



36-HOUR OPERATION  
All 3 trapped militants killed in Jammu

NEWS » PAGE 12



KASARAGOD TRAGEDY  
150 injured in fireworks explosion in temple

STATES » PAGE 6



ISRAEL HITS OUT  
New laws to restrict UN agency in Gaza

WORLD » PAGE 16



U.S. PRESIDENTIAL POLLS  
What is clicking on the two campaign trails

It's reproductive rights vs immigration issues

EDITORIAL » PAGE 8



STAR PERFORMER  
Smriti powers India to series win against NZ

SPORT » PAGE 17

## IN BRIEF



19,000 kg of firecrackers seized in Delhi

NEW DELHI  
Delhi Environment Minister Gopal Rai on Tuesday said 19,005 kg of firecrackers have been seized in multiple raids across the city. He added that the firecrackers were seized by teams of Delhi Police and the Revenue Department. » Page 2

PMLA cannot be used as tool for incarceration: HC

NEW DELHI  
Stringent provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) cannot be used as a "tool for incarceration", the Delhi High Court said on Tuesday while granting bail to two persons in a money laundering case involving AAP leader Satyendar Jain. » Page 2

OPPORTUNITIES » PAGE 5

## No clarity yet on sharing of seats in Mahayuti, MVA

Dramatic scenes were witnessed on the last day of filing nominations; BJP opposes NCP's Mumbai candidate; Congress says no 'friendly fights' in MVA; clear picture expected only after Deepavali

Vinaya Deshpande Pandit  
MUMBAI



Maharashtra witnessed dramatic scenes on the last day of filing nominations for the Assembly election, with confusion in the ruling and Opposition alliances regarding the exact formulas for seat-sharing.

For both the Mahayuti and the Maha Vikas Aghadi, full clarity is only likely after Deepavali when the deadline to withdraw nominations arrives on November 4.

While a Pawar vs Pawar battle unfolded in Baramati where Sharad Pawar and his nephew were engaged in a war of words, drama erupted in Mumbai too when the Ajit Pawar-led Nationalist Congress Party leader Nawab Malik filed

his nomination papers despite heavy opposition from his supposed ally, the BJP. The BJP later issued a statement saying it would not canvass for a leader who allegedly had links with the gangster Dawood Ibrahim. Several high-profile candidates filed their nominations on Tuesday, includ-

ing Milind Deora, Shaina N.C., and Amin Patel.

The Congress, BJP and NCP-SP each released an official list of candidates on the last day. The Congress list included 103 candidates, the BJP declared a list of 148 candidates from the party as well as from four smaller allies, and the

NCP-SP put out a list of 87 candidates. Though the Ajit Pawar-led NCP and Eknath Shinde-led Shiv Sena also issued lists, they gave nomination forms to candidates who were not mentioned in their lists, taking their tally of fielded candidates beyond the official list. Uddhav Thackeray's faction of the Sena did not issue any official list of candidates, but top sources in the party said that 96 candidates had been fielded.

While the MVA was clear that it would not let friendly fights happen, the Mahayuti could not achieve consensus over a few seats where allies were pitted against each other.

CONTINUED ON  
» PAGE 12  
MORE REPORTS ON  
» PAGE 13

## PM rolls out health cover for persons aged 70 and above

Bindu Shajan Perappadan  
NEW DELHI



Narendra Modi at the event to launch projects at AIIMS, Delhi.

In a major expansion of the Union government's flagship scheme, the Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PM-JAY), Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday announced that health coverage under the scheme will now be available to all senior citizens aged 70 and above, regardless of their income.

The scheme was introduced to "overcome the despair of the poor when illness strikes", Mr. Modi said, noting that the government bears the cost of hospitalisation for beneficiaries up to ₹5 lakh.

"With the expansion now, every elderly person above 70 years of age in the country will get free treatment in the hospital with the Ayushman Vaya Vandana Card. With an Ayushman Vaya Vandana card for the elderly in the house, the out-of-pocket

expenditure will be reduced to a great extent," he said.

Mr. Modi also launched other health sector projects worth around ₹12,850 crore on the occasion of Dhanvantari Jayanti and the ninth Ayurveda Day, at the All India Institute of Ayurveda (AIIA).

Ayurveda Diwas is being celebrated in more than 150 countries today, Mr. Modi said, offering this as proof of the growing attraction of Ayurveda.

CONTINUED ON  
» PAGE 12  
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governments of Delhi and West Bengal for not implementing the scheme, expressing his concern that senior citizens in these States cannot avail themselves of free treatment under the expanded programme.

PM's apology  
"I apologise to all the elderly aged 70 and above in Delhi and West Bengal that I cannot serve them. I know about your pains and sufferings, but I won't be able to help you," he said.

The reason is that the governments in Delhi and West Bengal are not joining the scheme due to their political interests," he added.

The Trinamool Congress reacted sharply to the criticism by the Prime Minister and added that West Bengal doesn't need an "exclusionary" initiative like Ayushman Bharat.

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AN-DO-NDE

## Delhi Waqf Board case: 110-page chargesheet filed against AAP MLA

**Press Trust of India**  
NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Tuesday filed a chargesheet against Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) MLA Amanatullah Khan in a money laundering case before a Delhi court.

The case pertains to alleged irregularities in the appointments at the Delhi Waqf Board during Mr. Khan's tenure as its chairperson.

In its first 110-page supplementary chargesheet, the Central probe agency claimed that there is sufficient evidence to prosecute the AAP legislator and other accused in the case under provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA).

Special judge Vishal Gogne, who heard Mr. Khan's bail plea on Tuesday, will hear the case next on November 7.

The ED arrested the Okhla MLA on September 2

**There is enough evidence to prosecute Amanatullah Khan for money laundering, ED told the court**

under the provisions of the PMLA after conducting a search at his residence and claiming that he was "evasive" during questioning. Its probe stems from two FIRs – one registered by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) in connection with the alleged irregularities and the other by the Delhi Anti-Corruption Branch related to "disproportionate assets".

The CBI has accused Mr. Khan of appointing Mahboob Alam as the CEO of the Delhi Waqf Board "in a corrupt and illegal way" and placing his relatives and other known people in various contractual or daily wage posts in the board without following the due process of law.

## PMLA cannot be used as tool for incarceration: High Court

HC makes the remark while granting bail to 2 accused in money laundering case involving AAP's Satyendar Jain; accused in such cases can't be equated with those held for heinous crimes, it says

**The Hindu Bureau**  
NEW DELHI



“

Keeping the accused in custody by using Section 45 of the PMLA as a tool for incarceration or as a shackle isn't permissible  
**JUSTICE MANOJ KUMAR OHRI**

Under the twin conditions of the PMLA's Section 45, an accused is required to prove that he is prima facie innocent and convince the judge that he would not commit any offence while on bail.

A Bench of Justice Manoj Kumar Ohri also observed that an accused in a money laundering case cannot be equated with someone being tried for serious offences like murder, rape, or dacoity.

"The liberty of an ac-

cused cannot be curtailed by Section 45 without taking all other germane considerations into account," the court noted while granting bail to Vaibhav Jain and Ankush Jain.

The former Minister, who is currently out on bail, has been accused of laundering money through four companies linked to him.

The ED has alleged that Mr. Vaibhav Jain and Mr. Ankush Jain were business associates of the AAP lead-

er and had abetted the commission of the offence.

Granting bail to them, the court observed that they had already spent two years in jail for an offence for which the maximum sentence is of seven years.

"Section 45 of the PMLA, while imposing additional conditions to be met for granting bail, does not create an absolute prohibition on the grant of bail," Justice Ohri said.

**'Bail, not jail, the rule'**

The court underlined that bail is the rule and jail an exception.

"This principle is nothing but a crystallisation of the constitutional mandate enshrined in Article 21, which says that no person shall be deprived of his life or personal liberty except according to the procedure established by law," the court added.

90% more voters aged 18-19; count of women voters up by 3 lakh: data

**The Hindu Bureau**  
NEW DELHI

so showed. Additionally, the number of voters identifying as third gender has also seen a marginal rise from 1,167 to 1,231.

The elector-to-population ratio also recorded an uptick from 68.58 to 70.60, indicating a broader inclusion of eligible voters in the electoral process.

**Electoral rolls revision**

In preparation for the Assembly election, due in February next year, Mr. Krishnamurthy on Tuesday launched a special summary revision of electoral rolls across all 70 constituencies.

The poll panel in Delhi is working to ensure accurate and updated voter rolls with the final version scheduled for publication on January 6.

The revision drive is particularly critical in addressing new voter registrations, corrections and deletions to reflect the latest population dynamics.

19,000 kg of firecrackers seized in enforcement drives, says Gopal Rai

**The Hindu Bureau**  
NEW DELHI

Delhi Environment Minister Gopal Rai on Tuesday said 19,005 kg of firecrackers have been seized in multiple raids across the city.

He said that the firecrackers were seized by 300 teams of Delhi Police and 77 teams of the Revenue Department. The enforcement agencies have registered 79 cases against the violators, the Minister also said.

Mr. Rai made the comments after chairing a review meeting with officials of the Delhi Pollution Control Committee and the police on the ongoing drive to enforce the firecracker ban.

The Delhi government had on October 21 notified a blanket ban on the sale and use of firecrackers till January 1, 2025 to prevent the likely deterioration of air quality during the winter.

**Firecrackers still on sale at Sadar Bazar**  
Meanwhile, shoppers are thronging Sadar Bazar, one of the largest wholesale markets in the city, in a last-minute rush to buy firecrackers.

Smaller firecrackers, with names like 'lehsun bomb', 'wonder bomb', and 'maachis bomb', are easily available in the market and cost anywhere between ₹100-250. They are also sold by hawkers. One could spot at least 20 of them selling the low-intensity 'bombs' on the streets.

However, several shopkeepers said the business has gone down after the imposition of the ban. "Customers are now buying firecrackers from U.P. and Gurugram, where they can find shops that sell these at nominal rates," said a shopkeeper.

Pushpa, 45, a Seemapuri resident who had come to the marketplace with her children, said, "I've come here to buy firecrackers as they are being sold for much lower rates here than in other parts of the city. Moreover, these are safe enough for children. Usually, firecrackers are very loud and dangerous. Plus, they create a lot of pollution."

HC seeks Delhi govt's response on BJP MLAs' plea over CAG reports

**The Hindu Bureau**  
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Tuesday sought a reply from the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) government on a plea filed by BJP legislators seeking directions to table in the Assembly 12 Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) reports linked to several policy initiatives and welfare programmes.

The BJP MLAs, led by Leader of the Opposition in the Delhi Assembly Vijender Gupta, have contended that the reports pertain to "extremely sensitive issues" over a five-year period between 2017 and 2022, including the now-junked liquor policy.

They have alleged that the Lieutenant-Governor had repeatedly requested the CM Office to share these reports with him so that these could be tabled in the Assembly, but the request fell on deaf ears. The petitioners have also claimed that they approached the CM, the Chief Secretary, and the Speaker over the issue, but no action has been taken to date.

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## IN BRIEF



## 12 killed, 30 injured as bus rams into flyover wall in Sikar

Twelve people died and 30 passengers were injured after a private bus crashed into the wing wall of a flyover in Rajasthan's Sikar district on Tuesday afternoon, police said. District Superintendent of Police Bhuvan Bhushan Yadav said the bus coming from Salasar rammed into a part of the flyover in Laxmangarh while taking a turn. According to the police, the bus was speeding and filled with passengers due to which the driver lost control and the vehicle rammed into the wing wall of the flyover. The right side of the bus got completely crushed and the driver died on the spot.

## Rajasthan government recalls textbook on Godhra carnage

The Rajasthan government has ordered the recall of four textbooks, including one on the 2002 Godhra carnage, just a month after their distribution in State-run schools. School principals have been directed to collect these books and submit them at block-level offices. The recall notice cited "technical deficiencies" and announced that a "GSM check" would be conducted to assess the quality of paper and printing. All four books were published by a private organisation for the 2023-24 academic session. Leader of Opposition Tika Ram Jolly said that the State government should disclose the 'real reasons' behind calling back the books.

## Dynastic politics to the fore in NE Assembly bypolls

Rahul Karmakar  
GUWAHATI

Aditya Golay Tamang, son of Sikkim Chief Minister Prem Singh Tamang, won the Soreng Chakung Assembly constituency unopposed, highlighting the dynastic politics ruling the bypolls in three northeast States.

He was one of the two Sikkim Krantikari Morcha (SKM) candidates to win without an election. The other was Satish Chandra Rai, who won the Namchi-Singithang seat after his Sikkim Democratic Front (SDF) rival Daniel Rai withdrew from the poll.

The SDF's Prem Bahadur Bhandari withdrew his candidature from Soreng Chakung, paving the way for Mr. Tamang's uncontested victory.

**Eight seats in all**  
The outcome in Sikkim leaves six seats in Assam and Meghalaya, where the byelections will be held on November 13.



NPP candidate Mehtab Chandee, accompanied by her husband, Meghalaya CM Conrad Sangma, before filing her nomination. FILE PIC

The bypolls in five Assembly seats – Behali, Bongaigaon, Dholai, Samaguri, and Sidhi – in Assam and the Gambegre constituency in Meghalaya were necessitated after the MLAs vacated their seats following their election to the Lok Sabha.

In Sikkim, the Chief Minister gave up Soreng Chakung, one of two seats he had won, while his wife Krishna Kumar Rai resigned from Namchi-Singithang. "It is an honour to represent the people of Soreng-Chakung," Mr. Aditya

**Sikkim CM Prem Singh Tamang's son Aditya Golay wins unopposed from Soreng Chakung; NPP fields Meghalaya CM Conrad Sangma's wife Mehtab Chandee from Gambegre**

candidate.

The two women and the Bharatiya Janata Party's candidate, former extremist Bernard N. Marak, are confident of winning Gambegre, a Congress bastion.

**'Merit, the yardstick'**

"We choose our candidates on merit. The report we have received from the ground is that the people are happy with our candidate and she is ahead in the race," senior NPP leader and Deputy Chief Minister Sniawhalang Dhar said.

Two other candidates in the fray in Gambegre are Independents.

The nomination of 38 candidates has been found

Golay said.

The spotlight in Meghalaya's Gambegre constituency is on Mehtab Chandee A. Sangma, the wife of Chief Minister Conrad K. Sangma and the nominee of the ruling National People's Party (NPP). A doctor by profession, she is making her debut in electoral politics.

One of her rivals is Sadharani M. Sangma, a member of the Garo Hills Autonomous District Council and the wife of former Minister Zenith Sangma. She is the Trinamool Congress



Paani Deva, 74, an old-age pension beneficiary. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

She, along with Ms. Devi, was speaking at a press conference in Delhi on 'Mass Digital Exclusions of Social Security Pensioners in Rajasthan' on Tuesday.

**'Mass exclusions'**

The magnitude of the problem started emerging in May 2023, during the Mehangai Rahat Shivirs (digital camps) by the State government. The social security pension beneficiaries were invited to get registered here. "I was sitting at the helpdesk at many of these camps. Among the beneficiaries, there were many complainants who had not been getting pensions. From Kishangarh Block, 600-650 beneficiar-

ies have been removed after being marked 'out of State' while another 100-150 beneficiaries who are alive, have been marked 'dead,' said Noratmal, who works with the Pension Parishad, an initiative to ensure universal pension to all workers in India that comprises a number of civil society organisations and trade unions, in the State.

Further investigations by the Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangathan (MKSS) and civil society groups revealed that in a year, 13 lakh beneficiaries, who were receiving social security pension for widows, elderly and persons with disabilities, have been excluded from the system.

There are one crore such beneficiaries in Rajasthan, which is the only State in the country that has a legal backing for the pension. The previous government,

led by Congress leader Ashok Gehlot, brought in a law, ensuring a 15% hike each year in pension.

"These people are not only economically marginalised but physically as well because of their age and disabilities. They have nowhere to go and no other means to earn a living," Nikhil Dey, founder member of MKSS, said.

Many of these "wrongful exclusions", Mr. Dey said, are because of a mismatch between their data on Aadhaar card and their details on the government portal. "Or because their biometrics, fingerprints and iris are no longer viable proofs of their existence," he said.

After making several rounds of the State administration offices, Ms. Devi was told that since her account has been inactive for two years, nothing can be

done. She should apply afresh. Pointing at such cases, Mr. Dey said, "If beneficiaries like her open a fresh account, then the government is, in a way, shrugging off its responsibility. We are demanding that accountability should be fixed on the person who marked her dead. She should also be given compensation and arrears for the duration that she was denied pension."

Development economist Dipa Sinha said the problem of exclusion is a result of technological interventions replacing human processes.

"The outlay for social security pensions has remained the same for the past 10 years without accounting for inflation," Ms. Sinha said, adding that along with inflation, the number of eligible beneficiaries is also rising. "To keep its expenditure the same,

## Vijay was confused, debut speech lacked clarity: BJP Minister

**The Hindu Bureau  
CHENNAI**



He had done the homework, and spoke what he wanted. However, the principles and action plans of his party, announced during the conference, showed that he lacked clarity.

L. MURUGAN  
BJP leader

da model-invoking corrupt forces "politically". He also declared the party is open to sharing power with parties, which approach the TVK in 2026 Assembly polls in Tamil Nadu.

To a question on Mr. Vijay's call for power sharing in 2026, Mr. Murugan said: "The BJP has been sharing power at the Centre with its allies since 2014. It even did so when Atal Bihari Vajpeyi was the Prime Minister. We have also set an example by running coalition governments in several States."

ing of votes, a glaring discrepancy in EVMs was discovered by the Congress candidates and their respective polling agents.

In a point-by-point rebuttal to the charges, the commission said it had forwarded all 26 representations received from the Congress to the respective returning officers (ROs).

"It has been confirmed to this commission that all the 26 statutory authorities i.e. ROs have given a detailed constituency-wise response to respective INC candidates, containing annexures as documentary evidence. The Chief Electoral Officer, Haryana, has also rejected the INC complaints," it said.

"The returning officers have not found any evidence of any wrongdoing in any electoral processes. The replies reflect continuous participation of INC candidates, representatives and their agents in various processes of election, including EVM processes," the commission said.

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## ED raids premises linked to IAS officer in liquor scam' case

**The Hindu Bureau  
PATNA**

Chhattisgarh and its control over the liquor business in both States.

The FIR was lodged in Raipur against Anil Tuteja, the then Joint Secretary of Commerce and Industry Department, Chhattisgarh; Arunpati Tripathi, the then Managing Director of Chhattisgarh State Marketing Corporation Limited; Vidhu Gupta of Prism Photography and Security Pvt Ltd, Noida; Vinay Kumar Choubey, the then Secretary of Jharkhand Excise and Prohibition Department; Gajendra Singh, the then Managing Director of Jharkhand State Beverages Corporation Limited, and other officials.

The operations were carried out against people providing technical and financial management support to Fairplay, which was involved in illegal broadcasting of cricket and Indian Premier League matches and online betting, ED officials said in a official statement.

Movable assets in the form of cash, bank funds, and silver bars to the tune of ₹4 crore were seized and frozen along with incriminating documents, digital devices, and papers related to immovable property.

## ED searches eight locations in online betting case

**The Hindu Bureau  
MUMBAI**

The Mumbai Zonal Office of the Enforcement Directorate (ED) conducted searches on Tuesday under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act, at eight locations in Mumbai and Kutch in Gujarat.

The operations were carried out against people providing technical and financial management support to Fairplay, which was involved in illegal broadcasting of cricket and Indian Premier League matches and online betting, ED officials said in a official statement.

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## Marked 'dead' or 'out of State', pensioners denied social security benefits in Rajasthan

Sobhana K. Nair  
NEW DELHI

"Computer has killed me. I request you to please make me alive again." This is the concluding sentence of Kanchan Devi's application to the Block Development Officer (BDO) in Kishangarh, Rajasthan. In March 2022, the monthly aid that she receives as part of the widow pension scheme from the Rajasthan government was abruptly discontinued. On enquiry, she was told that she has been marked "dead" in the files.

Ms. Devi has since reached out to the administration several times – from the BDO to various other officials at the State capital in Jaipur. But no one has paid attention, said Ms. Devi. She has a son who works at a tea shop while she works in the marble industry. But work was never consistent and

the pension was the only source of constant income for her.

But Ms. Devi's story is not unique.

The heavily wrinkled face of Paani Deva, 74, breaks into a smile when asked if she ever lived away from her village, Shahpura, in Beawar district. She lifts her voluminous brown skirt to show her swollen knee. Ms. Deva walks with a limp, leaning on the walking stick, awkwardly dragging her bad leg.

She doesn't remember any instance when she has lived away from her village for a long duration. But the State administration thinks otherwise. She has been denied old-age pension, since the system records her as "out of State". Ms. Deva lives by herself and is dependent on the generosity of her neighbours to take care of her and for food.

She, along with Ms. Devi, was speaking at a press conference in Delhi on 'Mass Digital Exclusions of Social Security Pensioners in Rajasthan' on Tuesday.

**'Mass exclusions'**

The magnitude of the problem started emerging in May 2023, during the Mehangai Rahat Shivirs (digital camps) by the State government. The social security pension beneficiaries were invited to get registered here. "I was sitting at the helpdesk at many of these camps. Among the beneficiaries, there were many complainants who had not been getting pensions. From Kishangarh Block, 600-650 beneficiar-

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# 'BJP spreading lies, working to expose them'

Former Delhi Health Minister alleges several projects stalled by L-G, says obstacles created in their implementation, resulting in delays

## INTERVIEW

**Satyendar Jain**

**Nikhil M Babu**  
NEW DELHI

Senior AAP leader says party leadership will decide on a tie-up with its INDIA bloc partner Congress for the Delhi Assembly poll, adds that they will go to court seeking a review of Arvind Kejriwal's bail conditions. Edited excerpts:

Now that you're out on bail, what are your immediate plans?

The Delhi Assembly election is round the corner. After getting bail, I have been meeting people. We are telling them about the truth behind the misinformation being spread by the BJP.

**Arvind Kejriwal is AAP's CM face, but his bail conditions bar him from going to the Delhi Secretariat or signing any official file, except the ones requiring L-G's approval...**

We will go to the court on the bail conditions. Now, we are focused on the election. After that, we will go to the court.

**What about the alliance with the Congress?**

This decision will be taken by the party leadership.

They [Centre] arrested me and are now saying that the project was not completed. During the pandemic, we built two tem-

# Modi govt. not allotting funds for Wayanad rehabilitation: Priyanka

**The Hindu Bureau**  
WAYANAD/KOZHIKODE

Congress candidate Priyanka Gandhi Vadra on Tuesday intensified her campaign for the byelection from the Wayanad constituency to the Lok Sabha by accusing the BJP-led Union government of neglecting the rehabilitation of the landslides-hit areas of

Wayanad by not providing any funds.

