened too quickly" he agreed that the state of

mind of the players perhaps reflected in their decision-making.

"When you are down in the series and such a situation comes up, you panic and make a mistake," Jadeja said. "But when you keep winning and are ahead 2-0, everyone says, 'it's okay, it happens.' When you are down in the series, even a small thing seems big."

Zverev beats Tsitsipas, runs into Rune next

PARIS MASTERS**Agence France-Presse**
PARIS

Germany's Alexander Zverev beat fierce rival Stefanos Tsitsipas 7-5, 6-4 in the quarterfinals of the Paris Masters on Friday.

The World No. 3 – the highest-ranked player left in the draw – will face the 2022 champion Holger Rune in Saturday's semifinal after the Dane edged Alex de Minaur 6-4, 4-6, 7-5.

On Thursday, World No. 2 Carlos Alcaraz admitted he "was not up to the level" of 18th-ranked Ugo Humbert of France, who swept to a shock third round victory over the Spanish superstar.

Left-handed Humbert came through 6-1, 3-6, 7-5 to register his first win over the French Open and Wimbledon champion, having lost twice to Alcaraz earlier



in 2024.

The results:**Quarterfinals:** Zverev bt Tsitsipas 7-5, 6-4; Rune bt de Minaur 6-4, 4-6, 7-5.**Third round:** Rune bt Cazaux

3-6, 6-3, 6-4; de Minaur bt Draper 5-7, 6-2, 6-3; Zverev bt Fils 6-4, 3-6, 6-3; Tsitsipas bt Cerundolo 6-7(1), 6-4, 6-2; Dimitrov bt Rinderknech 6-2, 4-6, 7-6(5); Khachanov bt Popov 7-6(5), 6-4; Thompson bt Mannarino 7-5, 7-6(5); Humbert bt Alcaraz 6-1, 3-6, 7-5.

Andy Flower

RCB Head Coach



in 2024.

We're only

going in with two uncapped players and we're going into the auction with the biggest purse by a long way. So, we've got the ability to put a whole squad of players together

Ricky Ponting

PBKS Head Coach



K.S. Viswanathan, CSK CEO

Rajasthan Royals**Player****Amount****(in cr.)****Sanju Samson****18.00****Rashid Khan****18.00****Varun Chakaravarthy****12.00****Sai Sudharsan****8.50****Andre Russell****12.00****Harsit Rana****4.00****Abhishek Porel****4.00****Players retained****4****Overseas Players****1****Uncapped Players****1****Money spent****65.00****Deduction****65.00****Purse remaining****55.00****RTM remaining****1****Royal Challengers Bengaluru****Player****Amount****(in cr.)****Virat Kohli****21.00****Rajat Patidar****11.00****Yash Dayal**

IN BRIEF



Lewis cuts loose as WI downs England in first ODI

Evin Lewis hit four times as many sixes as the entire England team in a commanding innings of 94 which led the West Indies to an eight-wicket win in the rain-affected first ODI in North Sound.

The scores: England 209 in 45.1 overs (Livingstone 48, Curran 37, Motie 4/41) lost to West Indies 157/2 in 25.5 overs (Lewis 94). West Indies won in DLS method.

Pirates too good for Dabang; Ajit delivers for U Mumba

Patna Pirates eased past Dabang Delhi 44-30 in a PKL match in Hyderabad on Thursday. For Pirates, Devank and Ayan scored a dozen points each while Ashu Malik and Vinay Virender (10 points each) performed well for Dabang. Ajit Chavan (14 points) was the star as U Mumba pipped Jaipur Pink Panthers 37-39 in a thrilling encounter. For Pink Panthers, Neeraj Narwal (12) was in good form.

Tokyo Marathon runner-up Gomechu gets four-year ban

Former Tokyo Marathon runner-up Tsehay Gomechu, 25, was banned for four years because of suspected blood doping, the AIU said. The Ethiopian also was disqualified from all her results and prize money earned since March 2020.