Speaking at a corner meeting at Eengapuzha in the Thiruvambady Assembly constituency in Kozhikode, Ms. Vadra said the stand taken by the Modi government indicated its lack of respect for the people and the nation, and the same was evident from its policies made during the

last 10 years of its governance. The policies of the Modi government always favoured five to six business friends of the Prime Minister and did not benefit the people.

Referring to the Wayanad landslides, she said Mr. Modi came to the district, visited the affected places and people and promised them all kinds of help. "Ho-

wever, the Union government has not provided any funds for the rehabilitation of the affected people," she alleged.

Ms. Vadra, who marks her electoral debut as the United Democratic Front candidate in Wayanad, is contesting against the LDF's leader Sathyam Mokkri, and BJP's Navya Haridas, a two-time councillor.



Hitting the ground running: Priyanka Gandhi Vadra meeting supporters at Engapuzha in Kozhikode . PTI

| Delhi Weather | max | min |
|---------------|-----|-----|
| Delhi City    | 36  | 20  |
| Safdarjung    | 36  | 20  |
| Palam         | 33  | 21  |

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

**Delhi Palam Tomorrow**  
33°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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| Timings            | DELHI     |
|--------------------|-----------|
| WEDNESDAY, OCT. 30 |           |
| RISE 06:32         | SET 17:38 |
| RISE 04:28         | SET 16:23 |
| THURSDAY, OCT. 31  |           |
| RISE 06:33         | SET 17:37 |
| RISE 05:21         | SET 16:50 |
| FRIDAY, NOV. 01    |           |
| RISE 06:33         | SET 17:37 |
| RISE 06:14         | SET 17:20 |

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## Kerala CPI(M) leader Divya arrested

**The Hindu Bureau**

KANNUR

Former Kannur district panchayat president and Communist Party of India (Marxist) leader P.P. Divya was remanded in judicial custody for 14 days by a court here on Tuesday.

She was arrested earlier in the day after she evaded authorities for 13 days amid allegations of abetting the suicide of Additional District Magistrate Naveen Babu. Naveen was found dead on October 15, after a farewell speech delivered by Ms. Divya at the Collectorate.

# 150 injured in Kerala fireworks blast

Eight persons critical; no permission given for fireworks display: Kasaragod Collector; police to form SIT to probe accident

**The Hindu Bureau**

KASARAGOD

Over 150 people were injured when firecrackers stored at the Theru Anjoottambalam Veerarkavu temple at Nileswaram in Kerala's Kasaragod exploded during the Vellattam Theyyam ritual around 12.20 a.m. on Tuesday.

The accident occurred as a crowd gathered to witness the Theyyam, unaware that stray sparks from the fireworks show would trigger an explosion.



Police, bomb disposal squad and forensic science laboratory officials collect evidence from the accident site in Kasaragod. ANI

Victims were initially treated at the Kasaragod district hospital, with the serious cases being transferred to private hospitals

in Mangaluru and Kannur, including the Government Medical College Hospital.

A total of 154 individuals had sought medical attention initially, with 101 currently under treatment across multiple hospitals.

The severity of injuries varies, with one victim in critical condition and seven others on ventilator support.

Kasaragod Collector K. Inbasekhar, District Police Chief D. Shilpa, and other local authorities coordinated relief efforts. Ms. Shilpa later announced the formation of a Special Investigation Team (SIT) to probe into the fire accident.

The district administration said that the additional divisional magistrate has been directed to carry out an inquiry separately into the incident.

The firecrackers, stored in a temporary structure adjacent to the temple wall, exploded creating a large fireball.

The blaze resulted in burns to faces, hands, and clothing of those nearby, officials said.

Mr. Inbasekhar later said no permission was given for the fireworks display. The temple committee president and the secretary have been taken into custody.

(With PTI inputs)

## Newspapers facing multiple challenges: Kanimozhi

**The Hindu Bureau**

CHENNAI

Kanimozhi, MP, on Tuesday thanked The Hindu Group Publishing Pvt. Ltd. (THGPL) for giving all employees Deepavali bonus despite challenging times.

She was speaking at the 68th anniversary celebrations of The Hindu Office and National Press Employees' Union held in the city.

Ms. Kanimozhi, who is the president of the union, said newspapers were facing multiple challenges to sustain themselves, particularly when press freedom was under constant attack and journalists were being targeted. She highlighted the changing preferences in news consumption patterns among youth as another challenge.

She said that The Hindu Group continued to recognise and respect the union unlike other corporates and was committed towards employees' welfare.

Noting that union was the fundamental right of workers to organise themselves for collective bargaining, N. Ram, Director, THGPL, said the management and the union must maintain cordial relations



Nirmala Lakshman, Chairperson, The Hindu Group Publishing Private Ltd., presenting a shawl to the president of The Hindu Office & National Press Employees' Union, Kanimozhi, MP, on Tuesday in the presence of Group's Directors N. Murali, N. Ram, Rohit Ramesh and N. Ravi. B. JOTHI RAMALINGAM

despite differences. Underlining *The Hindu*'s code of ethical values, he said there was a dire need to safeguard ethics and democracy in journalism. On the issue of *The Hindu*'s journalist Mahesh Lang's arrest he said that the Editor had taken the right stand on X. While the law would take its course on other issues, Mr. Ram said it was the fundamental right of journalists to work on sensitive documents and bring out truth. It was imperative for the newspapers to take an honest and just stand.

**Cordial relations'**  
THGPL Director N. Murali said the celebrations showcased the long-standing

cordial relations between the management and the employees and the newspaper was marching towards its 150th year.

Elaborating on the challenges faced by the newspaper industry, he said shrinking advertisement revenue leading to financial constraints and younger generation shifting towards digital news have become twin challenges. He appreciated L.V. Navaneeth, Chief Executive Officer, THGPL, and Editor Suresh Nambath for protecting press freedom and sustaining the industry despite the challenges.

Nirmala Lakshman, Chairperson, THGPL, noted that the newspaper's

core values would be upheld amid challenges and the management and the union together would overcome the difficult times.

Mr. Navaneeth expressed hope that the organisation would overcome whatever crises that would come up over the next couple of years, in partnership with the union.

THGPL directors N. Ravi and Rohit Ramesh and THGPL vice-president Human Resources, R. Subramanian, participated. The union's general secretary, M. Kamalanathan,

spoke at the event in which several current and former employees participated.



**CITY UNION BANK LIMITED**  
Credit Recovery and Management Department

Administrative Office : No. 24-B, Gandhi Nagar,

Kumbakonam - 612 001. E-Mail id : crmd@cityunionbank.in,

Ph : 0435-2432322, Fax : 0435-2431746

### RE-TENDER-CUM-AUCTION SALE NOTICE UNDER SARFAESI ACT 2002

The following properties mortgaged to City Union Bank Limited will be sold in Re-Tender-cum-Public Auction by the Authorised Officer of the Bank, under Rule 8 (6) & 9 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002, under the SARFAESI Act, 2002, for recovery of a sum of Rs.2,75,01,232/- (Rupees Two Crore Seventy Five Lakh One Thousand Two Hundred and Thirty Two only) as on 22-10-2024 together with further interest to be charged from 23-10-2024 onwards and other expenses, any other dues to the bank by the borrowers / guarantors No.1) M/s. Mona Metals, Having its Registered Office at 3008, Gali Bama, Bala Tooti, Sadar Bazar, Near Heera Street, Delhi - 110006. No.2) Mr. Prakash Daga, S/o. Mr. Harish Chand Daga, at Flat No.4-C, Plot No.11, Bandu Vihar, Sector - 10, Dwarka, New Delhi - 110075. Also at, Mr. Prakash Daga, S/o. Mr. Harish Chand Daga, at Flat No. E-3, Plot No.11, Bandu Vihar Sector - 10, Dwarka, New Delhi - 110075. No.3) Mrs. Vijay Laxmi Daga, W/o. Prakash Daga, at Flat No. C-5, Plot No.11, Bandu Vihar, Sector - 10, Dwarka, New Delhi - 110075. Also at, Mrs. Vijay Laxmi Daga, W/o. Prakash Daga, at Flat No. E-3, Plot No.11, Bandu Vihar Sector - 10, Dwarka, New Delhi - 110075.

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Place : Kumbakonam, Date : 28-10-2024

Authorised Officer

Regd. Office : 149, T.S.R. (Big) Street, Kumbakonam, Thanjavur District,

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been directed to carry out an inquiry separately into the incident.

The firecrackers, stored in a temporary structure adjacent to the temple wall, exploded creating a large fireball.

The blaze resulted in burns to faces, hands, and clothing of those nearby, officials said.

Mr. Inbasekhar later said no permission was given for the fireworks display. The temple committee president and the secretary have been taken into custody.

(With PTI inputs)

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## Tough task

Coalitional incoherence could stymie INDIA bloc's effort to retain Jharkhand

**A**s one of India's relatively younger States that is home to one of its largest tribal populations, and a supplier of much of the country's mineral resources, but with nearly a quarter of its populace poverty-stricken, Jharkhand's significance needs no elaboration. With the Assembly elections in two phases, on November 13 and 20, the battle lines are clearly drawn between the two coalitions – the ruling Jharkhand Mukti Morcha-led INDIA bloc and the Bharatiya Janata Party-led NDA. For a State that has seen frequent changes in coalitions and leadership, the last two tenures, that of the BJP (2014-19) and of the JMM-led coalition (2019-24), have been relatively stable. Chief Minister Hemant Soren managed to weather a tempest after having to resign following his arrest by the Enforcement Directorate and regaining his post after his bail. In the 2024 general election, his arrest by the Centre was seen by tribals as being vindictive, which helped the JMM and its ally, the Congress, to win all five seats reserved for Scheduled Tribe candidates, among the 14 in the State. But the BJP and its ally, the All Jharkhand Students Union (AJSU), still managed to get 47.2% of the vote against the INDIA bloc's 39.62%, suggesting a clear tribal versus non-tribal divide – Adivasis form 26.21% of Jharkhand's population.

By firming up its alliance with the AJSU, the BJP expects better Assembly poll results than what transpired in 2019 when the two contested separately. If candidate announcements and seat sharing are any indication, the BJP-led alliance has shown greater cohesion than the INDIA bloc in which the Rashtriya Janata Dal and the CPI (ML)-Liberation have shown some discontent over seat allocations. On the narrative front, the Hemant Soren-led INDIA bloc is seeking to consolidate its tribal support base, while yearning for the affirmation of other voters for the welfare schemes its government has implemented. The Maiya Samman Yojana, a cash transfer scheme for women, is quite popular, but it remains to be seen whether it will win votes for the alliance instead of plaudits alone. The BJP is aware of the divide and has sought to frame a problematic narrative of "infiltrators" – a dog whistle for Muslims – gaining benefits at the expense of tribals besides fielding defectors from the JMM such as former Chief Minister Champai Soren to undercut the JMM's support base. Only the results will tell whether Hemant Soren's plea to voters to see through this divisive ploy is successful, but mere lip service without strong organisational and resourceful efforts by the INDIA bloc to counter the BJP-led coalition's mobilisation in Jharkhand will be futile in its effort to retain power.

## Beautifully vague

Actor Vijay seems to be targeting both the BJP and the DMK

**S**tatus quo and change were words that marked the speech of veteran Tamil actor Vijay at the much-awaited inaugural State-level conference of his party, the Tamilaga Vetti Kazhagam, or the TVK (Tamil Nadu Victory Federation), on Sunday. Mr. Vijay, who drew a huge crowd, mostly youth, stuck to the treaded path, when it came to issues such as the political concept of "Dravidam", opposition to communalism, two-language formula, caste-based survey, NEET, women's empowerment, and the return of education to the State List. For him, "Dravidam" and Tamil nationalism were like two eyes, even though he did not explicitly define the terms. Neither of the two Dravidian majors, the DMK and the AIADMK, have positioned themselves against Tamil nationalism. Instead, the popular impression they have created is the complementarity of the terms. Invoking DMK founder and former Chief Minister C.N. Annadurai's position of "one community, one god (*Onatre Kulam Oruvane Devan*)", the TVK leader made it clear that his organisation was not against believers, a position that has gained acceptance among most parties in the State. But, there is no clarity about what he meant by "secular social justice". He used the term "proportional representation" to mean the concept of proportional reservation in education and employment – a scheme in the erstwhile Madras Presidency till about the early 1950s, and aligned to demands for a caste census, that is gaining currency. In 1970, the A.N. Sathyanathan-headed First Backward Classes Commission concluded that caste-based proportional quota "will neither be administratively feasible nor would it be in the interest of social integration...." Likewise, the proposal of having a branch of the Secretariat in Madurai is a watered down demand for having the city as the second capital.

Mr. Vijay, true to his words of "dropping a bombshell", made an offer of a share in power, a demand the Dravidian majors have refused to concede. This may have been aimed at unsettling the camp led by the ruling DMK, wherein the Congress and the VCK favour the notion of a coalition government. His assurance of not pursuing the politics of hate or being offensive towards adversaries is noteworthy. At the macro level, he pitted himself against the BJP and the DMK, without naming them explicitly. It remains to be seen whether this political attack will help him get into the anti-DMK space and anti-BJP constituency. As optics, the event was impressive but the TVK might face challenges as Tamil Nadu is known for a duopoly in politics, where attempts to create an alternative force have failed. As he spoke in generalities, there is not much to either welcome or condemn the themes he touched upon.

**I**n September this year, the Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister (EAC-PM) released a paper titled, 'Relative Economic Performance of Indian States: 1960-61 to 2023-24'. It presents the share of each State in the country's income and the per capita income compared to the all-India average.

The data tell us the importance of each State in the country's economy and the average welfare of the citizens of each State relative to the all-India level. The average hides the inequality. For instance, Maharashtra, which is the highest contributor to the nation's economy, has a per capita income of about 150% of the national average. But, it consists of Mumbai, which is rich, and Vidarbha, which is known for farmers' suicides due to poverty. Mumbai's rich contribute the largest amount of direct taxes and the city's municipality is the richest in the country. But it has huge slums with uncivilised living conditions.

### Regional differentials

The report points to the consistently better performance of the western and southern regions of India and the weak performance of the eastern States. The northern States have done poorly with the exception of Haryana and Delhi. Overall, the picture is of a growing divide in the country, which is not good for a federal and diverse nation such as India.

This growing gap is leading to the questioning of federalism. Representatives of the richer States recently held a conclave in Kerala and argued that they are not receiving their fair share of resources from the Centre. They say that they contribute much more to the national kitty than what the Centre gives back to them. In the year 2000 also there was a 'Conclave of the successful' to protest the devolution by the Eleventh Finance Commission. So, slowly, the spirit of federalism is weakening.

The report lists liberalisation (1991) as a marker of when the southern States began to perform better. But it does not go into the causes. It also points to the coastal areas doing better, which includes Odisha in the east. But, could it be that the poorer performance of some States is linked to the better performance of some others?

Investment is the most important determinant of output. The higher the level of investment, the larger the size of the economy. So, for a more complete analysis, the level and the rate of investment in each State needs to be studied. The better-off States typically have a higher rate of investment than the poorer States, and, therefore, perform better.

Investment comes from the public and the



**Arun Kumar**  
a retired professor of economics,  
Jawaharlal Nehru University and the  
author of the book,  
'Indian Economy's  
Greatest Crisis:  
Impact of the  
Coronavirus and the  
Road Ahead' (2020)

private sectors. The first is based on policy decisions while the second is determined by profitability considerations. Government may invest in a backward area to develop it even if no profit accrues in the short run. The private sector will not do so unless the government gives it concessions such as tax breaks and electricity at concessional rates.

On its own, private investment goes to developed areas where a large market ensures profits. So, urban conglomerates such as Mumbai, Delhi, Chennai, Bengaluru and Hyderabad are preferred investment destinations. Haryana which is contiguous with Delhi (with the highest per capita income) has also benefited. Kolkata is not preferred for other reasons. Coastal regions are preferred since they enable cheaper access to external markets through exports. Also, cheap imported inputs may be available.

Infrastructure availability and quality of governance in a State are important determinants of profits. Richer States are better in both and attract more investments. Better governance is also linked to better quality of education and health. This leads to the availability of more productive labour. But this is not critical since there is huge migration from the poorer to the richer States.

Private investment is 75% of the total investment. After the launch of the New Economic Policies (NEP) in 1991, the public sector's role as the leading sector shifted to the markets. Therefore, more investment has been going to the richer States where profits are higher. Further, the financial sector which guides investments became more important after 1991. The considerable household savings increasingly got diverted from the poorer States to the richer ones which offered higher profits. This is reflected in the low credit-deposit ratio of the poorer States when compared to the richer States. This diversion of investment leads to growing disparity.

Finally, the poorer States have a larger share of the unorganised sector working at low productivity and low incomes. Under the NEP, policy has favoured the organised sector. This has been aided by the construction of freight corridors and highways which enables this sector to penetrate into the hinterland. So, the organised sector has grown at the expense of the unorganised sector and fuelled the faster growth of the richer States.

In brief, the NEP has played a major role in the growing divide across States since 'liberalization', as the EAC-PM paper points out.

West Bengal and Kerala are special cases. Both

States have had strong Left movements and labour militancy. So, the private sector has invested little in these States. The border States of India have received less public investment for strategic reasons. It is also because many of them suffered from insurgency which scared the private sector.

Opposition-ruled States have accused the Centre of playing politics with public investment. The often flaunted slogan of 'Double Engine ki Sarkar' captures this idea. Further, growing cronyism in India impacts investment decisions since political signals are important. This spoils the investment climate by lowering the risk for the cronies while raising it for others. The result is a decline in the overall investment rate which impacts the poorer States more.

The black economy is also proportionately more in the poorer States. This vitiates the investment climate due to policy failure and weak governance and reduces the investment they receive. Therefore, it reduces their growth potential.

### Threat to federalism

The persisting differentials in the economic performance of different States are threatening federalism. Thus, policy needs to reverse this trend. Even keeping differentials at the present level is no more an option. This requires a reversal of the trend of private investment, weak governance and poor infrastructure in the States that are lagging.

Both the Centre and the States need to act. The States need to improve governance and reduce the levels of corruption in their jurisdiction. Public expenditures on social sectors need to be raised substantially. Private investment in the poorer States cannot be raised by fiat in the market-driven economy. It requires a change in the Centre's strategy of favouring the organised sector at the expense of the unorganised sector. If the focus shifts to the unorganised sector, the incomes of the marginalised would rise and that would boost demand and production in the poorer States. As demand rises in these States, it would attract more private investment.

The organised sector, which is constrained by shortage of demand, would also benefit. More concessions from the government are not what they need since they have enough resources to increase their investment. These policy changes will not mean that the richer States would not grow; only disparities would decline. This would be development from below which would strengthen federalism and help preserve the nation's unity.

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# A picture of a growing economic divide in India

**I**n September this year, the Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister (EAC-PM) released a paper titled, 'Relative Economic Performance of Indian States: 1960-61 to 2023-24'. It presents the share of each State in the country's income and the per capita income compared to the all-India average.

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This growing gap is leading to the questioning of federalism. Representatives of the richer States recently held a conclave in Kerala and argued that they are not receiving their fair share of resources from the Centre. They say that they contribute much more to the national kitty than what the Centre gives back to them. In the year 2000 also there was a 'Conclave of the successful' to protest the devolution by the Eleventh Finance Commission. So, slowly, the spirit of federalism is weakening.

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Investment is the most important determinant of output. The higher the level of investment, the larger the size of the economy. So, for a more complete analysis, the level and the rate of investment in each State needs to be studied. The better-off States typically have a higher rate of investment than the poorer States, and, therefore, perform better.

Investment comes from the public and the

Data from the paper titled,  
'Relative Economic Performance of Indian States: 1960-61 to 2023-24', show a growing gap that is leading to a questioning of federalism

rate. Paradoxically, women beyond the child-bearing age are very committed to bringing abortion rights back simply because they fought for it in the 1970s. It was a great advance then not only because unwanted pregnancies were high but also because single parents could now pay greater attention to child rearing than child bearing.

**The tirade against migrants**  
In contrast to the pre-1965 profile where most migrants were White, today about 50% of immigrants to the US are from Latin America, and as much as a quarter from Mexico alone. This probably explains why Mr. Trump's tirade against migrants from south of the border is so appealing. There are so many of them and they all look so different.

In 2022, about 10.6 million immigrants (or 23% of all immigrants in the U.S.) were Mexicans. Next were those from India (6%) and China (5%). Though 77% of immigrants are in the U.S. legally, about 25%, mostly Mexicans, are unauthorised. This was not so till 1968 when primarily Europeans and the British could enter the U.S.

Donald Trump's grandfather was an immigrant from Germany and got in easily. Yet, he hid this ancestry for, in those days, Germans were looked down upon, much like the Mexicans are today. However, time and skin colour have erased that memory, and their descendants, like Donald Trump, have low tolerance for latter day Latin America migrants.

As the presence of migrants is combustible, all of them are clubbed together for the authorised ones are not bodily stamped. Fighting for the cause of migrants then becomes a huge altruistic effort for they cannot fight for themselves. It is home advantage for those who rally behind the "Make America Great Again" banner.

This is also the reason why Mr. Trump does not have a full cast of celebrities on stage with

him. His cause needs no translation into everyday tongue. Any attempt to undermine the huge presence of unauthorised migrants will be met instantly with hostility and disbelief. Unsurprisingly, Ms. Harris tends to wander when confronted with this issue.

As abortion rights actively matter to fewer women today, Democrats are forced to frame this demand in terms of rights and that always needs explanation. As Ms. Harris readily cedes ground on this if religious leaders intervene, the moral ownership of that right is vastly weakened. When law and morality clash, morality usually wins.

That is why Ms. Harris is usually part of an elaborate ensemble in public with entertainers such as Bruce Springsteen, Usher, Lizzo, and now even Beyoncé. Barack Obama is also pushing for her onstage, and so has Michelle Obama. In the medley, one is likely to lose sight of the lead actor, Kamala Harris herself; she gets lost in the crowd.

**In totality**  
The polls say it is an even fight but Ms. Harris's camp is working much harder as a lot of their trek is uphill. Mr. Trump, in contrast, is on cruise control and travels light. He is the star of the show – an entertainer and political leader in one handy wrap. If he has somebody else on stage, that will be a side order. Nobody eclipses him when his show comes on.

In recent memory, the contrasting styles of the finalists has never been so stark. This is all because of the cause each one promotes. Ms. Harris's case is loaded with itsy-bitsy, fading numbers that need a regimen of grey cells to arrange. Mr. Trump's appeal has a gut feel that requires little explanation. He sets your heart thumping, so your brain can rest.

Somewhere along the line, by intuition or by luck, Mr. Trump has mastered the art of keeping it simple, even if it seems stupid. That is politics.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### New party

Actor and Tamilaga Vetti Kazhagam (TVK) leader Vijay has sent out the right message at the launch of his fledgling party. It was refreshing to have an emphasis on the much maligned word 'secular'. Mr. Vijay's commitment to fight divisive forces and corruption with equal force would stand him and his party in good stead. The policies and programmes of the party seem promising. The challenge lies in converting his huge fan base into a

### Fighting political force.

**J. Anantha Padmanabhan,**  
Srirangam, Tamil Nadu  
  
One more political 'star' has risen on the Tamil Nadu political horizon. However, Mr. Vijay has trotted out several promises which are, more or less, the same political rhetoric we have been hearing for the past several decades. What is amusing about his 'action plan' is his promise to abolish the post of Governor. It is unfortunate that matinee idols in the State still continue to take

### Electorate for granted.

**P.G. Menon,**  
Chennai  
  
**Heatwave as a 'disaster'**  
Declaring a heatwave as a State-specific disaster is a positive step but is not a permanent solution. The planet is warming due to various factors, and there is an indiscriminate removal of green cover that is often justified in the name of infrastructure and industrial development. While Tamil Nadu must implement immediate relief measures to protect citizens from the

### Extreme heat, it is equally important to enhance the State's (urban) green cover.

Creating green parks and intensifying tree-planting efforts should be prioritised. Moreover, tree planting by developers and builders should be made mandatory as a part of their projects. Large-scale tree-planting initiatives under corporate social responsibility plans should also be encouraged.  
**C. Raghavan,**  
Chennai  
  
**The power of solar**

The point that there is a

### Need to 're-evaluate energy policies through a gender lens'

seems unconvincing (Editorial page, "Solar, a game changer in women's empowerment", October 29). Whether it is at home or at the workplace, solar-generated power enters the premises and is available for use by all. I am not so sure about the scope for the discrimination that is being hinted at.  
**V. Lakshmanan,**  
Tirupur, Tamil Nadu  
  
It is exciting that technologies can have

positive and cascading effects on ensuring economic equality and gender justice. As a founder member of the International Solar Alliance, India can play a pivotal role in realising the full potential of solar energy and its influences on the demography and the economy of the country.  
**Afthab Razul S.,**  
Kayamkulam, Alappuzha, Kerala

Letters emailed to letters@thehindu.co.in must carry the full postal address and the full name or the name with initials.

# A collective effort towards peace in Myanmar

The 44th ASEAN Summit held from October 6 to 11 in Vientiane, Laos, highlighted mounting regional concerns, especially Myanmar's worsening crisis. Since the military coup in 2021, Myanmar has been in turmoil, and despite multiple efforts, including ASEAN's Five-Point Consensus, there has been little progress towards stability. The civil war is not only ravaging Myanmar, but also challenging ASEAN's credibility as a regional bloc committed to peace and stability.

## The situation in Myanmar

Myanmar remains engulfed in a brutal civil war between the military junta and various resistance groups, including Ethnic Armed Organisations (EAOs) and the People's Defence Forces (PDFs). The junta, which forcibly took control after toppling the democratically elected government of Aung San Suu Kyi, faces widespread armed resistance. The resistance groups now control significant swathes of territory, including six major border trade routes. The military's efforts to quash the rebellion have led to violence, displacing hundreds of thousands and creating a humanitarian crisis. More than 18.6 million people, including 6 million children, are in need of assistance, according to the United Nations.

The failure of the junta to cooperate with international peace efforts has exacerbated the conflict. The military continues to label opposition groups as terrorists and has shown little interest in holding genuine negotiations. In 2021, ASEAN broke its long-standing non-interference policy in response to the coup in Myanmar, recognising the breach of the ASEAN Charter regarding the rule of law and governance. However, its attempts to implement the 2021 Five-Point Consensus, which calls for an end to violence, inclusive dialogue, and humanitarian assistance, remain largely



**Harsh V. Pant**

Vice President for Studies at Observer Research Foundation (ORF), New Delhi



**Sreeparna Banerjee**

Associate Fellow, Indo-Pacific, ORF

unheeded, revealing the limitations of regional responses. Earlier, ASEAN tried to exclude Myanmar's military leaders from high-level summits due to the country's non-compliance with the Five-Point Consensus.

However, this time, after three years of boycotting the summit, Myanmar sent Aung Kyaw Moe, a senior official from Myanmar's Foreign Ministry, to Laos. This highlights ASEAN's need to keep dialogue alive and shows a pragmatic shift in its approach. It also indicates that the junta is willing to participate in ASEAN dialogues and is not entirely avoiding the bloc's engagement efforts.

Some ASEAN members, such as Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines, continue to push for stronger action, while others, such as Thailand, Cambodia, and Laos, maintain closer relations with the military government. The principle of consensus-based decision-making complicates matters, as it necessitates unanimous agreement, resulting in diluted and slow responses to the crisis. Thailand's recent proposal to host informal talks later this year with the Troika involving Indonesia (previous chair), Laos (present chair), and Malaysia (future chair) illustrates an attempt to break the diplomatic impasse. However, without the full involvement of all the stakeholders in Myanmar, including the National Unity Government and the EAOs, such efforts may not succeed. For instance, Thailand's humanitarian corridor operates only with the junta's consent in areas under its control. To move forward, engaging non-state actors will be crucial for ASEAN to craft a more inclusive and effective dialogue.

## India's Myanmar policy

During the 21st ASEAN-India Summit and the 19th East Asia Summit, Prime Minister Narendra Modi emphasised ASEAN's centrality and the Five-Point Consensus while encouraging

continued engagement with Myanmar. India's approach to Myanmar is closely tied to its Act East Policy. Myanmar is a pivotal land bridge between India and other ASEAN countries, and its stability is crucial for India's bilateral and regional interests. India shares a 1,643 km-long border with Myanmar, so it needs to balance security concerns regarding cross-border militancy and illegal activities by maintaining relations with Myanmar's military regime while supporting democratic processes through diplomacy.

India is involved in regional connectivity projects such as the Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project and the India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway to enhance trade and connectivity. Recently, both nations signed five Memorandums of Understanding under the Quick Impact Projects framework, focusing on agricultural development, vocational training, disaster management, and education. With India's \$250,000 grant, these projects aim to enhance Myanmar's socio-economic development, but Myanmar's political instability will likely challenge its success.

Concerns over regional stability and refugee influxes have led India to discontinue the Free Movement Regime and fence the border. As the Central government faces resistance from various State governments regarding this move, India is walking a tightrope.

New Delhi is also considering broader engagement with various stakeholders in Myanmar, which would help it safeguard its strategic interests, while also contributing to peace and stability in Myanmar. The effectiveness of this strategy will depend on the evolving undercurrents within Myanmar and India's ability to engage meaningfully with all the parties involved. ASEAN and India will need to adopt a more inclusive and pragmatic approach towards Myanmar – one that involves all key stakeholders.

ASEAN and India will need to adopt a more inclusive and pragmatic approach towards Myanmar – one that involves all key stakeholders

# Fighting high-stakes bypolls

Wayanad, Palakkad, and Chelakkara will all witness tough three-way contests

## STATE OF PLAY

### Biju Govind

biju.govind@thehindu.co.in



For the first time in its electoral history, Kerala is witnessing simultaneous bypolls next month to a parliamentary constituency (Wayanad) and two Assembly constituencies (Palakkad and Chelakkara). The seats will see three-way contests of the Congress, the CPI(M), and the BJP.

Wayanad has once again grabbed national attention since Congress general secretary, Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, is making her electoral debut from this seat. A bypoll in this constituency became necessary after her brother, Rahul Gandhi, who won both Wayanad and Rae Bareli in the Lok Sabha elections, was forced to vacate one of these seats and chose to retain Rae Bareli.

It was the 2019 general elections that first thrust Wayanad into the limelight when Mr. Gandhi chose it as his second seat after Amethi. Though the excitement around Wayanad waned when he contested the seat again in 2024, the hill constituency retains its status as an arena where high-stakes political contests are fought.

However, unlike 2019, Mr. Gandhi had to confront stronger opponents in 2024 including Annie Raja, a national executive member of the CPI, and K. Surendran, the State president of the BJP. Mr. Gandhi's vote share reduced by 5.25 percentage points from the previous election.

For the upcoming bypoll, the CPI has nominated Sathyan Mokeri, a seasoned politician and former legislator who contested the 2014 Lok Sabha polls in Wayanad and lost. The Left's decision to nominate Mr. Mokeri, who is the nation-

al secretary of the All India Kisan Sabha, indicates its resistance to the perceived glamour of Ms. Vadra. The Left considers her an outsider who is ill-equipped to serve the pressing needs of Wayanad, which include recurring human-wildlife conflicts, a crash in the prices of crops, a dearth of medical facilities, landslides, and lack of proper roads and rail connectivity.

The BJP has nominated Navya Haridas, a two-time councillor of Kozhikode Corporation who is the State general secretary of the Mahila Morcha. Her biggest challenge is to retain the 1.4 lakh votes that Mr. Surendran received in the polls five months ago.

Congress strategists are focused on achieving a massive victory for Ms. Vadra; they aim for a margin exceeding five lakh votes. Their confidence stems from the demographic composition of the constituency. The population of Wayanad comprises 46% Muslims, 41% Hindus, and 13% Christians. This minority-majority matrix strengthens the Congress's belief that Wayanad could be its bastion.

Meanwhile, riveting electoral battles are unfolding in the Palakkad and Chelakkara Assembly constituencies. These seats were vacated by Shafi Parambil of the Congress and K. Radhakrishnan of the CPI(M) after they won the Vadakara and Alathur Lok Sabha seats,

respectively. The Congress has chosen Youth Congress State president Rahul Mamkootathil from Palakkad. In a surprising twist, the CPI(M) has nominated P. Sarin from Palakkad. Mr. Sarin was digital media convenor of the Kerala Pradesh Congress Committee and dramatically switched allegiance when the Congress decided to field Mr. Mamkootathil. The BJP has entrusted its fortunes to its State general secretary, C. Krishnakumar, who unsuccessfully contested the Palakkad Lok Sabha seat.

The Congress has fielded Ramya Haridas, former Alathur MP who recently faced a setback in her Lok Sabha re-election bid, from Chelakkara. The CPI(M) has roped in its former legislator, U.R. Pradeep, while the BJP is pinning its hopes on K. Balakrishnan, who previously helmed the Thiruvilamala Gram Panchayat. In the 2021 polls, Mr. Radhakrishnan had secured a landslide victory with a margin of over 39,000 votes.

Both the Palakkad and Chelakkara Congress candidates face the challenge of being outsiders in their segments. There is also friction in the party due to their candidatures. They hope to overcome these difficulties and focus on capitalising on the anti-incumbency sentiment against the ruling LDF government.

Pinning hopes on their well-oiled machinery, the Left parties are confident that they will weather the anti-incumbency storm. If they win these elections, it could boost their morale, which has been low since the Lok Sabha elections.

For the BJP, the elections are yet another opportunity to win an Assembly constituency in Kerala. As of now, the party occupies only one Lok Sabha seat and no Assembly seat in the State.

# Indian Americans still back Harris, but are seeing Trump's appeal

The share of Indian Americans who identify with the Democratic Party has dropped below 50% in 2024

## DATA POINT

### Samreen Wani

The U.S. is set to vote in the 47th presidential election on November 5. Even as a majority of Indian Americans continue to lean towards the Democratic Party, support for the Republican Party is gaining momentum in the community. Indian Americans, the second-largest immigrant group in the U.S., are wealthier than the average American and their incomes too are growing at a faster rate. Concentrated mostly in States such as California, they primarily work in the private services industry. Indian Americans tend to be younger than other groups.

The median income of an average Indian American household is double that of a typical American household and rose by 24% from 2019 to 2023. In comparison, the overall household income of Americans increased by 18%, while incomes of all other Asians grew by 19% (Chart 1).

With over 87% of Indian Americans employed in the private sector – the rate is notably higher than other groups – poverty levels within the community are generally lower (Charts 2 and 3).

The wealthiest Indian Americans live in Washington state, though it ranks eighth in the population of Indian Americans. California hosts the largest Indian American population and ranks second in median income. Over half the community is concentrated in California, Texas, New Jersey, and New York (Chart 4).

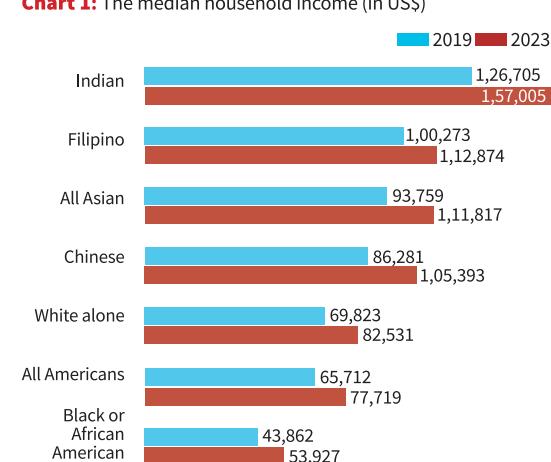
At 78%, the share of Indian Americans of voting age is slightly lower compared to other Asians in general, and they form 1.4% of the total electorate (Chart 5 and 6).

The share of Indian Americans who identify with the Democrats has dropped below 50% in 2024, according to a survey, while the share supporting the Republicans is on the rise (Chart 7).

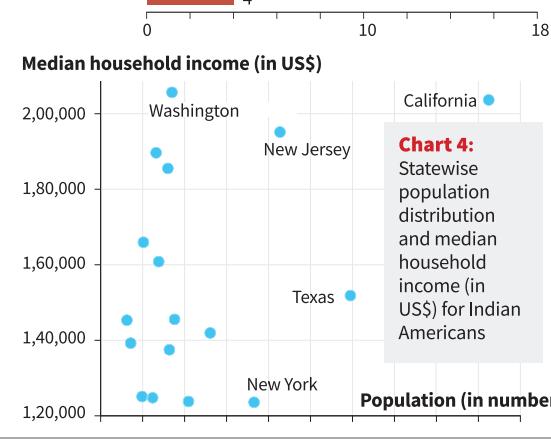
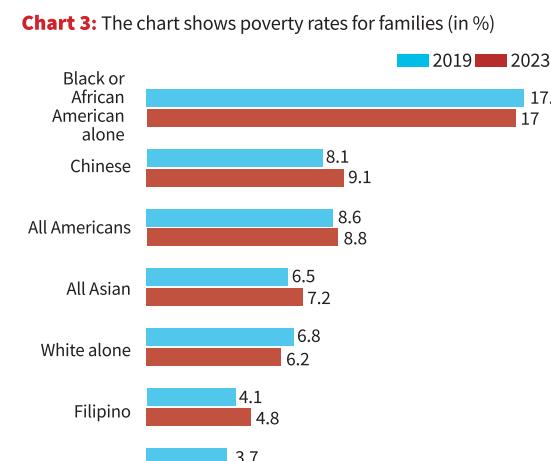
## Crazy rich and increasingly Republican

The data for the charts are sourced from the US Census Bureau and the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

**Chart 1:** The median household income (in US\$)



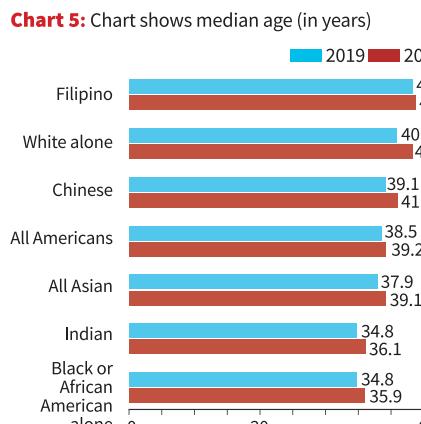
**Chart 3:** The chart shows poverty rates for families (in %)



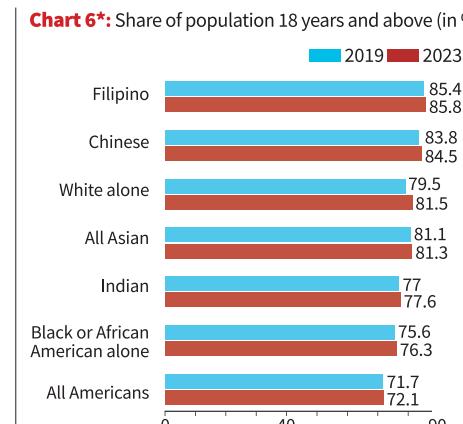
**Chart 2:** The chart shows sectorwise employment of Indian Americans (in %)



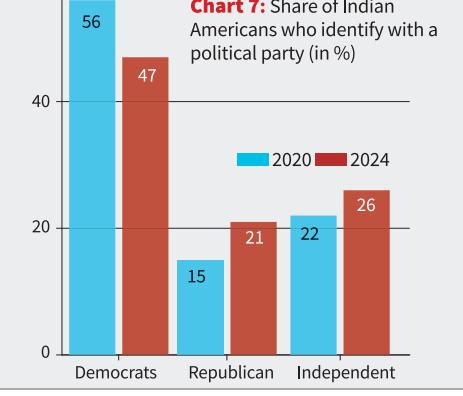
**Chart 5:** Chart shows median age (in years)



**Chart 6\***: Share of population 18 years and above (in %)



\*Does not reflect the actual share of eligible voters



## FROM THE ARCHIVES

**The Hindu.**

FIFTY YEARS AGO OCTOBER 30, 1974

## Steep rise in cost of fireworks

Madras, Oct. 29: A steep rise in the prices of fireworks, coupled with the strain on the pay packet caused by inflationary pressures, threatens to rob Deepavali of much of fun and frolic this year. Children belonging to middle and low-income group families may have to be content with a smaller pack of crackers which cost 50 per cent more than last year.

Though the festival is about two weeks off, there is little evidence of it in the fireworks market in the city. Shops which used to bustle with activity even a month ahead of the festival reported dull business. According to traders' computations, they may end the season with a shortfall of at least 25 per cent of their sales last year.

The prices of all varieties have gone up and the hike is more pronounced in the case of some popular items. For instance, the wholesale price of "black serpent eggs" has increased from last year's Rs. 11.75 to Rs. 30 per gross, "mini serpent eggs" from Rs. 6.75 to Rs. 18; colour matches from Rs. 9 to Rs. 17; star matches from Rs. 10 to Rs. 18; caps from Rs. 3.25 to Rs. 5.50; sparklers from Rs. 55 to Rs. 79 and colour sparklers from Rs. 58 to Rs. 87.

A spokesman of a large fireworks company claimed that the prices had been fixed this year allowing a very low profit margin taking into account the economic conditions of the people. He pointed out that the enormous increase in the cost of raw material, wages apart, warranted a still higher price. The cost of copper-coated wire had doubled, the price of chlorate and red phosphorous had gone up by eight times not to speak of the prices of waste paper, a major raw material, and board and printing

# Text & Context

THE HINDU

## NEWS IN NUMBERS

### Conflict in Sudan: number of people displaced

**14** in million. The head of the International Organization for Migration said that over 14 million people had fled their homes, either inside the country or over its borders, with some 200,000 people fleeing since last month. In total, nearly 30% of Sudan's population has been displaced. REUTERS

### Percentage of regions that have fully 'decoupled'

**30** per cent. According to a study from the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research, Germany, about 30% of the world's regions have fully separated or "decoupled" — where the economy grows but carbon emissions decline — and many are in Europe. PTI

### Percentage rise in U.K. median full-time annual salary

**6.9** per cent. Pay rose fastest in the accommodation and food services sector, up 9.8%, while earnings rose by 7.7% for 'caring, leisure and other services occupations' and the same amount for 'sales and customer services occupations', Office for National Statistics said. REUTERS

### Naxalites arrested in Chhattisgarh on Tuesday

**19** Of the men arrested from the Sukma district. The security forces recovered three gelatin rods, 300 gm of gunpowder, cordex wire, firecrackers, detonators, electric wire, and batteries from 14 cadres, while the remaining five were convicted of two murders which occurred in February. PTI

### Govt-requested cost cut on anti-cancer drugs

**10** per cent. The National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority has issued an office memorandum directing the concerned manufacturers to reduce the MRP on three anti-cancer drugs, Trastuzumab, Osimertinib, and Durvalumab. PTI

COMPILED BY THE HINDU DATA TEAM

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## Exit polls and missed predictions

Recent election polling discrepancies, particularly in Haryana and Jammu and Kashmir, have raised questions about exit poll reliability; while no model can capture elections perfectly, refining polling methods and recognising socio-political influences on voters is essential for accurate forecasting

### FULL CONTEXT

**Sanjay Kumar**  
**Devesh Kumar**

**A**s the dust settles on the Haryana and Jammu and Kashmir elections, doubts have been raised about the reliability of exit polls, many of which failed to predict the election outcomes accurately. The discrepancy between predictions and results has cast doubt on polling models. This recent episode follows similar polling inaccuracies in Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh over the past eight months. While it is easy to lump all polling agencies together, the approach adopted by CSDS-Lokniti distinguishes it from others. In this article, we highlight how our election surveys differ significantly from typical exit polls while offering insights into what may have gone wrong while estimating vote shares for leading parties in the electoral race in respective States.

#### Methodological rigour

Unlike standard exit polls, which rely on quick post-voting surveys, CSDS-Lokniti has always adopted a more nuanced approach. Trained field investigators visit sampled voter's homes the day after they cast their vote, and conduct face-to-face interviews. This method enhances the depth and accuracy of responses and is considerably better than quick surveys either by telephone or in some cases even outside the polling station. Second, to ensure that the sample accurately represents the electorate, CSDS-Lokniti adopts a multi-stage random sampling method.

Constituencies are randomly chosen using the probability proportional to size (PPS) method (adjusting the probability of choosing a particular constituency according to the size of its electorate). Then, polling stations within these constituencies are selected through systematic random sampling (SRS). The respondents are further drawn from updated electoral rolls through the SRS method, ensuring that a cross-section of voters is selected mirroring the demographic diversity of each State.

This rigorous methodology has ensured a close match between the demographics of the sample of the survey and actual demographic trends for major groups and communities — such as women, Dalits, Muslims, other minorities, and urban-rural populations. In fact, the demographic profile of our sampled voters in Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh is a close match to the actual profile of the voters in these States. However, deviations arise, and wherever they do, weights are applied to different social groups to align the sample with the electorate (Table 1). While many exit polls do not share their methodologies publicly, CSDS-Lokniti prides itself on transparency.