Odegaard in the final stages of recovery from injury: Arteta

Arsenal captain Martin Odegaard is in the final stages of recovery from an ankle injury after nearly two months out, manager Mikel Arteta said on Friday. He added Odegaard wouldn't play against Newcastle in the Premier League on Saturday but didn't rule him out of the trip to Inter Milan in Champions League on Wednesday.

LIVE TELECAST

India vs New Zealand: 3rd Test, day 2, Sports 18-1 (SD & HD) & JioCinema, 9.30 a.m.

Premier League: SS Select 1 & Hotstar, 6, 8.30 & 11 p.m.

LaLiga: gxr.world, 6.30, 8.45, 11 p.m. & 1.30 a.m. (Sunday).

West Indies vs England: 2nd ODI, FanCode, 7 p.m.

Series A: gxr.world, 7.30, 10.30 p.m. & 1.15 a.m. (Sunday).

ISL: Sports 18-3 & JioCinema, 7.30 p.m.

Formula One: Sao Paulo GP (Sprint Race), F1 TV, F1 TV Pro App & FanCode, 7.30 p.m.; Qualifying, 11.30 p.m.

PKL: Star Sports 2 & Hotstar, 8 p.m. onwards.

Laxmi Kashyap scores three

Sports Bureau

NEW DELHI

Laxmi Kashyap scored three goals to help Mata Rukmani Government Senior Secondary School, Chhattisgarh, to a 5-0 victory over Government Girls School, Ghumanhera, in a super league match of the Charanjit Rai 30th Nehru girls hockey tournament on Friday. Sumani Kashyap and Parmeshwari Sodhi scored the other goals.

The results: Super League: GM Patel Kanya Vidyalaya, Jamnagar 3 (Archana, Niyati Ben Parmar, Sanjana Ben) bt One Thousand Hockey Legs 0. Mata Rukmani Government SSS, Chhattisgarh 5 (Laxmi Kashyap 3, Sumani Kashyap, Parmeshwari Sodhi) bt Government Girls SSS, Ghumanhera, Delhi 0.

Bopanna and Ebden lose in Paris Masters quarterfinals

Sports Bureau

Sixth seeds Wesley Koolhof and Nikola Mekic edged out third seeds Rohan Bopanna and Matthew Ebden 7-6(13), 7-5 in the doubles quarterfinals of the €6,946,835 ATP Masters tennis in Paris on Friday.

Other results: \$267,082 WTA, Jiujiang, China: Doubles: Quarterfinals: Guo Han Yu (Chn) & Moyuka Uchijima (Jpn) bt Arianne Hartono (Ned) & Parthana Thombare 6-4, 6-2.

€148,625 Challenger, Bratislava: Doubles: Semifinals: Nicolas Barrientos (Col) & Julian Cash (GBR) bt Rithvik Bolipalli & Arjun Kadhe 2-4 (retired); Quarterfinals: Rithvik & Arjun bt Robin Haase (Ned) & Lucas Medler (Aut) 7-5, 6-4; Lukas Pokorný (Svk) & Michael Vrbenky (Cze) bt Guido Andreozzi (Arg) & Sriram Balaji 6-2, 7-5.

\$133,250 Challenger, Seoul: Doubles: Quarterfinals: Nam Ji Sung (Kor) & Joshua Paris (GBR) bt

Anirudh Chandrasekar & Niki Poonacha 6-1, 6-3; Saketh Myneni & Ramkumar Ramanathan bt Jeong Yeong-Seok & Park Uisung (Kor) 6-3, 6-1.

\$4,000 Challenger, Brazzaville: Quarterfinals: Filip Jiani (Rou) bt Karan Singh 6-4, 6-2; Gonzalo Oliveira (Ven) bt Dev Javia 6-4, 6-3; Pre-quarterfinals: Karan Singh bt Florent Bax (Fra) 5-7, 6-1, 6-3. Doubles: Semifinals: Bax & Karan bt Benjamin Lock & Courtney Lock (Zim) 2-6, 6-3, [10-5].

\$60,000 ITF women, Sydney: Pre-quarterfinals: Erika Sema (Jpn) bt Vaidehi Chaudhari 6-7(5), 7-6(3), 7-6(1).