#### Misleading euphoria

There was a common thread among all three elections — Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, and Haryana. There was a shared perception in all three States that a Congress wave was sweeping through. This sentiment appeared to envelop the media and many pollsters, leading to exaggerated predictions of Congress victories. While CSDS-Lokniti does project vote share, we largely refrain from making seat-by-seat predictions. Our survey estimates were remarkably close to actual outcomes, staying well within the margin of error — at -2.91 percentage points for Haryana and less than -0.6 percentage points for Madhya Pradesh,

### Getting close to the mark

Exit polls in recent elections have faced criticism for their inaccuracies, resulting in their failure to predict the final results correctly. Here is a look at CSDS-Lokniti's projections in some recent elections



**Table 1:** Demographic profile of the sample compared with that of demographic profile of voters in respective States

|        | Chhattisgarh (2023) |             |           | Madhya Pradesh (2023) |             |           | Haryana (2024) |             |           |
|--------|---------------------|-------------|-----------|-----------------------|-------------|-----------|----------------|-------------|-----------|
|        | Census              | CSDS-Survey | Deviation | Census                | CSDS-Survey | Deviation | Census         | CSDS-Survey | Deviation |
| Female | 49.8                | 47.7        | -2.1      | 48.2                  | 49.5        | 1.3       | 46.8           | 40          | -6.8      |
| Muslim | 2                   | 2.7         | 0.7       | 6.6                   | 6.3         | -0.3      | 7              | 5           | -2        |
| Urban  | 23.2                | 24.9        | 1.7       | 27.6                  | 27.6        | 0         | 34.9           | 31          | -3.9      |
| SC     | 12.8                | 13.2        | 0.4       | 15.6                  | 16.4        | 0.8       | 20.2           | 23          | 2.8       |
| ST     | 30.6                | 23          | -7.6      | 21.1                  | 19.5        | -1.6      | -              | -           | -         |
| Sikh   | -                   | -           | -         | -                     | -           | -         | 4.9            | 4           | -0.9      |

*Note: All figures in percent. The deviation shows how much Lokniti-CSDS survey differs from Census data for respective States.*

**Table 2:** Chhattisgarh Assembly elections

| Vote share comparison for Chhattisgarh (2023) |                |        |           |
|---|----------------|--------|-----------|
| Parties                                       | CSDS-Projected | Actual | Deviation |
| Congress                                      | 42             | 42.23  | 0.23      |
| BJP   | 38             | 46.27  | 8.27      |
| BSP+GGP                                       | 5              | 3.44   | -1.56     |
| Others  | 15             | 8.06   | -6.94     |

*Note: All figures in %. Deviation in % points*

**Table 3:** Madhya Pradesh Assembly elections

| Vote share comparison for Madhya Pradesh (2023) |                |               |           |
|---|----------------|---------------|-----------|
| Parties   | CSDS-Projected | Actual Result | Deviation |
| Congress  | 41             | 40.4          | -0.6      |
| BJP   | 43             | 48.55         | 5.55      |
| BSP   | 5              | 3.4           | -1.6      |
| Others  | 12             | 7.65          | -4.35     |

*Note: All figures in %. Deviation in % points*

**Table 4:** Haryana Assembly elections

| Vote share comparison for Haryana (2024) |                |               |           |
|--|----------------|---------------|-----------|
| Parties                                  | CSDS-Projected | Actual Result | Deviation |
| Congress                                 | 42             | 39.09         | -2.91     |
| BJP                                      | 37             | 39.94         | 2.94      |
| BSP+                                     | 4              | 5.96          | 1.96      |
| AAP                                      | 2              | 1.79          | -0.21     |
| JJP                                      | 1              | 0.9           | -0.1      |
| Others                                   | 14             | 12.32         | -1.68     |

*Note: All figures in %. Deviation in % points*



#### When voters feel overwhelmed by constant questioning from different pollsters, they might disengage, further affecting responses to the questions

and 0.23 percentage points for Chhattisgarh. The real gap was not in Congress's predicted performance but in underestimating the BJP's ability to secure votes (Tables 2, 3, and 4).

#### BJP's winning formula

Two important reasons may help explain how the BJP may have out-maneuvered expectations. First, the BJP effectively counter-mobilised voters in response to perceived anti-incumbency (Madhya Pradesh and Haryana). Party workers worked quietly and efficiently in all States at the grassroots level, bypassing media narratives and building voter coalitions away from the limelight. This disciplined organisation gave the BJP an unexpected

edge. Second, differential voter turnout may have complicated assessment of vote shares. For example, in Haryana, where the Jat vote was expected to favour Congress, it remained unclear how many voters from this group actually showed up at the polls. Similarly, while communities might express loyalty to certain parties, their turnout could vary — impacting the outcomes in constituencies with close contests.

#### Are voters lying to pollsters?

Lastly, an interesting, if not compelling, theory is floating around: voters lie to pollsters. This assertion seems far-fetched; if voters were indeed misleading surveyors, pollsters would not have so accurately assessed vote share estimates in other elections, such as the recent one in Jammu and Kashmir. However, it seems there are chances of voters being affected by factors such as social desirability bias, particularly among marginalised communities, who may offer "socially acceptable" answers

during surveys done in public. It also seems possible that an increasing number of polling agencies contributes to voter fatigue, leading to skewed responses. When voters feel overwhelmed by constant questioning from different pollsters, they might disengage, further affecting responses to the questions including the vote choice question.

In summary, the divergence between vote share estimates and actual vote shares in recent elections indicates the greater need for caution in election polling and forecasting. We must not only refine our methodologies but also remain aware of the social and political dynamics that can influence voting behaviour. Ultimately, elections are complex, and while models may fall short in predicting exact outcomes, they remain essential tools for understanding the pulse of democracy.

*Sanjay Kumar is a Professor at Centre for the Study of Developing Societies. Devesh Kumar is a Researcher at Lokniti-CSDS, a Research programme of CSDS*

### THE GIST

▼ CSDS-Lokniti employs a detailed approach involving face-to-face interviews and multi-stage random sampling, ensuring a representative and accurate demographic match with actual voter profiles.

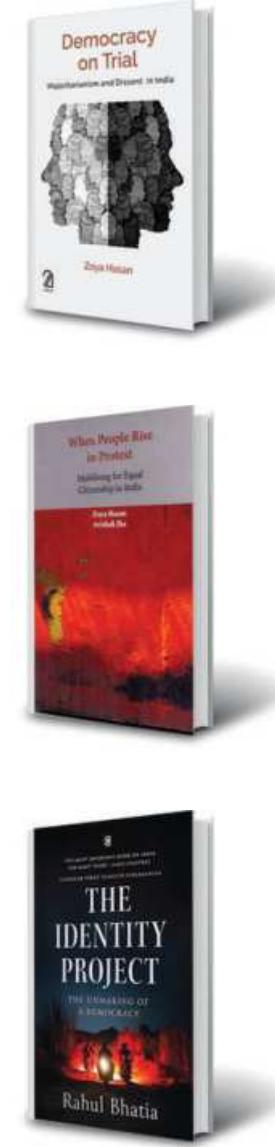
▼ Various factors, such as social dynamics, media narratives, and voter turnout, can significantly affect how individuals respond to polls and ultimately how they vote.

▼ JOIN FOR MORE: <https://telegram.me/DailyPressNation> Exit polls and forecasts are often subject to error due to inherent uncertainties in voter behavior, making it essential to interpret results with caution.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY



Transcending voices: Women protesters at the protest site in New Delhi's Shaheen Bagh. FILE PHOTO



## FROM THE ARCHIVES

## Know your English

**K. Subrahmanian**  
Upendran

“Do you think we'll have another earthquake soon?”

“How do I know? I'm not a seismologist.”

“A what?”

“A seismologist. He's a person who studies earthquakes. The first syllable 'seis' is pronounced like the word 'size'.”

“Size? But I've heard many people pronounce the first syllable like the word 'cease'.”

“It's pronounced 'size'. And 'mologist' rhymes with 'pologist' in the word 'anthropologist'.”

“I see. And the stress is on the second syllable 'mo' right?”

“That's right.”

“So it's pronounced seismologist. And one another thing...”

“You can't say 'one another thing'.”

“Why not?”

“Because the meaning of another is 'additional person or thing'. For example, if you say, I want another cup of coffee, it means you want one more cup.”

“Yes, I know that. But what's your point?”

“One another thing” is an example of redundancy. ‘Another’ means one other.

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‘One another’ means ‘one other one’. So say ‘one other’ or ‘another’.”

“So ‘one another thing’ is wrong. What do I say then?”

“You can either say ‘one more thing’ or ‘another thing’. Don't use both at the same time. You could say ‘one more thing that I'd like you to do is...’ or ‘Another thing that I'd like you to do is...’ Understood?”

“Understood. Oh, before I forget, there's one thing that I'd like you to clarify. Is there a difference between ‘fictitious’ and ‘factitious’?”

“There's a difference. When you say that something is fictitious, it means that it is ‘imagined and invented, not real’. For example, at the end of most TV serials, there is usually a line saying ‘All characters are fictitious.’ What it means is that the characters in the serial are not based on the real life of any individual or individuals. Another example: John's account of the accident was fictitious.”

“In other words, he didn't tell the truth. He merely invented a story. Right?”

“Right. ‘Factitious’, on the other hand, means ‘deliberately created or developed, unnatural, artificial’. For example, Radha gave Uma a factitious smile of welcome. What it means is that the smile Radha gave was an artificial one, not a real one. You can also talk about the factitious demand for coffee seeds.”

“Coffee seeds?”

“It can be anything. When you say that there is a factitious demand for something, it means that the demand has been artificially created with an ulterior motive.”

“It must only be profit motives.”

“Perhaps. Remember, unlike ‘fictitious’, ‘factitious’ is a formal word. Both words have the stress on the second syllable ‘ti’.”

Published in The Hindu on November 10, 1993

## Why India is at risk of becoming a ‘diminishing democracy’

In her new book, Zoya Hasan holds a mirror to rising majoritarianism and what it means for freedom of expression, dissent and equality. Other writers like Rahul Bhatia, Aakar Patel and Seema Mustafa point at problematic laws which target minorities

## Ziva Us Salam

**I**t is rare that the opening sentences of a book grip you, leaving you nodding in silent agreement. Yet this is what happened when I picked up veteran academic and writer Zoya Hasan's new book, *Democracy on Trial: Majoritarianism and Dissent in India*, published by Aakar Books. Its opening sentences read, “India is a thriving democracy when it comes to elections but a diminishing democracy when it comes to equality and freedoms. The very idea of a democracy based on equal rights irrespective of caste, class or faith has changed under the pressure of majoritarian politics which gained ground after the assumption of power by the Bharatiya Janata Party government in 2014.”

Hasan's words took me back to Sambhal in western Uttar Pradesh where a large section of the electorate, mostly Muslims, were subjected to violence when they came to exercise their franchise in the 2024 Lok Sabha election. Many voters showed their bruises to the media and alleged they were not allowed to cast their vote because of their religion. The allegation could not be proven yet the lingering thought remained: why were most people with injuries from a single community? Were they being wilfully denied their democratic right under an avalanche of majoritarianism with compromised institutions?

## Failures of Congress

A little later in the book, Hasan provides the answer, writing, “Majoritarianism

dominates politics in the current conjecture.” She then analyses how, even as we criticise the right-wing government today, the groundwork for its rise, incredibly, was laid by the Congress. Back in the mid-1980s, when the BJP was gasping for breath after winning two seats in the 1984 Lok Sabha election, the Congress' politics gave the still nascent BJP the lifeline it needed. It came with the party's dubious role in the entire Ayodhya saga; first the opening of the mosque's lock in 1986, then the destruction of the Babri Masjid in 1992 with Prime Minister Narasimha Rao at the helm.

As Aakar Patel analysed in *Our Hindu Rashtra* (Penguin), “In 1986...the court ordered the opening of the mosque to Hindu worshippers with the acquiescence of the Rajiv Gandhi government.” Three years later, Rajiv Gandhi allowed the Vishwa Hindu Parishad to lay the foundation stone of “a future Ram temple”.

Hasan doesn't hold back, writing, “The party's ill-advised actions and inactions ended up creating a space for the Hindu right to play a more central role in public life. This undermined its own monopoly over political power.” Since 1992, the Congress has not formed the government at the Centre on its own. In 2014, the party notched up its worst numbers.

For all its paradoxical attitude towards minorities, the decline of the Congress has given a free run to majoritarian politics with the BJP using every trick in the book, and many outside the book, to ride roughshod over democratic norms, particularly, the pluralist ethos of the country. For instance, Hasan brings up the increasing political subjugation of the

media. For long, India had a tradition of free press, broken only briefly during Indira Gandhi's ill-advised Emergency. Yet, the media houses objected to many of her manoeuvres, unlike today when, as Hasan puts it, “Media (is) on government duty”. It is, of course, partly caused by the widely prevalent corporate ownership of media houses, as she points out.

“Indian news media landscape is vast but this vast landscape is owned by a few corporate houses. This trend started when Mukesh Ambani-owned Reliance Industries entered the media sector taking over Network 18, and several television channels, including CNBC TV 18, CNN-IBN and CNN Awaaz as well as online websites.” Needless to say, most media house owners have close ties with the government. It translates to prime-time anchors working like the government's cheerleaders. This works for the corporate house, and it works for the government.

## Shaheen Bagh and CAA

The passage of laws like the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019, which introduces religion as a factor in granting Indian citizenship, and its links to a National Register of Citizens contradicts the protections provided to all communities in the Constitution, like the right to equality enshrined in Article 14. Hasan has discussed this constriction of rights threadbare in another of her recent works, *When People Rise in Protest*, co-authored with Avishek Jha and published by Three Essays Collective.

Tracing what came to be called the Shaheen Bagh movement led by the homemakers of a south-east Delhi colony,

Hasan contends that “the Shaheen Bagh protests were largely organised, led, and sustained by Muslim women who previously did not have an autonomous or significant presence in public life.”

Hasan says Shaheen Bagh was a powerful symbol of civil disobedience in the face of countless pressures. The government, on its part, refused to talk to the protesters, and some of the statements from its top Ministers targeting minorities did not help. The Uttar Pradesh government used disproportionate force. The disengagement with a section of the citizenry was complete.

Rahul Bhatia's new book, *The Identity Project* (Westland Books), also does not hold back on the controversial Act, stating, “The CAA gave refuge while the NRC took it away.”

Earlier, in 2020, Seema Mustafa had edited a volume on the protests in *Shaheen Bagh and the Idea of India* (Speaking Tiger Books) in which Hasan contributed an essay on ‘Occupying Streets: Women in the Vanguard of the Anti-CAA Struggle’.

In the Introduction, Mustafa points out that a group of women, led by elderly women in their eighties, “came out of their homes to safeguard their homes.” They wanted to ensure that their citizenship was not brought into question, that their youth remained assured of a future as equal citizens of India, and that their menfolk remained safe and secure, she writes.

Hasan's books – like the tomes of Bhatia, Patel, and Mustafa – hold a mirror of Indian society and polity. They warn readers that India is at risk of soon having a democracy in body but not in spirit.

## THE DAILY QUIZ

Spanish footballers Rodri and Aitana Bonmatí won the prestigious Balon d'Or presented by France Football on Monday. Here is a quiz on the famed football award

## Vignesh P. Venkitesh

## QUESTION 1

Who is the first and oldest winner of the award?

## QUESTION 2

The award for best young player is named after this player who is also the first French footballer to win the prize. Who is he?

## QUESTION 3

The award for best goalkeeper is named after the only goalkeeper to win the golden ball. Who is he?

## QUESTION 4

The first non-European player to win the award has never played in a World Cup. Who is he?

## QUESTION 5

Bonmatí won her second consecutive prize on Monday. Which other woman player has the same feat?

## QUESTION 6

For a decade since 2008, either Cristiano Ronaldo or Lionel Messi won the prize. Who was the last player to win before their streak and who broke their streak?



## Visual Question:

Name this player who is the only defender to win the prize twice? A.F.P.

## Questions and Answers to the previous day's daily

**quiz:** 1. Which treaty signed in July 1923, recognised the boundaries of the modern state of Turkey? **Ans: Treaty of Lausanne**

2. Who was the last Sultan of the Ottoman Empire deposed in 1922 and name the founder of modern Turkey and its first President? **Ans: Mehmed VI and Mustafa Kemal Ataturk**

3. What was the former name of Istanbul and what is the capital of Turkey? **Ans: Constantinople and Ankara**

4. Name the body of water that connects separates Asian Turkey from European Turkey. **Ans: The Bosphorus Strait**

5. Which region having a World Heritage Status is known for its distinctive “fairy chimneys”? **Ans: Cappadocia**

6. Name the globally sweet made of filo pastry, filled with chopped nuts, and sweetened with syrup or honey associated with the Turkish region. **Ans: Baklava**

7. Name the Turkish Literature Nobel Laureate who set up the Museum of Innocence. **Ans: Orhan Pamuk**

Visual: Name the site considered the world's oldest temple complex. **Ans: Göbekli Tepe**

**Early Birds:** K.N. Viswanathan | Tito Shiladitya | Tamal Biswas | Piyali Tuli | Dodo Jayaditya

Please send in your answers to [dailyquiz@thehindu.co.in](mailto:dailyquiz@thehindu.co.in)

## Word of the day

## Furtive:

attempting to avoid notice or attention

## Synonyms:

hidden, covert, secretive

## Usage:

There is something furtive about their behaviour.

## Pronunciation:

newsth.live/furtivepro

## International Phonetic Alphabet:

/fɜ:tɪv/

For feedback and suggestions for Text & Context, please write to [letters@thehindu.co.in](mailto:letters@thehindu.co.in) with the subject 'Text & Context'

**From Page One****No clarity on sharing of seats in Mahayuti, MVA**

Ramesh Chennithala, Maharashtra in-charge for the Congress, told *The Hindu*, "There will be no friendly fight in Maharashtra. We are asking our party workers to withdraw their candidatures from places where the alliance partners have fielded their candidates. In Mumbai, we [the Congress] will fight in 11 seats. Congress will fight in 103 seats. Our goal is that we have to get rid of the corrupt government."

Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis said, "There will be friendly fights in four seats. Whenever we could not achieve consensus, we have decided we will not fight over those seats."

For example, in Mumbai, the Mahayuti fielded candidates against each other in the Mankurd-Shivajinagar and Anushakti Nagar seats. While Mr. Ajit gave nomination forms to MLA Nawab Malik and his daughter Sana Malik, the Shiv Sena also fielded candidates in the same constituencies as Mahayuti candidates.

The BJP, however, issued a statement against Mr. Malik. "We will not canvas for a candidate who has links with gangster Dawood Ibrahim," Mumbai BJP chief Ashish Shelar told reporters.

**Family battle**

The war of words between Mr. Ajit and his uncle Mr. Pawar turned personal on Tuesday.

After Mr. Ajit got emotional, accusing his uncle of breaking the family, Mr. Pawar imitated him on stage, adding that he had to climb the steps of the court because of a Pawar.

"I am the elderly person in the family. There is no reason for me to break the house. I have never gone against the wishes of my family, and will never do so in the future. Whatever happens, but I will never walk on the wrong path," the senior Pawar said at the opening rally of Yugendra Pawar's campaigning in Baramati.

He added that some people had gone to court claiming ownership of the party that he had founded and built up.

The office of the Chief Electoral Officer said that 10,905 nomination papers of 7,995 candidates had been received till Tuesday.

**Modi rolls out health cover for those over 70**

"It is very easy to say that people are not getting Ayushman Bharat. But what about the terms and conditions that have to be met to avail the benefits of the scheme? Even if you have a smartphone, you will become ineligible for the scheme. Half of the population will fail the eligibility criteria," Trinamool Congress leader Kunal Ghosh said.

**'Covers whole family'**

Mr. Ghosh added that the West Bengal government's Swasthya Sathi scheme covers every member of a family without any such prerequisites.

The Prime Minister inaugurated and laid the foundation stones for projects worth more than ₹13,000 crore, including the creation of four centres of excellence under the Ayush Health scheme, expansion of health services with the use of drones, helicopter services at AIIMS, Rishikesh, new infrastructure at AIIMS, New Delhi and AIIMS, Bilaspur, expansion of services in five other AIIMS in the country, establishment of medical colleges, the launch of nursing colleges, and other projects related to the health sector.

Mr. Modi inaugurated the second phase of India's first All India Institute of Ayurveda, and three medical colleges at Mandsaur, Neemuch and Seoni in Madhya Pradesh, and laid the foundation stones for five nursing colleges, and 21 critical care blocks.

(With inputs from Shiv Sahay Singh)

**Rajnath flags off Sagarmala Parikrama to Thoothukudi****Dinakar Peri**  
NEW DELHI

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Tuesday virtually flagged off the Sagarmala Parikrama, a 1,500-km passage by an autonomous surface vessel manufactured by Sagar Defence Engineering, from Mumbai to Thoothukudi.

The vessel's journey, unveiled at Swavlamban, the annual event of the Naval Innovation and Indigenisation Organisation (NIO), is an important technology demonstration especially as the Indian Navy looks to induct autonomous surface and underwater vessels in large numbers.

The Minister formally unveiled the third edition of Acing Development of Innovative Technologies with iDEX (ADITI 3.0) challenge and 13th edition of



Rajnath Singh

Defence India Start-up Challenges (DISC 13) aimed to advance indigenous defence technologies and operational efficiencies.

ADITI 3.0 features a challenge from the Navy to design a high-power microwave weapon system. DISC 13 presents seven challenges – three from the Army and two each from Navy and Air Force – in the domains of AI, military communication and autonomous bots among others.

Navy chief Admiral Dinesh K. Tripathi reiterated

**All 3 trapped militants killed in Jammu's Akhnoor: Army**

Encounter started at Asan in Sunderbani Sector on Monday morning when militants opened fire at a convoy; Army says it recovered war-like stores; NSG commandos also joined the operation

**The Hindu Bureau**  
SRINAGAR

The three militants who made an attempt to attack an Army convoy on Monday were killed in a 36-hour anti-militancy operation of the security forces in Akhnoor of Jammu and Kashmir, the Army said on Tuesday.

"All three hardcore terrorists were eliminated post intense firefight. After surveillance throughout the night, an intense fire-fight unfolded today morning resulting in a significant victory for our forces. Relentless operations and tactical excellence have led to the elimination of the three terrorists," an Army spokesperson said.

It said the operation saw successful recovery of war-like stores, "marking a critical step in maintaining security in the region".

The encounter started at Asan in the Sunderbani Sector on Monday morning when militants fired upon a convoy. The area was cordoned off immediately. A special team of NSG commandos joined the security forces to neutralise the militants. Officials said BMP-II, an infantry combat vehicle, also



**Battlefield:** The Army deploys BMP-II, an infantry combat vehicle, during a search-and-cordon operation following an attack on an Army convoy in Akhnoor in Jammu & Kashmir on Tuesday. ANI

known as APC 'Sarah', was deployed by the security forces at the site.

"One of the three terrorists who fired at an ambulance that was part of an Army convoy moving near the LoC on Monday morning was killed by evening," Senior Superintendent of Police, Jammu, Joginder Singh said.

The Army said special forces were mobilised promptly to reinforce the cordon around the fleeing militants. "Advanced technology, including night surveillance devices, unmanned ground vehicles, and surveillance drones

ensured real-time tracking and prevented potential escapes," the Army said.

"We also want to dispel some rumours going around on social media about the use of BMPs in this operation. The hardened vehicles were used to close in on the trapped terrorists. We want to also emphasise that Indian Army is a professional force and no disrespect to the mortal remains of the slain terrorist has been carried out," the Army said.

There is a sudden spurt in militant attacks in J&K this month. Earlier, militants carried out five at-

tacks in the Kashmir Valley, which resulted in killing of 10 civilians. Two security personnel were also killed in these attacks.

J&K Lieutenant-Governor Manoj Sinha has directed security forces to take pre-emptive actions to stop militant attacks.

"We have many (security) meetings, including one with L-G Manoj Sinha. The aim is that the coordination between the Army and the police continue. Our synergy is increasing," Deputy Inspector-General, Jammu-Samba-Kathua range, Shiv Kumar Sharma said.

**Shah unveils mobile app for birth and death registration****The Hindu Bureau**  
NEW DELHI

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Tuesday launched the Civil Registration System (CRS) mobile application to "integrate technology with governance".

Mr. Shah said the application would make registration of births and deaths seamless and hassle-free by allowing citizens to register at any time, from any place, and in their State's official language.

"It will significantly reduce the time required for registration," he said in a post on X.

According to the Registration of Births and Deaths (Amendment) Act, 2023, all reported births and deaths in the country occurring from October 1, 2023, are to be digitally registered through the Centre's portal dc.crsorgi.gov.in.

**Single document**

The digital birth certificates will be a single document to prove the date of birth for various services such as admission to educational institutions, government jobs and marriage registration.

The centralised database will also help update the National Population Register (NPR), ration



Amit Shah. ANI

cards, property registration and electoral rolls.

Data for the NPR, first collected in 2010 and updated in 2015 through door-to-door enumeration, already includes information on 119 crore residents. NPR is the first step to the creation of the National Register of Citizens (NPR), as per the Citizenship Act.

**Patel remembered**  
Mr. Shah also unveiled a statue of India's first Home Minister Sardar Vallabhbabai Patel at the Census Building in the capital.

He said that Patel wove the country into a thread of unity, laying the foundation for a strong India. "This statue of the Iron Man, a symbol of struggle and sacrifice for national interest, will continue to inspire everyone as a testament to his unwavering dedication to establishing democratic values in the country," Mr. Shah said.

**Cong. slams Modi, says PM destroying SEBI's sanctity****The Hindu Bureau**  
NEW DELHI

Mounting an all-out offensive against Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) Chairperson Madhab Buch, the Congress on Tuesday accused Prime Minister Narendra Modi of 'destroying' the SEBI's sanctity and 'jeopardising' the savings of crores of small and medium investors.

Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi said the "Monopoly Bachao Syndicate" was at work, at the core of

which was a 'dangerous' nexus among the Adani Group, key regulatory bodies, and the BJP.

Party chief Mallikarjun Kharge said the sanctity of stock markets regulator has been compromised.



**Indigenously built:** The first aircraft of the Tejas LCA-Mk1A series took to the skies from the HAL facility in March. ANI

be used to deliver two jets to the Indian Air Force (IAF) while regular deliveries are awaited.

The engines are now expected by March or April next year, which is a two-year delay from the contractual terms.

A source said that contractual terms will have to be implemented. High-value defence contracts typically have a penalty clause for delays or violations. Another source confirmed that the penalty clause in the deal has been invoked.

**Minister discussed**  
The engine delays were also discussed between the National Security Advisers of the two countries when they met and was also taken up during the visit of Defence Minister Rajnath Singh.

There are two engines available with GE for now that are being given to India, sources said. They will

subsequent five years.

"The GE issue is purely logistical. There are no politics involved," the first source said, saying that GE has supply chain issues with the engines and they are now tying that up to restart regular production.

There are two engines available with GE for now that are being given to India, sources said. They will

In response to a query from *The Hindu*, a GE Ae-

rospace spokesperson reiterated its earlier response, "The Aerospace industry continues to experience unprecedented supply chain pressures. The GE Aerospace is working with our partner HAL and suppliers to resolve constraints and deliver F-404 IN20 engines for the LCA-Mk1 programme."

The Security of Supply Arrangement (SoSA) that India and the U.S. concluded recently enables this kind of cooperation, sources noted.

In addition to the 83 Mk1 aircraft on order, the Defence Ministry has given approval for procurement of another 97 of them.

This would eventually make 180 LCA-Mk1A jets and 220 jets of the Mk1 variant.

The combined cost of the 180 Mk1As is an estimated at ₹1.15-lakh crore.

**Rajnath flags off Sagarmala Parikrama to Thoothukudi**

Vijaita Singh  
NEW DELHI

The Union Home Ministry granted long-term visas to 145 Pakistanis in September, a senior government official has said.

Long-term visas are typically granted to citizens of Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan, who enter India on short-term visas, in a bid to acquire Indian citizenship. The majority of applicants for such visas

are Pakistani Hindus, although the members of six non-Muslim communities – Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, Parsis and Christians – from the three neighbouring nations are eligible for five-year long-term visas.

On another note, the official said that a list of 366 Pakistani prisoners and 86 fishermen lodged in Indian jails has been shared with Pakistan in July. Since January, nine Pakistani prison-

ers and five fishermen were repatriated.

According to the Citizenship Act, 1955, one of the conditions to acquire citizenship by naturalisation is that the applicant should have lived in India for at least 11 years, includ-

ing a continuous stay during the last 12 months before applying for citizenship.

According to Seeman Lok Sangathan, a group that advocates for the

rights of Pakistani minority migrants in India, nearly 500 Hindus have arrived in India on short-term visas in the past six months.

**'Resume Thar Express'**

The organisation has demanded the resumption of services of the Thar Express, the rail link between Jodhpur and Karachi. It was suspended by Pakistan in 2019 following the revocation of the special status of Jammu and Kashmir.

"The rail link should be restored as most Pakistani Hindus who arrive in Rajasthan live in Sindh province, across the border," said SLS president Hindu Singh Soda. "Since only the Attari-Wagah immigration post is operational, people from Sindh have to travel all the way to Punjab. This involves money and time, and those who come here are from economically weaker sections."

**Four elephants dead in tiger reserve****The Hindu Bureau**  
BHOJPAL

Four elephants were found dead and five were found in poor health in the Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve in Madhya Pradesh on Tuesday, officials said. Chief Wildlife

Warden Vijay N. Ambade said one male and three female elephants from a herd of 13 were found dead and five more were found lying on the ground.

"On October 29, during regular patrolling, staff of the Bandhavgarh Tiger Re-

serve found two wild elephants in RF 384 and two in PF183 A of Khitauli and Pataur core ranges, respectively, dead," he said.

He said that a team of wildlife health officers and wildlife veterinarians are treating the elephants.

**APPEAL**

20 years old Arunthi suffering from Acute Myeloid Leukemia requires Allogenic Bone Marrow Transplantation at Meenakshi Mission Hospital & Research Centre, Madurai. The total expenditure is Rs. 16,00,000/- The family is very poor and cannot afford the huge cost. Please help her have a bright future. Donations sent by Ch.D.D. favouring Meenakshi Mission Hospital & Research Centre, Nungambakkam Branch, A/C. No. 60182010063310, IFSC: CNRB0016018 GOGV 180 GOGV. The donations sent through Ch.D.D./NEFT Transfer & GOOGLE PAY (Canara Bank, Nungambakkam Branch, O.No.13, N.No.29, Pyrofts Garden Lane, Chennai-600027, Ph: 044-42137401 E-mail ID: womenswelfaresyndicate@gmail.com. Website: www.womenswelfaresyndicate.org

WWS

A ND-NDE

# Family feud and 'Pawar play' at Baramati

Yugendra Pawar, backed by his grand-uncle Sharad Pawar, takes on his uncle Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar in the family's stronghold; Ajit cites development work, while Sharad confident of qualifications of his grand-nephew ahead of one of the most closely watched contests in Maharashtra

## Abhinay Deshpande

MUMBAI

The Baramati Assembly constituency in Maharashtra, traditionally a Pawar family stronghold, will see a family battle again. Both Yugendra Pawar, backed by his grand-uncle Sharad Pawar, and his uncle Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar have filed their nominations from this seat, making it one of the most closely watched contests in the Maharashtra Assembly election.

Mr. Yugendra, a fourth-generation politician from the influential Pawar family, accompanied by his grand-uncle and aunt Baramati MP Supriya Sule, filed nomination papers on Monday, signalling a generational shift within the Pawar lineage. This election marks the second instance this year of two members of the family facing off in



Yugendra Pawar with NCP (SP) working president Supriya Sule; right, Ajit Pawar at a campaign event. ANI

Baramati. In the Lok Sabha polls, Mr. Ajit had fielded his wife, Sunetra Pawar, against Ms. Sule.

**New wave**  
Expressing support for his grand-nephew, Mr. Sharad backed Mr. Yugendra's leadership, asserting that the young candidate repre-

sents a new wave in Maharashtra politics. Mr. Ajit made an emotional pitch while addressing the supporters, accusing the elder Pawar of orchestrating a family rift by fielding a candidate against him.

"I have previously admitted to making mistakes, but it seems others are

making their own errors now," Mr. Ajit said at a rally. He recalled a family agreement to prioritise Baramati, and said that Mr. Sharad disregarded this consensus. "Saheb (Sharad Pawar) has created a split within the family," he added, saying politics should not descend to such "personal le-

vels". "It took generations to unite us, it doesn't take a moment to break us apart," he said.

Mr. Ajit cited development work done in Baramati, stating that growth is not limited to infrastructure alone. "People have a right to question, but some discussions lack understanding," he added, addressing recent critiques of his tenure.

Mr. Sharad expressed confidence in his decision to support Mr. Yugendra, whom he described as a highly educated, internationally trained candidate familiar with administration and Baramati's core industries such as sugar.

"The party has chosen a young leader, and I believe the people of Baramati will back this new generation," he said, drawing on his own five-decade-long association with the constituency. Advising young leaders, he reflected, "This

bond with the people is built on mutual trust. Humility and acceptance of the people's mandate are essential."

Mr. Yugendra, thanking his grand-uncle for the support, expressed his resolve to address local issues such as unemployment, inflation, water scarcity, and the rising crime against women. "Saheb himself filed my papers, and I am fortunate to have his guidance," he said.

Asked about contesting against his uncle Mr. Ajit, he said, "What matters is who stands with me, not the challenge before me."

Mr. Ajit exuded confidence in his campaign, pledging to continue schemes such as the Ladki Bahin Yojana, a social welfare initiative, if re-elected. "Mahayuti will return to power. By November 23, we will reaffirm our commitment to the people," he said.

## IN BRIEF



Puja Khedkar's father enters poll fray as Independent

Sacked probationary IAS officer Puja Khedkar's father Dilip Khedkar on Tuesday filed his nomination as an Independent candidate in the Maharashtra Assembly election. He will be contesting the Shevgaon seat. Earlier, he had contested the Lok Sabha election but was unsuccessful. Trainee IAS officer Puja Khedkar (in picture) had grabbed headlines in July for abusing her position of power. Further investigation brought her disability claims and OBC status benefits into question.

## Disagreements continue on parliamentary panel on Waqf

Three members of the Joint Committee on Waqf (Amendment) Bill 2024, AAP MP Sanjay Singh, DMK MP M. M. Abdulla, and AIMIM MP Asaduddin Owaisi, stood in protest on Tuesday during a presentation by the Delhi Waqf Board Administrator. Delhi Chief Minister Atishi had earlier objected to the presentation. Panel chairperson Jagdambika Pal allowed the presentation after taking opinion from the Lok Sabha Secretary-General. Mr. Pal has also agreed to hear the Delhi Minority Affairs Minister.

## 'Modi asked Tata to shift aircraft plant from Nagpur'

Nationalist Congress Party (SP) chief Sharad Pawar on Tuesday said the Final Assembly Line (FAL) of the Tata Advanced Systems and Airbus, which was inaugurated in Gujarat on Monday, was initially planned to be set up in Nagpur. "Ratan Tata wanted the project to come up in Maharashtra, and a 500-acre plot in Nagpur MPPC area was marked for it. This was during the Manmohan Singh-led government. But when Narendra Modi became the Prime Minister, he called Ratan Tata and asked him to set up the factory in Gujarat," Mr. Pawar said.

# Raut seeks removal of DGP, says Mahayuti using police against MVA

## The Hindu Bureau

MUMBAI

Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Sanjay Raut on Tuesday accused the ruling Mahayuti alliance led by Chief Minister Eknath Shinde of using police machinery to attack leaders of the Opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi. He also demanded the removal of the Director-General of Police, Rashmi Shukla.

Mr. Raut was speaking to presspersons on the

context of an alleged attack on Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Advay Hire in the Malegaon Outer constituency in Nashik on Monday.

He alleged that Mr. Hire was attacked by the goons of a Shiv Sena Cabinet Minister and the party's candidate from the seat, Dada Bhuse.

### Fearing defeat'

"The MVA candidates are threatened, attacked, and intimidated by the Mahayuti leaders ahead of the election. It is quite evident that they [Mahayuti] fear



Sanjay Raut

uti leaders ahead of the election. It is quite evident that they [Mahayuti] fear

# Shah breached model code, says Trinamool

## The Hindu Bureau

KOLKATA

The Trinamool Congress on Tuesday alleged that Union Home Minister Amit Shah had violated the Model Code of Conduct by making "politically charged" statements at an official event in North 24 Parganas district of West Bengal, where an Assembly by-election is set to be held on November 13.

Mr. Shah had participated in an event organised by

the Border Security Force at Petrapole on the India-Bangladesh border on Sunday. "We seek your urgent attention regarding a serious breach of the Model Code of Conduct by Union Home Minister Amit Shah carried out during the inauguration event of the integrated Check Post, Passenger Terminal and Maitri Dwar at Petrapole in North 24 Parganas," Rajya Sabha member Subrata Bakshi said in a letter to the Chief Electoral Officer here.

# Lawyers clash with police in courtroom after spat with judge

## Press Trust of India

GAZIABAD

Lawyers and baton-wielding police personnel came to blows in a courtroom in Ghaziabad on Tuesday after the judge called them to remove a group of protesting lawyers raising slogans against him following a disagreement.

Some of the lawyers claimed they suffered injuries as police personnel used batons on them while police officers alleged that agitating advocates set a local police outpost on fire.

The ruckus started around 11 a.m. in the district and sessions court complex located in the Raj Nagar area following a heated altercation between an advocate and the judge over the hearing of an anticipatory bail case.

**Dramatic scenes**  
Dramatic scenes of the clash in the courtroom surfaced on social media. In one such clip, some police personnel were seen brandishing batons, while one even wielded a wooden chair, gesturing as if to strike the lawyers.

Ghaziabad Police Commissioner Ajay Kumar Mishra said that a group of advocates "tried to exert pressure" on the district judge during the hearing of a bail application and "attempted to assault" him.

Requesting anonymity, a lawyer said that a group of advocates had demanded that District and Sessions Judge Anil Kumar should hear the case of an-



Police arrive to control the situation at the Ghaziabad district court on Tuesday. PTI

ticipatory bail on priority, which he denied and stated that the case would be entertained as per the listing.

"Upon this, the group of advocates raised slogans against the district judge. The matter took an ugly turn when court proceedings were interrupted and the judge called in the police. On reaching the courtroom, police personnel resorted to lathicharge. Over a dozen lawyers suffered injuries," he claimed.

**Complaint sent**  
Meanwhile, former district bar president Nahar Singh Yadav sent a complaint of the incident to the Allahabad High Court Chief Justice.

He alleged that advocates Jitendra Singh and Abhishek Yadav, who reached the court to oppose the anticipatory bail plea, had urged the district judge to hear the arguments on priority or transfer the case as the courtroom was crowded.

Mr. Yadav claimed that the district judge lost his temper and started abusing the lawyers.

## Cheating case filed against journalist in Ahmedabad

### Press Trust of India

AHMEDABAD

The police have registered a cheating case against *The Hindu*'s Gujarat correspondent, Mahesh Langa, for allegedly duping a businessman of ₹28.68 lakh, an official said on Tuesday.

This is the third first information report registered against Mr. Langa after his arrest earlier this month by the Ahmedabad Police's Crime Branch in an alleged GST scam.

On October 23, a second FIR was registered against him by the Gandhinagar Police after the recovery of documents of the Gujarat Maritime Board from his possession, Commissioner of Police, Ahmedabad, G.S. Malik said.

Mr. Langa was sent to judicial custody two weeks ago after his police remand in the alleged GST fraud case came to an end.

The Enforcement Directorate on Tuesday said in New Delhi that Mr. Langa was "controlling" an accused company, DA Enterprises, from whose premises unaccounted-for cash was seized by the Gujarat Police recently as part of an investigation into the GST fraud case.

The agency said it undertook fresh searches on Sunday in the money laundering case on seven premises in Ahmedabad, Surat and Bhavnagar and seized "incriminating" documents. The money laundering case stems from an Ahmedabad Crime Branch FIR filed on receipt of a complaint from the Directorate General of GST Intelligence.

**OFFICE OF THE ADDITIONAL CHIEF ENGINEER, PWD, ZONE, AJMER**  
No. ACE/AJ/TECH/F2/30A-Ajmer/D-3337 Date:- 24.10.2024  
NIB No.: PWD2425A2392 Notice Inviting Bid No. 18/2024-25

Bids for 02 No. Works are invited from interested bidders upto 5.00 P.M. on Monday 18 November 2024. Other particulars of the bid may be visited on the procurement portal (<http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in>, <http://sppp.raj.nic.in>) of the State, and DIPR departmental website. The approximate value of the procurement is Rs. 2292.92 Lacs.

UBN NO. PWD2425WLOB08830 PWD2425WLOB08831 (V.K. Jain), Additional Chief Engineer, PWD, Zone, Ajmer.

DIPR/C/10601/2024

**BRUHAT BENGALURU MAHANAGARA PALIKE**  
Office of the Executive Engineer, Bangalore South Division, Amruthnagara, Konakunte Main Road, Soudamini Layout, Bangalore - 560 062.

No.BBMP/EE/BSD/TEND/06/2024-25 Date:29.10.2024 INVITATION FOR SHORT TERM TENDER (Through GOK KPP Portal only)

(Single & Two Cover System) The Executive Engineer, Bangalore South Division, invites item rate tenders from eligible contractors for the works detailed in the table below.

**Various Civil works in different wards of Bangalore South Division.**

Reserved for General Category

| Sl. No. | Ward No.                     | Est. Cost (Rs. in lakhs) | EMD (in Rs.)       | No. of Works |
|---------|------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|--------------|
| 1       | Ward No. 197-Vasanthapura    | 9.65                     | 24,125             | 01           |
| 2       | Ward No. 202-Uttarahalli     | 10.00 to 38.70           | 25,000 to 77,400   | 04           |
| 3       | Ward No. 203-Subramanyapura  | 28.70 to 45.00           | 57,400 & 90,000    | 02           |
| 4       | Ward No. 204-Vasanthapura    | 8.70 to 50.00            | 21,750 to 1,00,000 | 04           |
| 5       | Ward No. 206-Konakanakte     | 15.00 to 40.70           | 37,500 to 81,400   | 04           |
| 6       | Ward No. 208-Anjanapura      | 23.00 to 40.70           | 46,000 to 81,400   | 03           |
| 7       | Ward No. 209-Gottigere       | 25.00 to 40.70           | 50,000 to 81,400   | 03           |
| 8       | Ward No. 210-Kalena Agrahara | 5.00 to 58.70            | 12,500 to 1,17,400 | 06           |
| 9       | Ward No. 211-Begur           | 10.00 to 58.70           | 25,000 to 1,17,400 | 03           |
| 10      | Ward No. 212-Naganathapura   | 20.00 to 44.70           | 50,000 to 89,400   | 04           |
| 11      | Ward No. 225-Kudlu           | 10.00 to 200.00          | 25,000 to 3,00,000 | 05           |

**Reserved for SC Category**

|    |                            |               |                 |    |
|----|----------------------------|---------------|-----------------|----|
| 12 | Ward No. 202-Uttarahalli   | 40.00         | 40,000          | 01 |
| 13 | Ward No. 204-Vasanthapura  | 50.00         | 50,000          | 01 |
| 14 | Ward No. 206-Konakanakte   | 25.00         | 25,000          | 01 |
| 15 | Ward No. 208-Anjanapura    | 30.00         | 30,000          | 01 |
| 16 | Ward No. 209-Gottigere     | 23.00         | 23,000          | 01 |
| 17 | Ward No. 211-Begur         | 10.00         | 10,000          | 01 |
| 18 | Ward No. 212-Naganathapura | 10.00         | 10,000          | 01 |
| 19 | Ward No. 225-Kudlu         | 20.00 & 38.70 | 25,000 & 38,700 | 02 |

**Reserved for ST Category**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 20 | Ward No. 203-Subramanyapura | 10.00 & 35.00</ |

## IN BRIEF



## Man held for issuing death threats to Salman, Zeeshan

A 20-year-old man was arrested on Tuesday for allegedly issuing death threats to actor Salman Khan and Zeeshan Siddique, MLA and son of the slain former MLA Baba Siddique. An FIR was registered on Monday after Mr. Zeeshan's team informed the police of the threat. The police took the accused, identified as Gufran Maqbool, into custody at 1 a.m., the Bandra Police said. He has no previous record of crime. The police said Mr. Maqbool was called for an inquiry and arrested after the verification was done. He was booked under Sections 308(2), 308(5), 351(I) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita.