Doubles: Semifinals: Destane Avia & Maddson Ingilis (Aus) bt Shravilli Bhamidipaty & Vaidehi 6-2, 6-0; Quarterfinals: Shravilli & Vaidehi bt Alexandra Bozovic & Belle Thompson (Aus) 6-4, 7-6(4).

\$60,000 ITF women, Kerala: Doubles: Semifinals: Riya Bhatia & Lian Tran (Ned) bt Conn Perrin (Sui) & Anita Wagner (BIH) 6-3, 0-6, [10-4]; Quarterfinals: Riya & Lian bt Jesika Maleckova & Miriam Skoch (Cze) 7-5, 4-6, [10-5].

Majcen nets brace as Punjab comes from behind to beat Chennaiyin

ISL

Vivek Krishnan

NEW DELHI

A commanding second-half performance helped Punjab FC come from behind to beat Chennaiyin FC 3-2 in the Indian Super League (ISL) clash here on Thursday.

Even as firecrackers went off in the vicinity on Deepavali night, Punjab FC produced its own fireworks on the field, taking advantage of a vulnerable Chennaiyin defence for three second-half goals.

Luka Majcen, donning a mask after fracturing his jaw in the opening game versus Kerala Blasters, scored twice in three minutes while Asmir Suljic put the result beyond doubt with a third goal in the 70th minute.

Jordan Gil's two goals for Chennaiyin were in vain. It was Chennaiyin that broke the deadlock in the 30th minute. It was all thanks to the vision of Lukas Brambilla, sending Gil through on goal with a de-

fence-splitting pass that rendered Punjab's centre-backs helpless. Gil, who had scored in the previous two matches, made no mistake with his left-footed strike.

The celebration wasn't as emphatic as the finish

owing to the Colombian's previous association with Punjab.

If Punjab coach Panagiotis Dilimperis did deliver stern words to his players during the break, it worked almost immediately. It was Filip Mrzljak who turned provider by slipping the ball through to Majcen in the middle.

The Punjab forward timed his run to perfection and finished calmly with his right foot.

Just two minutes later, Majcen added to his tally.

This time, the assist went to Khaiminthang Lhungdim, who ran onto a ball inside the box on the right to find Majcen.

From six yards out, Majcen wasn't going to miss.

The result: Punjab FC 3 (Luka Majcen 46, 48, Asmir Suljic 70) bt Chennaiyin 2 (Jordan Gil 30, 90+9).



Firmly ahead: Asmir Suljic, centre, scored PFC's third goal.

ADIMAZES/ISL



Spinning a web: Maharaj returned a five-wicket haul in Bangladesh's second innings. AFP

South Africa wins by an innings, sweeps Test series 2-0

SA IN BANGLADESH

Associated Press

CHATTOGRAM

South Africa defeated Bangladesh by an innings and 273 runs inside three days and swept the two-Test series here on Thursday.

Bangladesh lost 16 wickets on day three and fell to its second worst defeat, behind the innings and 310 runs loss to West Indies in 2002.

In reply to South Africa's 575 for six declared, Bangladesh was all out for 159 just after lunch, forced to follow on, and bowled out again for 143 in 44 overs.

Fast bowler Kagiso Rabada took five for 37 in the first innings and left-arm spinner Keshav Maharaj five for 59 in the second.

South Africa won the first Test by seven wickets for its first victory in the

sub-continent since 2014.

Resuming the day at 38 for four, Bangladesh was reduced to 48 for eight with Rabada grabbing his 15th five-for in Tests.

A 103-run ninth-wicket partnership between Mominul Haque and Taijul Islam delayed the inevitable. Mominul made a team-best 82 and Taijul 30.

Leading by 416 runs on the first innings, South Africa enforced the follow-on and its bowlers justified the decision by wrapping up Bangladesh in less than two sessions.

Left-arm spinner Suren Muthusamy registered a career-best four for 45 in his fourth Test to play a perfect foil to Maharaj.