## Oil firms hike commission to dealers, no fuel price change

The State-owned oil companies on Tuesday hiked the commission paid to fuel dealers but there will be no change in the retail prices of petrol and diesel in majority of States. Petrol and diesel prices will fall in Odisha, Chhattisgarh, and Himachal Pradesh due to a rationalisation of intra-State freight. "IndianOil is pleased to announce a revision in the dealer margins (effective from October 30, 2024), following the resolution of a pending litigation. This will have no additional impact on the Retail Selling Price of products," IOC said in a post on X. Dealer commissions would vary according to sale and place. Details were, however, not immediately known. Union Oil Minister Hardeep Singh Puri welcomed the freight rationalisation. PTI

## NPPA seeks cut in prices of anti-cancer medications

The Hindu Bureau  
NEW DELHI

The National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) has directed manufacturers to reduce the maximum retail price of three anti-cancer drugs - Trastuzumab, Osimertinib and Durvalumab - in line with the government's commitment to ensure the availability of drugs at affordable prices.

"This is in pursuance of the announcement made in the Union Budget for the year 2024-25 exempting these three anti-cancer medicines from customs duty. The Department of Revenue, Ministry of Finance, issued a notification recently reducing the customs duty on these three drugs to nil," said a release by the Central government on Tuesday.

## Maithili missed out on classical status as proposal did not come from Bihar govt.

Sreeparna Chakrabarty  
NEW DELHI

While five languages were accorded the classical status earlier this month, Maithili missed out as the Bihar government had not forwarded the proposal officially.

The recommendation according classical status for a language is made by the Linguistics Expert Committee, which comprises representatives of the Union Ministries of Home and Culture and four or five linguistic experts at any given time. The panel is chaired by the president of the Sahitya Akademi. The recommendation then has to be approved by the Union Cabinet following which a Gazette notification is issued.

Sources in the committee told *The Hindu* that the proposal for Maithili had

## The language was included in the Eighth Schedule of Constitution in 2003

been forwarded by the Patna-based Maithili Sahitya Sansthan, but the same had not been forwarded to the Home Ministry by the Bihar government, which is the official procedure.

Thus, though the 300-page proposal for Maithili was discussed at the meeting of the committee, it could not be considered due to this technicality.

## 12 million speakers

By the 2011 Census, there were approximately 12 million Maithili speakers in India. Maithili was included in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution as a recognised Indian language in 2003. It is included as an optional paper in the UPSC

exam. In March 2018, Maithili received the second official language status in Jharkhand. Besides, Jharkhand and Bihar, it is the second most spoken language in Nepal.

The Janata Dal(U) has been consistent in its demand for classical language status for Maithili and reiterated it on October 7, barely three days after the Union Cabinet cleared the same for the five languages. JD(U) national working president and Rajya Sabha member Sanjay Jha, who hails from Mithilanchal, made the call in a statement issued on X.

"Conservation and promotion of the Maithili language has been my top priority from the beginning. Due to my efforts, the expert committee of Maithili scholars constituted by the Central government made 11 recommendations in its report, which was

completed on August 31, 2018. The first recommendation was - the Maithili language is about 1,300 years old, and its literature has been developing independently and continuously. Therefore, it should be placed in the category of classical language," he said.

In a written reply in the Bihar Assembly in July, State Education Minister Sunil Kumar Singh, while asserting that the decision to accord classical status to languages was under the Central government, had said the Bihar Government would soon send the proposal to the Centre.

Among the five languages given classical status on October 3, the proposals for Assamese and Bengali had come from the respective State governments as had been the case for Marathi which has been pending since 2014.

## New guidelines promote Ayurveda, curb antibiotics use in veterinary treatment

A.M. Jigeesh  
NEW DELHI

The Standard Veterinary Treatment Guidelines (SVTG), released recently by the Union Ministry of Animal Husbandry, aims to reduce and regulate the use of antibiotics to treat diseases found among livestock and poultry. The SVTG also provides for the use of Ayurvedic drugs in veterinary treatment.

It is for the first time that the Centre has come up with a standard set for treatment of almost all diseases of animals and birds.

Union Animal Husbandry Secretary Alka Upadhyay said the guidelines were designed to minimise antimicrobial resistance and effectively control diseases. Former Director and Vice-Chancellor of the In-

## Maharashtra man behind bomb threats to airlines, say police

Press Trust of India  
NAGPUR

The police in Nagpur have identified a 35-year-old man from Gondia in the State as the person behind a spate of hoax bomb threats that triggered panic, caused flight delays and led to increased security at airports and other establishments, an official said.

The Nagpur city police's Special Branch has identified the man as Jagdish Uike, who has authored a book on terrorism and was arrested in 2021 in a case, he said.

"Uike is currently on the run after these emails were traced back to him," the senior police official said.

He sent emails to Ministers and government bodies, including the Prime Minister's Office (PMO), Railway Minister, Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde and his deputy, airline offices, the Director-General of Police (DGP) and the Railway Protection Force (RPF), the official said.

The threats were issued mostly through social media.

Air India received threats for around 36 flights and IndiGo for about 35 flights. Vistara received the threats for 32 flights, the sources said.



In the past 15 days, over 510 flights have got the threats that later turned out to be hoaxes.

ven a chance to present his information on the secret terror code he claimed to have deciphered.

He also requested a meeting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi to discuss his knowledge of terror threats, he added.

**Threats continue**  
More than 100 flights operated by various Indian airlines received bomb threats on Tuesday, according to sources.

In 16 days, over 510 domestic and international flights have got the threats that later turned out to be hoaxes.

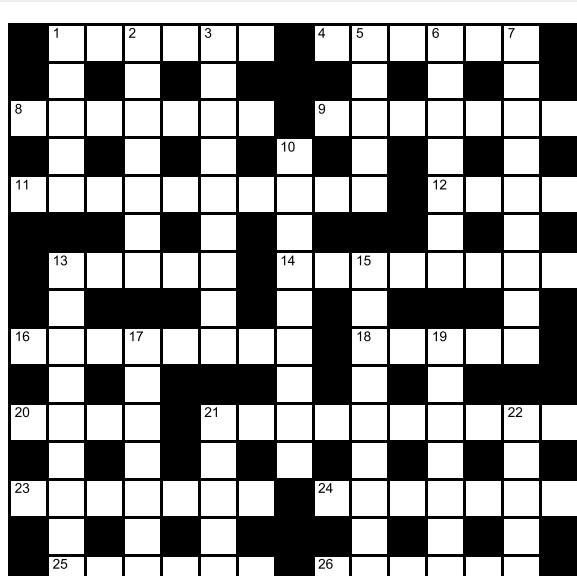
The threats were issued mostly through social media.

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## TH CROSSWORD (set by Bruno)

14318

To solve this puzzle online, get across to our crossword site.  
<https://qrgo.page.link/jipTn>



## Across

- Shock as cat's found behind western edge of jungle (6)
- Music media incurring waste's finished (6)
- Most of vacation with group was cut into parts (7)
- Actor with indecent mouth according to Spoooner (4,3)
- I avert disaster in metropolis with imagination (10)
- Smooth function ends early (4)

## Down

- One of twelve jogger's jacket seen around gunroom, oddly cut (5)
- University President starting to socialise with sour and unpleasant person (7)
- City in Kerala, starts to educate all labourers - becomes "red" (9)
- Terrible, mostly noisy, extremely stinky (5)
- Resurgent posse reestablished to capture witch (7)
- One becoming part of European network's English actor (5,4)
- Actor playing devil - in Singapore on vacation (3,6)
- Spanish beach - centre of antihuman articles and drug (9)
- Review of Copyright on yoghurt wrapping showing people resulting in compensation (9)
- Old city in British Columbia set up in green building material (7)
- Having great desire at heart, first to take top off (7)
- Credit to setter's intelligence ultimately an offence (5)
- Foundation of strong bridge, propped up, breaks (5)

## SUDOKU

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

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

## Solution to previous puzzle

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A | B | U | S | R | E | V | E | R | S | A | L | P |
| E | T | H | I | A | P |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| P | A | R | A | V | I | O | G | T | S |   |   |   |
| R | L | R | G | N | H |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| R | E | X | T | R | A |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| Z | D | N | A | M | Y | R | R | G |   |   |   |   |
| S | I | D | E | L | O | N | N | P | T |   |   |   |
| S | I | D | E | L | O | N | N | P | T |   |   |   |
| C | I | V | I | S | E | R | V | A | N |   |   |   |
| S | D | A | Q | D | A | Q | D | A | Q |   |   |   |
| S | T | R | E | A | S | T | A | R | T |   |   |   |
| E | A | E | E | S | E | C | E | S | E |   |   |   |
| P | R | E | S | S | S | S | S | S | S |   |   |   |

## Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

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

## FAITH

## Ramayana praises Bharatha

The inner strength of a man's spiritual stature is judged as the length of the stalk of a lotus flower, determined by the height of water in a pond (*vellatanaiya malar nittam-kural-595*). Kambavardhi Lanka Sri Jayaraj said in a discourse that to excel in life, a person must synchronise his external actions with his inner thoughts, and he should be guileless and not sanctimonious.

A maxim says, "*ullangai nellikani pola*" – anything that is as clear and certain as the *nelli* fruit (gooseberry) on the palm of one's hand. The lines in the inner core of the fruit will be similar to the outer skin cover.

Poet Kambar exemplifies Bharatha as the person apt to befit this great virtue. The Ramayana praises Bharatha's greatness in various places. Sage Viswamitra praised Bharatha and said he was equal to Sri Rama.

On hearing the cancellation of Sri Rama's coronation, his mother Kousalya told Rama that it would take place to Bharatha, who was better than Rama.

The hunter Guha, suspecting Bharatha, aimed at him with an arrow. Sumantra alerted Bharatha, but he raised his hands, symbolically saying he had come not to fight but only to see Sri Rama.

Guha lavishly showered Bharatha with praise and told him that even a thousand Ramas would not equal Bharatha.

When Bharatha was waiting for Sri Rama's arrival from the forest and decided to fall in the Agnikunda if he had not turned up, Kousalya said even tens of millions of Sri Rama would not match one Bharatha.

Bharatha's place has been written in the golden letters.

CM YK</

## IN BRIEF



## SpiceJet pays TDS dues worth ₹310 crore till Sept. quarter

SpiceJet on Tuesday said it has cleared pending TDS dues worth ₹310 crore till the September quarter of the current fiscal. The carrier, which had been facing turbulent times, last month raised ₹3,000 crore. "Beginning September 26, SpiceJet has cleared over ₹600 crore in pending dues, including outstanding salaries, GST liabilities, and Provident Fund contributions. The firm has also successfully reached settlements with multiple aircraft lessors," it said. PTI

## Adani Ports SEZ net profit rises 40% in Q2 to ₹2,445 cr.

Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone Ltd. (APSEZ) reported a 41% growth in its net profit which rose to ₹2,445 crore during the second quarter ended September 30. Revenue from operations grew 6% to ₹7,067 crore. "We witness continued growth across operations, with existing ports delivering strong volume ramp-ups and new capacity addition progressing in Gopalpur, Vizhinjam and Colombo," said Ashwani Gupta, its whole time director and CEO.

## Canara Bank Q2 net up 11% to ₹4,014 crore

Canara Bank reported a 11.31% year-on-year increase in net profit for the September quarter of FY25 to ₹4,014 crore. Net interest income improved to ₹9,315 crore, up from ₹8,903 crore in the corresponding quarter of 2023-24. During Q2, the bank recovered up to ₹500 crore, a portion of the ₹11,777 crore it has under the NCLT, through liquidation activities and various settlements, K. Satyanarayana Raju, MD and CEO, said on Tuesday.

## Adani Enterprises net surges almost eightfold in Q2 to ₹1,747 crore, income grows 15%

## The Hindu Bureau

MUMBAI

Adani Enterprises Ltd. (AEL), the holding company of the Adani Group, reported a consolidated net profit of ₹1,747 crore for the second quarter ended September 30, an almost eightfold surge over its bottomline a year ago.



Gautam Adani

AEL's total income grew 15% to ₹23,196 crore in Q2. "AEL's constant endeavour on achieving operational efficiency across all business verticals along with incubating new asset base is reflected yet again in these results," the compa-

## Despite a slow start, States' capex likely to rise further this year

Tamil Nadu, Gujarat, Karnataka and Maharashtra are expected to have adequate fiscal space to meet their budgeted capex goals for 2024-25

## Vikas Dhoot

NEW DELHI

**C**apital expenditure by States, a key driver of India's economic growth in recent times, may have started on the backfoot in 2024-25 with the general elections taking up the first quarter, and States' capex dropping 7% from last year by August, but those spends may pick up steam in the coming months, rating agencies reckon.

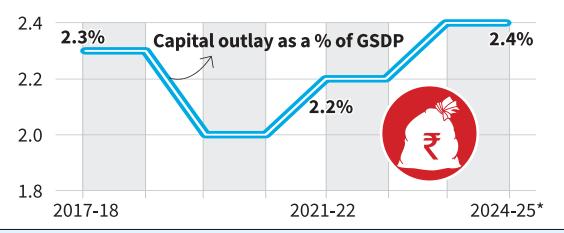
This positive prognosis is significant as the Finance Ministry in a review of the economy late September had identified lower capex spends by States as one of the 'incipient signs of strains in certain sectors', along with other cooling signals for the economy like the drop in passenger vehicle sales in the first few months of the year.

In a report on Tuesday, Crisil Ratings said it expects the capex outlays of India's top 18 States that account for about 94% of the capital spending done by State governments, to rise in the range of 7% to 9% and hit ₹7.2 lakh crore, compared with ₹6.7 lakh crore in 2023-24.

Rating firm ICRA also recently said it expects the combined capital spending of 13 major States to rise 13% to ₹6.5 lakh crore this year, though that would be

## Multiplier effects

Despite a slow start on public capex this year, 18 major States are expected to clock 7%-9% growth in capital spends with an outlay of ₹7.2 lakh crore, as per Crisil Ratings



**States include:** Maharashtra, Gujarat, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, Telangana, Rajasthan, West Bengal, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, Odisha, Punjab, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Haryana, Jharkhand and Goa

\*P: Projection

Source: State budgets, the Comptroller and Auditor General of India & CRISIL Ratings

slightly lower than these States' ₹7.2 lakh crore Budget estimate for capex.

ICRA economists attributed this to a dull start to capex in the initial months of 2024-25 and an anticipated undershooting in States' revenues. However, of the 13 States they analysed, ICRA expects Gujarat, Karnataka, Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu to have enough fiscal space to meet their budgeted capex plans, said the firm's chief economist Aditi Nayar.

CRISIL Ratings senior director Anuj Sethi expects a 7-9% growth in capital outlays, which translates to States achieving about 90% of their budgeted target this fiscal. "Though similar to last fiscal, it will be higher than the levels of 82%-84% achieved bet-

ween FY2018 and FY2023," he pointed out.

Mr. Sethi said their expectations of a pickup in the capital outlays for the remainder of this fiscal, were also backed by the evidence "from a step-up in States' borrowings, which have already surged about 26% year-on-year in the second quarter [July to September] after a 15% year-on-year decline in the first quarter".

These 18 States' capital outlay as a share of their gross state domestic product (GSDP) is projected at 2.4% this year, the same as 2023-24 when their capex grew 27%. Growth will vary across States, and a slowdown in economic activity or higher revenue spending would impact these estimates, Crisil underlined.

Sales to other OEMs,

## Sales blip, tax provision dents Maruti Q2 net 17%

## The Hindu Bureau

MUMBAI

Maruti Suzuki India Ltd. (MSIL) reported a 17.4% drop in net profit to ₹3,069 crore for the second quarter ended September 30.

The dip in net profit was on account of a provision worth ₹337.6 crore resulting from the withdrawal of indexation benefit and a change in the tax rate on long-term capital gains on debt mutual funds as per the Finance Act 2024, the company said in a filing.

Profit before tax for the quarter grew 6.3% to ₹5,100.5 crore, the highest-ever for the company.

Maruti registered net sales income of ₹35,589 crore against ₹35,535 crore in the same period of the previous year, up 0.2%.

## Sales Contraction

Total vehicles sales during the quarter fell 1.9% to 5,41,550 units of which the domestic market volume was 4,63,834 vehicles, down 3.9% year-on-year and the export volume was 77,162 vehicles, up 12.1%.

Segment-wise, mini car sales at 30,971 units was down 3.7%, compact cars sales at 1,77,213 units was down 14.8%. Mid-size car sales plunged 46.5% to 1,972 units year-on-year and van sales were down 0.7% to 34,809 units.

Utility vehicles sales were up by a marginal 0.3% to 1,80,535 units. Light commercial vehicles sales rose 14.8% to 8,485.

Sales to other OEMs,



more specifically to Toyota Kirloskar Motors, surged 83.6% to 29,849 units.

Last year, Suzuki Motor Gujarat Private Ltd. (SMG) was acquired to become a 100% subsidiary of MSIL.

The board, at its meeting on Tuesday, considered the structure after the acquisition and gave an in-principle approval for the amalgamation of SMG with MSIL.

The appointed date for the amalgamation is April 1, 2025, subject to all legal and regulatory compliances, the company said.

For the first half of this financial year, the company sold a total of 10,63,418 units, comprising 9,15,142 units in the domestic market and 1,48,276 units in the export market.

While the domestic market sales slid by 0.3%, the export sales volume grew by 11.9%. Net profit for the first half was at ₹6,719 crore as against ₹6,202 crore a year earlier, up 7.7%.

Utility vehicles sales were up by a marginal 0.3% to 1,80,535 units. Light commercial vehicles sales rose 14.8% to 8,485.

Sales to other OEMs,

## MARKETS

## MARKET WATCH

|           | TUESDAY | % CHANGE |
|-----------|---------|----------|
| Sensex    | 80,360  | 0.45     |
| US Dollar | 84.05   | 0.02     |
| Gold      | 81,400  | 0.37     |
| Brent oil | 70.80   | -1.45    |

## NIFTY 50

|                          | PRICE    | CHANGE  |
|--------------------------|----------|---------|
| Adani Enter.             | 2848.60  | -49.95  |
| Adani Ports              | 1372.70  | -20.50  |
| Apollo Hosp              | 6987.45  | -61.15  |
| Asian Paints             | 2992.85  | -9.00   |
| Axis Bank                | 1186.85  | -15.25  |
| Bajaj Auto               | 9850.85  | -160.40 |
| Bajaj Finserv            | 1766.70  | -36.25  |
| Bajaj Finance            | 7022.50  | -111.15 |
| Bharat Elec.             | 283.65   | -13.60  |
| Bharti Airtel            | 1637.10  | -26.25  |
| BPCL                     | 311.45   | -1.05   |
| Britannia Ind.           | 5667.50  | -54.80  |
| Cipla                    | 1477.55  | -25.60  |
| Coal India               | 445.70   | -3.90   |
| Dr Reddy's Lab.          | 1274.70  | -36.80  |
| Eicher Motors            | 4898.15  | -177.50 |
| Grimson                  | 2686.00  | -39.05  |
| HCL Tech                 | 1871.30  | 0.00    |
| HDFC Bank                | 1751.85  | -17.65  |
| HDFC Life                | 742.40   | -24.15  |
| Hero MotoCorp            | 4787.45  | -140.35 |
| Hindalco                 | 693.60   | -0.70   |
| Hind Unilever            | 2547.65  | -28.15  |
| ICICI Bank               | 1331.85  | -39.00  |
| IndusInd Bank            | 1038.15  | -16.65  |
| Infosys                  | 1839.30  | -26.05  |
| ITC                      | 487.95   | -3.80   |
| JSW Steel                | 958.80   | -8.45   |
| Kotak Bank               | 1760.20  | -10.35  |
| L&T                      | 3380.90  | -40.10  |
| M&M                      | 2746.40  | -34.10  |
| Maruti Suzuki            | 11046.00 | -43.25  |
| NestleIndia              | 2267.40  | -4.65   |
| NTPC                     | 412.15   | 8.25    |
| ONGC                     | 265.00   | 1.65    |
| PowerGrid Corp           | 320.55   | 2.25    |
| Reliance Ind             | 1340.00  | 5.65    |
| SBI                      | 1661.35  | 55.45   |
| State Bank               | 832.70   | -40.65  |
| Shriram Finance          | 3265.80  | 6.50    |
| Ltd.                     | 1871.60  | -31.30  |
| TataConsumerPro-<br>duct | 992.05   | 16.15   |
| Tata Motors              | 842.75   | -35.70  |
| Tata Steel               | 150.06   | 0.68    |
| TCS                      | 4075.25  | -15.60  |
| Tech Mahindra            | 1698.50  | -4.05   |
| Titan                    | 3283.40  | 0.35    |
| Trent Ltd.               | 7410.30  | 102.45  |
| UltraTech Cement         | 1112.10  | 19.50   |
| Wipro                    | 562.20   | 3.60    |

## EXCHANGE RATES

Indicative direct rates in rupees a unit except yen at 4 p.m. on October 29

| CURRENCY           | TT BUY | TT SELL |
|--------------------|--------|---------|
| US Dollar          | 83.88  | 84.20   |
| Euro               | 90.60  | 90.95   |
| British Pound      | 108.94 | 109.36  |
| Japanese Yen (100) | 54.67  | 54.88   |
| Chinese Yuan       | 11.75  | 11.80   |
| Swiss Franc        | 96.68  | 97.06   |
| Singapore Dollar   | 63.31  | 63.56   |
| Canadian Dollar    | 60.40  | 60.65   |
| Malaysian Ringgit  | 19.15  | 19.24   |

Source: IndianBank. <http://www.indianbank.com/DailyPressNation>

## A Business Initiative

## ENTERPRISE CONNECT

Prega News Empowers 'Parar Dosha Buja' Season 3, Celebrating the Strength of Women



Revisiting "Parar Dosha Buja" Prega News commenced a unique voyage in West Bengal by celebrating Durga Puja and spreading smiles all across. This year, the brand had the privilege of reaching over 5,000 women across 75 locations in Bengal, celebrating their achievements and contributions in an extraordinary journey of empowerment and recognition. This campaign celebrates the women of your home and mine - teachers, housewives, doctors, nurses - is our own Maa Durga who epitomizes strength & resilience with abundant grace.

Joy Chatterjee, Vice President, Sales and Marketing, stated, "Durga Puja has always been close to my heart, and as a Bengal, I cherish the cultural richness of this festival. Growing up, I witnessed the extraordinary talent in our community, where everyone engaged in music, dance, and poetry with such passion. Even after

## GENEVA

**Israel is seeking the 'eradication' of Palestinians, says UN rights expert**



UN rights expert Francesca Albanese said Israel is committing "genocide" in Gaza and added that the country is seeking the "eradication of Palestinians" from their land. She said the offensive Israel unleashed was "part of a long-term, systematic state-organised forced displacement of the Palestinians". AFP

## CONNECTICUT

**Trump-ally Bannon released after serving four months in prison**



Longtime Donald Trump-ally Steve Bannon was released from prison early on Tuesday, after serving a four-month sentence for defying a subpoena in the congressional investigation into the U.S. Capitol attack on January 6, 2021. Upon his return, Bannon said he was focused on helping Mr. Trump win the presidential election. AP

## MOSCOW

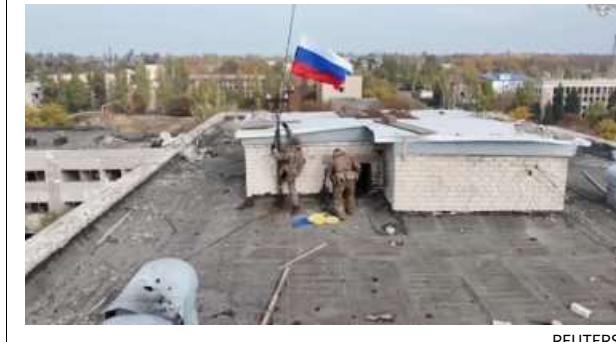
**Putin launches drills of nuclear forces simulating retaliatory strike**



Russian President Vladimir Putin on Tuesday launched a massive exercise of the country's nuclear forces featuring missile launches in a simulation of a retaliatory strike, as he continued to flex the country's nuclear muscle amid spiraling tensions with the West over the Ukraine war that began in February 2022. AP

## MOSCOW

**Russian Army personnel capture eastern Ukraine town Selydove**



Russia's Defence Ministry said on Tuesday that its forces had captured the eastern Ukrainian town of Selydove as Moscow's troops advance closer to the key logistics hub of Pokrovsk. The capture of the frontline town of Selydove located about 18 km southeast of Pokrovsk is the latest gain for Russian forces. AFP



**Hezbollah picks Naim Kassem to lead the group**

**Associated Press**

BEIRUT

Hezbollah announced on Tuesday that it has chosen cleric Naim Kassem to lead the Lebanese militant group after the killing of its longtime leader Hassan Nasrallah in an Israeli air-strike on a Beirut suburb in late September.

The group said in a statement that Hezbollah's decision-making Shura Council elected Kassem, 71, as its new secretary-general and vowed to continue Nasrallah's policies "until victory is achieved."

Since Nasrallah's death as part of an Israeli offensive that took out many of Hezbollah's senior officials, the white-turbaned cleric with a gray beard has often been the public face of the Lebanese militant group. He is one of its founding members but is widely seen by supporters as lacking his predecessor's charisma and oratory skills.

Kassem has been sanctioned by the U.S. His appointment came as no surprise since he had served as Nasrallah's deputy for 32 years and had also been Hezbollah's public face.

# At least 93 killed, 40 missing in Israeli strike in north Gaza

**Most of the victims in the overnight attack on a residential building are women and children; hospital where the injured are being treated has little resources after an Israeli raid last week**

**Agence France-Presse**  
GAZA STRIP

Gaza's civil defence agency said on Tuesday that an overnight Israeli air strike killed 93 people in a residential building in the northern district of Beit Lahia.

"The number of martyrs in the massacre of the Abu Nasr family home in Beit Lahia has risen to 93 martyrs, and about 40 are still missing under the rubble," agency spokesman Mahmud Bassal said.

The Israeli military said it was "looking into the reports".

"Most of the victims are women and children, and



**Accounting the dead :** Palestinians transport bodies of victims ahead of the funeral in Beit Lahia in the northern Gaza Strip. AFP

people are trying to save the injured, but there are no hospitals or proper medical care," Rabie al-Shandagly, 30, who had taken refuge in a nearby school in Beit Lahia, said.

The bodies of 15 people killed in the strike were brought to Kamal Adwan Hospital, its director Husam Abu Safia told AFP. He said 35 wounded people, most of them children,

were being treated at the hospital.

"We are still receiving a number of martyrs and wounded," Mr. Safia said, adding that the hospital was struggling to treat patients due to a lack of staff and medicines.

"There is nothing left in the Kamal Adwan Hospital except first aid materials after the Army arrested our medical team and workers when they invaded the hospital during the military operation in Jabaia," Safia said.

Last week, the Gaza health ministry said Israeli troops had stormed the hospital, while the Israeli military said it was operating around it.

# New Israeli laws bar UNRWA from operating on its soil

**Associated Press**  
JERUSALEM

Israeli lawmakers passed two laws on Monday that could threaten the work of the main UN agency providing aid to people in Gaza by barring it from operating on Israeli soil, severing ties with it.

The laws, which do not immediately take effect, signal a new low for a long-troubled relationship between Israel and the UN. Israel's international allies said they were deeply worried about their potential impact on Palestinians.

Under the first law, the UN agency for Palestinian refugees, or UNRWA, would be banned from conducting "any activity" or providing any service inside Israel. The second law would sever Israel's diplomatic ties with the agency.



The laws, which do not immediately take effect, signal a new low for a long-troubled relationship between Israel and the UN. AP

The laws risk collapsing the already fragile process for distributing aid in Gaza at a moment when Israel is under increased U.S. pressure to ramp up aid. UNRWA's chief called them "a dangerous precedent."

The head of UNRWA, Philippe Lazzarini, said the laws were part of an "ongoing campaign to discredit" UNRWA, he said. [pressnation.com](http://pressnation.com)

# Germany recalls Iran envoy after execution of German-Iranian

**Associated Press**  
BERLIN

Germany protested to Iran on Tuesday over the execution of Iranian-German prisoner Jamshid Sharmahd, who was kidnapped in Dubai in 2020 by Iranian security forces, and recalled its Ambassador to Berlin for consultations.

The Foreign Ministry wrote on X that Iran's charge d'affaires in Berlin was summoned to hear "our sharp protest" against

## Five killed in attack in Pakistan's Balochistan

**Press Trust of India**  
KARACHI

Five workers were killed and two injured when gunmen opened fire at a dam construction site in the Panjgur district of Pakistan's restive Balochistan province.

The militants attacked the security officials and workers who were busy in the maintenance work on the dam site.

Officials said the victims were local people.

**Office of The Chief Engineer, Water Resources Zone, Kota**  
क्रमांक F. 111/CEWRZ/BRN/e-NIB-04/2024-25/10488 तिथि: 23.10.2024  
e-NIB No. - 04/2024-25  
Bid for the work of "Renovation Work of Canal System of Utavali Minor Irrigation Project Tehsil Chhipabard District Baran (Rs 577.24 Lacrs)" is invited from interested bidders from 24.10.2024 (9:30 Hr) to 12.11.2024 till 18:00 Hr other particulars, terms & conditions may be seen on the procurement portal <https://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in> & <https://sppp.rajasthan.nic.in>, www.dpr.rajasthan.gov.in & www.water.rajasthan.gov.in.  
UBN NO. : WRD2425WLOB00992

Chief Engineer  
Water Resources Zone, Kota

**कार्यालय अधीकारी अभियन्ता, सार्वजनिक निर्माण विभाग, खण्ड-झारू**  
क्रमांक: 773 दिनांक: 22.10.2024  
इं-निविदा सूचना संख्या: 08/2024-25  
राजस्थान के राज्यालय मंदिर की ओर से निवापा को अपने दो निवापों कार्य (दोष निवाप अधिकारी 5 वर्ष संस्थित) के लिए उत्तर खेल में सार्वजनिक निर्माण विभाग में पंचायत संसदों एवं राज्य सरकार/केन्द्रीय सरकार के द्वारा इसके लिए निर्माण सम्बंधी श्रमिकों के संबंधों के समकात हो, से निवापार्ट प्रयत्न में प्रोक्टर्स प्रैफियर हो अनलाइन निविदा अभियन्ता को जाती है।  
निविदा से संबंधित सम्पर्क विवरण देखें [www.eproc.rajasthan.gov.in](http://www.eproc.rajasthan.gov.in) एवं [www.sppt.rajasthan.nic.in](http://www.sppt.rajasthan.nic.in) पर देखें आपका संपर्क है। इनकी सर्वेक्षणों को अपने निविदा हासिलात के माध्यम से देखें।  
NIB: PW2425A2379, UBN No.: PW2425WSOB08773, PW2425WSOB08774  
डॉअर्थीपाठी/सी. 10549/2024

जाइपुर विद्युत वित्रान निगम लिमिटेड  
Regd. Office: Vidyut Bhawan, Jyoti Nagar, Jaipur 302005  
Office of the Superintendent Engineer (KUML)  
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### E-PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTICE

E-tenders in two parts (Techno-commercial bid and Price bid) are invited from eligible bidders for design, survey, supply, installation, testing, commissioning, operation & maintenance for 25 years from COD of grid connected solar power plants through RESCO mode, its associated 33kV OR, 11kV line to connect the plant various 33/11kV sub-stations and RMs of solar power plants for solarization of agriculture consumers connected on 11kV feeders of various GSS in JVNL under KUSUM Scheme – Component C (Feeder Level Solarization). All the details regarding tender is available at web site [www.energy.rajanathan.gov.in/jvnl](http://www.energy.rajanathan.gov.in/jvnl), [www.sppp.rajasthan.gov.in](http://www.sppp.rajasthan.gov.in) and [www.eproc.rajasthan.gov.in](http://www.eproc.rajasthan.gov.in) vide NIT No. JVNL/ACE (PPM)/SE(KUSUM)/XEN/REDSM/1N-13. In future, corrigendum/extension, if any, shall be published only at web site [www.energy.rajanathan.gov.in/jvnl](http://www.energy.rajanathan.gov.in/jvnl), [www.sppp.rajasthan.gov.in](http://www.sppp.rajasthan.gov.in) and [www.eproc.rajasthan.gov.in](http://www.eproc.rajasthan.gov.in) UBN is: VVN2425WSOB0866  
JPR-2303 (2024)

Superintendent Engineer (KUSUM)  
For Electricity Complaints Tel Free No. 1800 180 6507

DIPR/C/10585/2024

**KMML** The Kerala Minerals and Metals Ltd (A Govt. of Kerala Undertaking) Sankaramangalam Kolam 691583 Phone: 0476-2651215 to 217 E-Mail: [md@kmml.com](mailto:md@kmml.com)

### TENDER NOTICE

For more details please visit the E-Tendering Portal: <https://etenders.kerala.gov.in> or [www.kmml.com](http://www.kmml.com)

| No | Tender Id          | Items  |
|----|--------------------|--|
| 1  | 2024_KMML_698302_1 | For the supply of Aluminium Trihydrate-1037 MT                   |
| 2  | 2024_KMML_696528_1 | For the supply of E Power Thyristor based Temperature Controller |
| 3  | 2024_KMML_699391_1 | For the supply of Variable Frequency Drive                       |

Chavara 29.10.2024 Sd/- Managing Director for The Kerala Minerals and Metals Ltd

**कार्यालय अधीकारी अभियन्ता, सार्वजनिक निर्माण विभाग, खण्ड-झारू**  
क्रमांक: 506 निविदा सूचना संख्या 09/2024-25 दिनांक: 24.10.2024

इस कार्यालय के पत्रांक 385-93 दिनांक 17.09.2024 द्वारा अमंत्रित उक्त निविदा में निम्नलिखित संशोधन किया जाता है:-

| क्र. सं. | विवरण                       | पूर्व में निविदा लागत | वर्तमान में सार्वजनिक लागत |
|----------|-----------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| 1        | अनुमति लागत                 | 484.00 लाख            | 488.25 लाख                 |
| 2        | 2 प्रौद्योगिक पर्याप्त राशि | 9,68,000.00           | 9,76,500.00                |
| 3        | 1/2 प्रौद्योगिक धरोहर राशि  | 2,24,000.00           | 2,44,125.00                |

निविदा की शोध यथा निविदा के अन्तर्गत निविदा अभियन्ता को जाती है।

कार्यालय की अधीकारी अभियन्ता का प्रत्यक्ष विवरण देखें [www.eproc.rajasthan.gov.in](http://www.eproc.rajasthan.gov.in) एवं [www.sppp.rajasthan.gov.in](http://www.sppp.rajasthan.gov.in) पर देखें आपका संपर्क है। इनकी सर्वेक्षणों को अपने निविदा हासिलात के माध्यम से देखें।

NIB: PW2425A2379, UBN No.: PW2425WSOB08779, (PWD2425WSOB08799), (PWD2425WSOB08799), (PWD2425WSOB08800), (PWD2425WSOB08801)

अधीकारी अभियन्ता सानिवि. कृष्णगामुप सिटी

क्रमांक: लेखा/2024-25/वी-1083

इं-निविदा सूचना संख्या : 01/2024-25

राजस्थान के राज्यालय मंदिर की ओर से परिविहार संसदों हेतु भय योग्य वर्ष की ममता एवं संरक्षण एवं राज्य सरकार के अन्य विधायिकों में पंजायते एवं दो श्रेष्ठों तत

**BIG CLIMB**

Deepti reaches her career-best rank in ICC ODI bowlers' list



Deepti Sharma moved up two places to reach a career-high second spot in the latest ICC women's ODI rankings for bowlers on Tuesday. On the back of some strong performances in the recent ICC Women's T20 World Cup, Deepti has been one of India's best players through her side's ongoing white-ball series against New Zealand.

**SITTING OUT**

Williamson to miss third Test, prepare for England series



Prolific New Zealand batsman Kane Williamson will miss the third and final Test against India starting on Friday in Mumbai in a bid to get fit for the series against England. Former captain Williamson, 34, was in the squad but did not play in either of the first two Tests in India while recovering from a groin problem.

**RUN FEAST**

SA's de Zorzi and Stubbs make Bangladesh toil on opening day



Opener Tony de Zorzi and No. 3 batter Tristan Stubbs hit maiden centuries to help South Africa dominate Bangladesh on Day 1 of the final Test on Tuesday. The Proteas reached 307 for two before bad light forced an early stumps. **The scores:** SA 307/2 in 81 overs (de Zorzi batting 141, Stubbs 106) vs Bangladesh. **Toss:** South Africa.

**NEW HIGH**

Atrachali the first to score 500 tackle points in the PKL



Bengal Warriorz and Puneri Paltan played out an exciting 32-32 tie in the Pro Kabaddi League on Tuesday. Warriorz skipper Fazel Atrachali made history when he became the first to score 500 tackle points in the league. In the second match, Bengaluru Bulls registered an exciting 34-33 win over Dabang Delhi.

# Sublime Smriti brings festive cheer to Indian fans

The opener shares a 117-run partnership with skipper Harmanpreet as India claims ODI series 2-1 with a six-wicket win in decider; Halliday's knock helps NZ recover from 88 for five and post 232



**That winning feeling!** The Women in Blue came up with an authoritative performance in the series-deciding third ODI against the White Ferns. VIJAY SONEJI

**IND VS NZ WOMEN**

the smiles back to the Indian team, too.

The stylish left-hander, who gives much joy to cricket's connoisseurs, hit a sparkling 100 (122b, 10x4) to help India coast to a six-wicket win against New Zealand in the third ODI.

Chasing 232, the Women in Blue got home with 5.4 overs to spare. They

thus won the series 2-1, some consolation after the disappointment in the recent T20 World Cup in the UAE. Beating the champion may have made it a bit sweeter. Two partnerships featuring Smriti made the chase a stroll in the park for India. After the early dismissal of Shafali Verma, she put on 76 for the se-

cond wicket with wicket-keeper Yastika Bhatia (35, 49b, 4x4) and 117 for the third with skipper Harmanpreet Kaur (59 not out, 63b, 6x4).

This was Smriti's eighth century in ODIs and she has now overtaken Mithali Raj as the leading scorer of hundreds for India. She may have taken some time

to find her rhythm, but once she did, those lofted shots, pulls and drives flew off her blade.

Earlier, Brooke Halliday's career-best 86 (96b, 9x4, 3x6) helped the White Ferns recover from a batting collapse. Half the side was back in the pavilion before the half-way mark of the innings. At 88 for five,

the Indians may have hoped for a shorter target to chase, but Halliday stood firm. She battled hard against the spirited Indian attack and the oppressive heat, choosing only the right balls to go hard at.

The visitors had begun disastrously with Suzie Bates getting run out in the seventh over. In the next

**SCOREBOARD****NEW ZEALAND**

Suzie Bates run out 4 (14b), Georgia Plummer c Deepi b Priya 39 (67b, 6x4), Lauren Down c Yastika b Saima 1 (5b), Sophie Devine b Priya 9 (11b, 2x4), Brooke Halliday c Radha b Deepi 86 (96b, 9x4, 3x6), Maddy Green run out 15 (19b, 2x4), Shafali Verma c & b Deepi 25 (49b, 1x4), Hannah Rowe lbw b Deepi 11 (18b), Leah Tahuhu (not out) 24 (14b, 2x4, 1x6), Eden Carson c Radha b Renuka 2 (3b), Fran Jonas run out 2 (4b); Extras (lb-4, w-9, nb-1): 14; Total (in 49.5 overs): 232.

**FALL OF WICKETS**

1-24 (Bates, 6.2 overs), 2-25 (Down, 7.1), 3-36 (Devine, 10.4), 4-66 (Plummer, 18.5), 5-88 (Green, 23.3), 6-152 (Gaze, 38.4), 7-199 (Halliday, 45.3), 8-210 (Rowe, 47.3), 9-219 (Carson, 48.4).

**INDIA BOWLING**

Renuka 10-1-49-1, Saima 9.5-1-44-1, Priya 10-1-41-2, Deepi

10-2-39-3, Radha 4-0-21-0, Harmanpreet 6-0-34-0.

**INDIA**

Smriti Mandhana b Rowe 100 (122b, 10x4), Shafali Verma c Gaze b Rowe 12 (11b, 2x4), Yastika Bhatia c & b Devine 35 (49b, 4x4), Harmanpreet Kaur (not out) 59 (63b, 6x4), Jemimah Rodrigues lbw b Jonas 22 (18b, 4x4), Tejal Hasabnis (not out) 0 (3b); Extras (lb-2, w-6): 8; Total (for four wkts. in 44.2 overs): 236.

**FALL OF WICKETS**

1-16 (Shafali, 3.4), 2-92 (Yastika, 20.6), 3-209 (Smriti, 40.1), 4-232 (Jemimah, 43.3).

**NEW ZEALAND BOWLING**

Tahuhu 6-0-30-0, Rowe 8-0-47-2, Carson 10-0-45-0, Devine 7.2-0-44-1, Bates 4-0-18-0, Jonas 9-1-50-1.

**Toss:** New Zealand.

**PoM:** Smriti; **Pos:** Deepi. India won by six wickets with 34 balls to spare to clinch series 2-1.

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over, Saima Thakor got the ball to shape away a little to produce a thick outside edge off Lauren Down, and when the new spinning kid on the block, Priya Mishra's googly cleaned up Sophie Devine, fresh from her match-winning knock, New Zealand was in trouble. Priya and Saima would

## Harman kept telling – do it for the team'



**Top of the pile:** Smriti's eighth ODI hundred took her past Mithali Raj's record of seven for India. VIJAY SONEJI

**P.K. Ajith Kumar**

AHMEDABAD

When Smriti Mandhana finds her silken touch, she puts a smile on the cricket fan's face. On Tuesday night, she brought

the smiles back to the Indian team, too.

The stylish left-hander, who gives much joy to cricket's connoisseurs, hit a sparkling 100 (122b, 10x4) to help India coast to a six-wicket win against New Zealand in the third ODI.

Chasing 232, the Women in Blue got home with 5.4 overs to spare. They

## Rana is ready for the longest format, says Sarandeep



**Promising sign:** Rana delivering the goods with bat and ball bodes well for India. SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

**Yuvraj Krishnan**

NEW DELHI

Harshit Rana ticked almost all boxes in Delhi's victory against Assam in the Ranji Trophy, underlining his readiness for the five-Test tour of Australia next month.

In a match that began a day after the pacer was named in India's 18-member squad, the 22-year-old took five wickets in the first innings, scored a half-century at No. 8 and then delivered critical breakthroughs in the second essay to put Delhi on its way to a 10-wicket win.

Before Rana embarks on the high-profile tour of Australia, he is set to join the India squad for the third Test against New Zealand which begins in Mumbai on Friday. He was already with the India contingent as a my-under-19 days."

New Zealand opener Suzie Bates said Smriti anchored the Indian chase well.

"Harman kept telling me – do it for the team, do it for the team."

She admitted that it hasn't been easy for the past month and a half.

"We had a lot of expectations from all of us, individually and as a team, in the World Cup," she said.

"This series came too soon for everyone. Half the mind of everyone was still on the World Cup."

**Pat for debutants**

Smriti praised the efforts of the three Indian debutants – Priya Mishra, Saima Thakor and Tejal Hasabnis – in the series. "I think it was exceptional the way Priya got Sophie Devine," she said. "Saima bowls with so much clarity and I have played a lot of cricket with Tejal for Maharashtra from my under-19 days."

Smriti was determined to get it right this time. "I don't think I have left that many balls in recent times in one-dayers," said Smriti.

## Wade retires from international cricket

**Press Trust of India**

MELBOURNE

Matthew Wade, a T20 World Cup winner in 2021, retired from international cricket on Tuesday, and will now start working in a coaching role in Australia's white-ball set-up.

Wade, a wicketkeeper-batter, will join Australia's coaching staff under Andre Borovac for the upcoming T20I series against Pakistan, and the Tasmanian will also be with the group for the ODI series starting at Melbourne next week.

The 36-year-old has played 36 Tests, 97 ODIs and 92 T20Is in a career that spanned across 13 years, and his last appearance for the national team was in this year's T20 World Cup. However, Wade will continue to play domestic cricket for Tasmania and Big Bash League for Hobart Hurricanes at least for the next two seasons.

"I was fully aware my international days were most likely over at the end of the last T20 World Cup. My international retirement and coaching have been a constant conversation with George (Bailey) and Andrew (McDonald) over the past six months," he said.

"I told Rana before this game that he is on the verge of an opportunity for India and that he should take a five-for here. He got pumped up and delivered. He is ready to play right now."

"Coaching has been on my radar over the last few years and thankfully some great opportunities have come my way," he added.

## Golden day for Spaniards as the Ballon d'Or goes to Rodri and Bonmati



**The pinnacle:** Bonmati and Rodri make their feelings known after winning the coveted one. AP

**Associated Press**

PARIJS

Spanish midfielders Rodri and Aitana Bonmati won the men's and women's Ballon d'Or award for the world's best football player on Monday.

The 28-year-old Rodri won the prestigious award for the first time after helping Manchester City win the Premier League and being a key player in Spain's European Championship triumph.

He succeeded eight-time winner Lionel Messi of Argentina.

The 26-year-old Bonmati

retained her award after helping Barcelona win the Spanish league, the Spanish cup and the Champions League.

Bonmati joined Barca teammate Alexia Putellas in winning two titles since the women's trophy was first awarded in 2018.