The scores: South Africa 575/6 decl. in 44.2 overs bt Bangladesh 159 in 45.2 overs (Mominul 82, Rabada 5/37) & 143 in 43.4 overs (Shanto 36, Mahmud 38, Maharaj 5/59, Muthusamy 4/45).

Chisty) 2, Imperial Blue (Antony) 3, Ladylyn (R. Girish) 3 and Bourbon Bay (Vinod Shinde) 4. 2-3/4, Shd and 1-2, Im 14.25s. Rs. 25 (w), 11, 23 and 15 (p), SHP: 28, THP: 22, FP: 56, Q: 35, Trinella: 152, Favouite: Knotty Charmer.

Owners: Mr. Marthand Singh Mahindra, Mrs. Rina Mahindra, Mr. P. Prabhakar Reddy & Mr. Rama Sesu Eyunni. Trainer: S. Attaollahi.

Owners: Mr. K. Kaliyaperumal, Mr. Meka Yugandhar & Mr. Ashok Ranpis. Trainer: Prasanna Kumar.

4. BELGAUM PLATE (I,200): JER-

SEY KING (Suraj) 1, Vivaldo (Trevor) 2, NXX (Trevor) 1, Final Call (Sandesh) 3 and Prime Abbott (Sandesh) 4. 3/4, 1/2 and Lnk. Im 13.31s. Rs. 35 (w), 14 and 16 (p), SHP: 32, THP: 36, FP: 92, Q: 37, Trinella: 173, Exacta: 242, Favouite: Vivaldo.

Owners: Mr. Vikram Sreeram, Mr. Ananth Iyengar, Mr. Shankar Srinivas & Mr. Ashok Ranpis. Trainer: S. Dominic.

5. JAYANT SHAH MEMORIAL TROPHY (I,400M): DIVINE ART (Suraj) 1, Disciple (Antony) 2, Del Aviz (Akshay) 3 and Royal Aristocracy (Sandesh) 4. 7-1/4, 3/4 and 1. Im 24.68s. Rs. 69 (w), 17, 12 and 15 (p), SHP: 31, THP: 43, FP: 45, Q: 44, Trinella: 151, Exacta: 439. Favouite: Run For The Sun.

Owner: Mr. K. Kaliyaperumal. Trainer: Prasanna Kumar.

7. DUDHAGAR FALLS PLATE (DIV. I), (I,200M): RUN FOR THE SUN (Akshay) 1, Femina Fatale (A. Ramu) 2, Cool Water (Asirvatham) 3 and Infinite Spirit (P. Siddaraju) 4. 4. Not run: Lockheed, 6, 5/34 and 2, Im 13.71s. Rs. 14 (w), 11, 12 and 15 (p), SHP: 31, THP: 43, FP: 45, Q: 44, Trinella: 151, Exacta: 439. Favouite: Run For The Sun.

Owner: Mr. K. Kaliyaperumal. Trainer: S. Attaollahi.

8. KUDREMUK PLATE (DIV. II), (I,400M): BALMORAL (Akshay) 1, Yannick (Antony) 2, Joon (Sandesh) 3 and Invincible (M. Rajesh) 4. 4-1/2, 1/2 and 1-1/4, Im 26.74s. Rs. 19 (w), 11, 26 and 12 (p), SHP: 77, THP: 49, FP: III, Q: 126, Trinella: 278, Exacta: 3,276. Favouite: Balmoral.

Owners: Manjri Horse Breed Farm Pvt Ltd & M/s. DT Racing & Breeding LLP. Trainer: S. Attaollahi.

Jackpot: Rs. 914 (385 tks); Runner-up: 188 (804 tks); Treble (I): 256 (42 tks); (II): 65 (451 tks).

Amorim. REUTERS

Manchester United names Amorim as head coach

Agence France-Presse

Ruben Amorim was on Friday named as the new manager of Manchester United. The 39-year-old Portuguese coach, who won two Primeira Liga titles with Sporting Lisbon, has signed a deal until 2027 and will join the club on November 11.

"Manchester United is delighted to announce the appointment of Ruben Amorim as head coach of the men's first team," the club said on its website.

A N D N D