She beat her teammates Caroline Graham Hansen of Norway and Salma Paralluelo of Spain as Barcelonae completed a 1-2-3.

Rodri arrived on crutches. He is out for the season after injuring his ACL while playing for City last month.

**The winners: Men's Ballon**

**d'Or:** Rodri (Manchester City); **Women's Ballon d'Or:** Aitana Bonmati (Barcelona).

**Johan Cruyff trophy for best men's and women's coach:** Carlo Ancelotti (Real Madrid) and Emma Hayes (ex-Chelsea, now USA women's national team).

**Gerd Mueller trophy for top scorer:** Kylian Mbappe (ex-PSG) and Harry Kane (Bayern Munich) (both on 52 goals).

**Raymond Kopa trophy for best young player:** Lamine Yamal (Barcelona); **Lev Yashin trophy for best goalkeeper:** Emiliano Martínez (Aston Villa).

**Socrates Prize for charity work:** Jenifer Hermoso (Tigres Monterrey).

**Best men's and women's teams:** Real Madrid and Barcelona.

## IN BRIEF



## World No. 1 Sinner out of Paris Masters with 'virus'

World No. 1 Jannik Sinner has withdrawn from the Paris Masters indoor event due to an "intestinal virus", tournament organisers announced on Tuesday. Sinner, assured since mid-October of finishing the year on top of the rankings for the first time in his career at the age of 23, has been replaced in the draw by Frenchman Arthur Cazaux, who was drafted in from qualifying. Cazaux will face either compatriot Corentin Moutet or American Ben Shelton in his second-round opener. Organisers said Sinner was "suffering from an intestinal virus contracted before he arrived in Paris".



## Liverpool's Jota sidelined until after international break

Liverpool will be without Diogo Jota until after the international break, manager Arne Slot revealed on Tuesday, a blow ahead of the fourth-round League Cup match at Brighton & Hove Albion on Wednesday and amid a gruelling stretch of games. Jota, who has four goals in 10 games across all competitions this season, has not played since suffering a chest injury in the win over Chelsea on October 20. When asked whether he would return before the November international break, Slot said "no". Slot also hinted that Federico Chiesa could be facing a long-term layoff.



## Son is Asia's International Player of the Year again

Tottenham forward Son Heung-min was crowned as Asia's International Player of the Year for the fourth time by the Asian Football Confederation (AFC) at its annual awards ceremony on Tuesday. Son, who captains both Tottenham and the South Korea national team, also won the prize in 2015, 2017 and 2019 and takes the trophy from compatriot Kim Min-jae of Bayern Munich. Australia's Ellie Carpenter, who plays for French club Lyon, became the inaugural winner of the women's international award.

## LIVE TELECAST

**Bangladesh vs South Africa:** 2nd Test, day 2, FanCode, 9.30 a.m.  
**ISL:** Sports 18-3 (SD & HD) & JioCinema, 7.30 p.m.  
**PKL:** Star Sports 2 (SD & HD) & Hotstar, 8 p.m. onwards  
**Serie A:** gxr.world, 11 p.m. & 1.15 a.m. (Thursday)

## Profitable day for Vaidehi in Sydney ITF tournament

## TENNIS

## Sports Bureau

Former National champion Vaidehi Chaudhari had a good time, winning her singles and doubles matches, in the \$60,000 ITF women's tennis tournament in Sydney, Australia, on Tuesday.

Vaidehi beat qualifier Yukina Saigo of Japan 6-4, 6-2 in the first round. Vaidehi in partnership with Shrivalli Bhamidipati knocked out the third seeds Yu-Yun Li and Nina Vargova in straight sets. In the \$41,000 Challen-

ger in Brazzaville, Congo, Karan Singh and Devi Java won their singles first round matches.

**The results:**  
**€6,946,835 ATP, Paris:** Qualifying singles (first round): Christopher O'Connell (Aus) bt Sumit Nagal 6-4, 7-6(3).  
**\$133,250 Challenger, Seoul:** Singles (first round): Kaito Uesugi (Jpn) bt Ramkumar Ramanathan 6-4, 6-4.  
**\$41,000 Challenger, Brazzaville, Congo:** Singles (first round): Karan Singh bt Petr Lamachkine (Per) 3-6, 6-1, 6-4; Calvin Hemery (Fra) bt Yuvan Nandal 6-3, 6-1; Dev Java bt Simone Agostini (Ita) 6-3, 6-4.  
**\$267,082 WTA, Jiujiang, China:** Doubles (pre-quarterfinals): Arina Arifullina & Anastasia Sergienko bt Ustinya Lekkomseva & Saumya Vig 6-2, 6-0.

## Delhi wins against Assam with a bonus point

Fighting knock by Sumit helps visiting team avoid innings defeat; Siddhant and Grewal pick up three wickets each for host

## RANJI TROPHY

**Vivek Krishnan**  
NEW DELHI

Midway into the second session on Tuesday afternoon, Delhi sealed a 10-wicket victory against Assam at the Arun Jaitley Stadium in the third round of the Ranji Trophy. The home team's first outright win of the season came with a bonus point by virtue of openers Sanat Sangwan and Gagan Vats taking it past the paltry target of 59 in the fourth innings with all wickets intact.

Delhi's triumph was a foregone conclusion once the visitor, 44 for three overnight, lost three wickets within the first ten minutes of the final day to be reduced to 45 for six. From that bleak situation, Assam was still able to overcome the overall deficit of 124 runs thanks to wicketkeeper-batter Sumit Ghadigaonkar stepping up for the second straight innings. He remained unbeaten on 76, but negligible support from the others meant Assam folded for 182.

Ghadigaonkar and Assam's lower-order did enjoy a fair slice of fortune, with Delhi's players guilty of dropping a few catches that they would have snatched with ease on another



**Casted:** Delhi pace bowler Siddhant Sharma's three-wicket burst hastened Assam's collapse. SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

day. Harshit Rana, who is set to join India's squad for the third Test against New Zealand in Mumbai from Friday, bore the brunt of the spilled chances. He was not free of blame given that he also dropped Ghadigaonkar off his own bowling.

The frustration didn't

last too long, however, as Delhi polished off the lower-order at the stroke of lunch.

When play resumed, Sangwan and Vats were able to complete the task at hand in 16.1 overs for a win that seemed improbable at the end of day two.

Delhi coach Sarandeep

Singh hopes for this performance to fuel belief for the remainder of the season.

"The boys need to have the belief they can win. You have to feel that you are a champion team. Winning is a habit."

"If you don't win, you won't get that habit. And if you don't win, you won't get confidence," the former India off-spinner told reporters after the game.

## The scores:

**Assam — 1st innings:** 330

**Delhi — 1st innings:** 454

**Assam — 2nd innings:** Subham Mandal lbw b Sidhu 18, Rishav Das c Himmat b Rana 10, Abhishek Thakuri lbw b Grewal 9, Denish Das b Rana 1, Sibsankar Roy c Grewal b Siddhant 4, Bhagwan Dutta (run out) 0, Sumit Ghadigaonkar (not out) 76, Sarupam Purkayastha lbw b Grewal 25, Mukhtar Hussain c Mathur b Siddhant 18, Mirinmoy Dutta bt Siddhant 4, Rahul Singh b Grewal 4; Extras (b-9, w-2, nb-2): 13; Total (in 42 overs): 182.

**Fall of wickets:** 1-7, 2-34, 3-44, 4-44, 5-45, 6-45, 7-87, 8-109, 9-146.

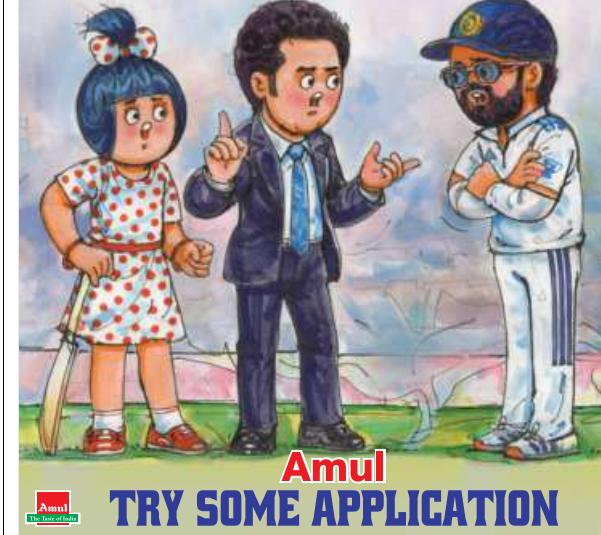
**Delhi bowling:** Rana 11-11-62, Grewal 12-10-3, Chauhan 8-3-18-0, Mathur 3-0-20-0, Sidhu 1-1-0-1, Siddhant 7-0-24-3.

**Delhi — 2nd innings:** Sanat Sangwan (not out) 34, Gagan Vats (not out) 25; Extras (nb-3): Total (for no loss, in 16.1 overs): 62.

**Assam bowling:** Hussain 3-2-4-0, Mirinmoy 6-0-20-0, Bhargav 3-0-15-0, Purkayastha 2-0-10-0, Rahul 2-0-9-0, Sibsankar 0-1-0-4.

**PoM:** Sumit Mathur.

## WE HAVE GRIT EXPECTATIONS



dcunha/AB/984

## RANJI SCORES — ROUND THREE (DAY FOUR)

## ELITE: Group A: Agartala:

Mumbai 450 & 123/6 decl. in 43 overs (Ajinkya Rahane 48 n.o.) drew with Tripura 302 & 48/0 in 22 overs.

## Points:

Mumbai 3(9),

Tripura 1 (9).

## Aurangabad:

Meghalaya 276 & 185 in 55 overs (Sumit Kumar 45, Mukesh Choudhary 4/61) lost to Maharashtra 361 & 104/0 in 21.1 overs (Murtaza Trunkwala 78 n.o.).

**Maharashtra 7 (8), Meghalaya 0 (0).**

## Group B: Visakhapatnam:

Andhra Pradesh 344 & 118 in 32.1 overs (Vinay Galeti 5/49, Mayank Dagar 4/23) lost to Himachal Pradesh 500 in 158 overs (Mukul Negi 42, K.V. Sasikanth 5/118). HP 7 (14), Andhra 0 (0).

## Jaipur:

Gujarat 335 & 314/9 in 101 overs (Umang Kumar 153 n.o., Jaymeet Patel 82, Kukna Ajay Singh 5/107) drew with Rajasthan 319. Gujarat 3 (15), Rajasthan 1 (5), TN 1 (11).

## Hyderabad:

Hyderabad 536/8 decl. bt Pondicherry 153 & 333 in 119.3 overs (Ganga Sridhar Raju 106, Tanay Thyagarajan 7/106). Hyderabad 7 (7), Pondicherry 0 (1).

## Dehradun:

Vidarbha 326 & 300 in 75 overs (Swapnil Singh 5/97) bt Uttarakhand 289 & 71 in 21.2 overs (Harsh Dubey 6/38). Vidarbha 6 (18), Uttarakhand 0 (6).

## Group C: Patna:

Bihar 143 & 21 in 66.2 overs (Babul Kumar 44, Sakibul Ganj 130, Shreyas Gopal 4/70) lost to Karnataka 287/7 decl. in 51 overs & 7/2 in 10.1 overs. Karnataka 6 (8), Bihar 0 (1).

## Kolkata:

Kerala 356/9 decl. in 120 overs (Salman Nizar 95 n.o., Mohammed Azharudeen 84, Ishan Porel 6/103) drew with Bengal 181/3 in 63 overs (Suvam Dey 67,

Sudip Chatterjee 57). Kerala 1 (8), Bengal 1 (5).

## Indore:

Madhya Pradesh 308 & 308/4 decl. in 48.1 overs (Rajat Patidar 159, Harpreet Singh 44) drew with Haryana 440 in 155.5 overs (Harshal Patel 81, Kumar Kartikeya 5/118) & 115/3 in 38 overs (Mayank Shandilya 68 n.o.). Haryana 3 (13), MP 0 (2).

**Mullanpur:** Punjab 210 & 267/3 in 94 overs (Jaskaranvir Singh Paul 115, Pukhraj Mann 91) drew with Uttar Pradesh 556/9 decl. UP 3 (5), Punjab 1 (0).

**Group D: Jamshedpur:** Jharkhand 202 & 130 in 50.3 overs (Sharad Singh 64) lost to Chandigarh 290 & 45/0 in 3.3 overs. Chandigarh 7 (13), Jharkhand 0 (6).

**Coimbatore:** Chhattisgarh 500 drew with Tamil Nadu 259 & (F/0) 264/4 in 76 overs (N. Jagadeesan 60, Andre Siddarth 41, Vijay Shankar 106 n.o.). Chhattisgarh 3 (5), TN 1 (11).

**Delhi:** Assam 330 & 182 in 42 overs (Sumit Ghadigaonkar 76 n.o.) lost to Delhi 454 & 62/0 in 16.1 overs. Delhi 7 (11), Assam 0 (1).

**PLATE: Ahmedabad:** Sikkim 424 & 170 bt Arunachal Pradesh 295 & 195 in 62.3 overs (Kamsha Yangfo 63 n.o., Ankur Malik 4/101, Lee Yong Lepecha 5/38). Sikkim 6 (12), AP 0 (0).

**Panaji:** Goa 179 & 306 bt Nagaland 147 & 255 in 104.1 overs (Dega Misra 94, Chetan Bist 41, Darshan Misal 5/51, Rahul Mehta 4/48). Goa 6 (19), Nagaland 0 (13).

**Nadiad:** Mizoram 536 bt Manipur 270 & 246 in 75.3 overs (Phirojjam Jotin 67, KC Cariappa 4/90). Mizoram 7 (13), Manipur 0 (0).

## Tour de France 'comes home' as 2025 route is unveiled



Rizwan. REUTERS

## Rizwan agrees to PCB's new selection policy

**Press Trust of India**  
LAHORE

Pakistan's new white-ball captain Mohammad Rizwan, after initial reluctance, has agreed to the PCB's new selection policy and will not have any voting right in the short-listing of touring squads or the playing eleven, according to the source in the board.

"Rizwan agreed to the new system where his input in the selection process would be strictly advisory," a source said.

The 2025 Tour de France will be raced exclusively in France for the first time since the 2020 Covid edition with the 21 stages including two time-trials, a blockbuster final week in the Alps and a return to the Champs-Elysees finale. After successive starts outside France in Copenhagen in 2022, Bilbao in 2023 and Florence in 2024, the 2025 Grand Depart is in Lille, with fans expected to flood over the nearby Belgian border.

"We decided to bring the Tour home, it was high time after all the foreign starts," race director Christian Prudhomme said.

Entirely absent from the 2024 route due to the Olympics, the 2025 edition has eight stages in the North and West and ends with eight laps along the

cobbles of the Champs-Elysees in Paris. The Olympics enjoyed a huge success with a long, arduous race around Paris but organisers said it was too soon for the Tour to attempt that.

A fierce struggle for the first yellow jersey accorded to the overall race leader will be decided on a 185km race around Lille.

Cross-border Belgian fans can support a potential winner in double Olympic champion Remco Evenepoel, who finished third in the 2024 Tour.

Defending champion Tadej Pogacar has proven too hot to handle in stages with a single mountain, but is beatable where there are four or five, especially in the heat. After being beaten into second twice by Denmark's Jonas Vingegaard, Pogacar towered above the Tour in 2024, winning six stages in a crushing triumph.

The results: **League:** Iramdham Maheko School, Langmeidong, Manipur, 9 (Bidyalaxmi Devi 5, Jerina Thongtham 3, Ashakiran Devi) bt Khalsa Girls SSS, Amritsar, 1 (Laxmi). One Thousand Hockey Legs 10 (Anjini 4, Vanshika Sharma 2, Prachi Pandey 2, Megha 2) bt Assam Schools Hockey 0. GM Patel Kanya Vidyalaya, Jamnagar, Gujarat, 11 (Puri Ben Parmar 5, Archana Vala 4, Nitai Ben, Prita Ben Zampadilya) bt Raghunath Inter College, Meerut, 0.

Mata Rukhmani Government SSS, Chhattisgarh, 3 (Parmeshwari Sodhi 3) bt Krida Prabodhini, Pune, 0.

**The results: League:** Iramdham Maheko School, Langmeidong, Manipur, 9 (Bidyalaxmi Devi 5, Jerina Thongtham 3, Ashakiran Devi) bt Khalsa Girls SSS, Amritsar, 1 (Laxmi). One Thousand Hockey Legs 10 (Anjini 4, Vanshika Sharma 2, Prachi Pandey 2, Megha 2) bt Assam Schools Hockey 0. GM Patel Kanya Vidyalaya, Jamnagar, Gujarat, 11 (Puri Ben Parmar 5, Archana Vala 4, Nitai Ben, Prita Ben Zampadilya) bt Raghunath Inter College, Meerut, 0.

# Gukesh the overwhelming favourite in World title match: Nakamura

The American GM believes the Indian has an 80:20 chance of beating Ding, feels no player is going to be super dominant the way Carlsen has been; emphasises the importance of Global Chess League going forward



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GLOBAL CHESS LEAGUE

## P.K. Ajith Kumar

**A**t Friends House in London earlier this month, Hikaru Nakamura was requested to play a game of chess by someone who admitted he wasn't very good. The World No. 2 from the United States graciously sat down, braving the cold on the balcony, played in all seriousness, and won the game within a matter of a few moves.

Nakamura has this connection with people. In the virtual world too, he connects with them easily. He is a hugely popular streamer, with more than 2.5 million subscribers on YouTube.

"You have all these people coming to the game and it is really important that instead of trying to push them away from chess, you really try to encourage them to keep playing," Nakamura told *The Hindu* in London. "So, you know, when I play some of these games, like the one I have just played, it is more about hopefully being able to provide something that the person can learn."

He adds chess is about connecting the dots, in a way. "You think ahead, you strategise all these things," he said. "Well, I do think those are very beneficial talents or abilities that you can learn from chess. I think a lot of top chess players spend so long memorising variations, and they kind of forget these things."

Nakamura recalls taking tennis lessons as a kid. "When I was probably seven, I actually took tennis lessons and, you know, obviously I was a complete beginner," he said. "I was kind of decent by the end of all these lessons, but the thing is even the person I was, the coach could still beat me with his eyes closed basically. So I don't really mind these random games of chess with people."

Nakamura was in London for the Global Chess League, the franchise-based league that is a joint venture between Tech Mahindra and world chess governing body FIDE. It was Season 2, but it was his time in the league that uses some innovative ideas to make chess more appealing to the casual player and a global television audience.

His team, American Gambits, may not have had a great tournament, but he enjoyed the experience. He believes chess needs to be more entertaining to attract new audiences and that the Global Chess League is a right move in that direction.

"I think in the league, we got a little bit unlucky, if we look at our matches against

Magnus Carlsen's team (Alpine SG Pipers) and we definitely should have won one of those matches, but from the competitive side, it was a lot of fun," he said. "And the concept of a tournament like this is to take chess to a global audience, to the casual follower."

He believes that it is important for the future of chess. "I know some people are unhappy with the time control (with no increment) in this tournament, but I don't really have a problem with that," he said. "I grew up playing with it and I think you know ultimately you have to understand what the purpose of an event like this is. If you have this time control in events like the World rapid or blitz championships, it would be a huge problem."

He feels the profile of the Global Chess League is a bit different. "I don't look at this as an event that is supposed to fit the mould of a super serious top-level tournament," he said. "I mean the goal to me, it is very clear, that they want to try and promote chess to a global audience that does not just follow chess day and night all the time or 24/7. You have to keep that in perspective."

Nakamura pointed out that he had a different perspective from other top players as he was also someone who was creating content for streaming constantly.

"I have this view from both sides, from the inside and from the outside," he said.

"You know if all I did was to speak of Garry Kasparov games or Carlsen games non-stop; it is not something that would appeal to a lot of the fans. If you don't take the chance to try and push chess to the global audience then you've missed an opportunity. I think the players have to either talk about things like the time control before the event begins or get used to it. I would love to compete in the Global Chess League again; it has been a lot of fun for me."

Nakamura believes the practice of wealthy private individuals conducting round-robin tournaments for top 10 players would not generate enough public interest. "If you go back to pre-2010, I would say in terms of top-level tournaments, there were a couple events, like the one in the Netherlands, the one in Spain, and maybe a couple others as well, but there wasn't really a big interest," he said. "And if you go back to 2014, you have things like the Grand Chess Tour, which brought in some interest. I still would argue that ultimately the general public was not super aware of these events. I think if you have corporate sponsors and you have a model that is based around the fans or the eyeballs, it is possible to grow

the game in a sustainable way."

Nakamura belongs to a generation that is dominated by one player, Carlsen, the World No 1. He doesn't think the next generation will be anything like that.

An 18-year-old D. Gukesh is taking on Ding Liren for the World championship in Singapore next month. Nakamura believes the Chennai lad is the overwhelming favourite ("80-20 chances for Gukesh").

"I think the one thing that is definitely going to be helpful for chess going forward is that there will be nobody who is going to be super dominant the way Magnus has been," he said. "With Magnus there hasn't been great competition."

He is convinced that there are several top players emerging at the same time. "When I look at Gukesh or when I look at Arjun Erigaisi, Nodirbek Abdusattorov, or Alireza Firouzja, all of them are very strong players," he said.

"And I think that there is no one player who is going to dominate. It is going to be something where all these players are competitive with each other. And I think for the fans when you have these competitive match-ups it definitely should be a good thing in terms of keeping the interest."

(The author was in London at the invitation of Tech Mahindra).

## THE GIST

▼ Nakamura is a hugely popular streamer

▼ He belongs to a generation that is dominated by one player — Carlsen

▼ The American is convinced that several top players are emerging at the same time



## SCIENCE

# Study offers clues to why COVID-19 vaccine protection wanes quickly

Why mRNA vaccines for COVID-19 fail to generate long-lasting plasma cells in the bone marrow is now a crucial question. The answer likely lies in the unique surface structure of the SARS-CoV-2 virus, which features spikes that serve as the primary target for most COVID-19 vaccines

Puneet Kumar  
Vipin M. Vashishtha

**T**he ideal vaccine offers nearly complete protection against infection and mild disease in just one dose. It is simple to administer and doesn't have any adverse effects. The protective immunity lasts a lifetime.

Are these expectations too idealistic?

In practical scenarios, no single vaccine provides such advantages. The key challenges vaccine developers face are the vaccines' durability, the lack of immune correlates of protection, and the inability to protect against infection and transmission. But the greatest challenge among these three bottlenecks is the inability of vaccines to confer long-lasting protection.

Recently, the authors reviewed 34 licensed vaccines for the duration of protection against different infectious diseases. Only five offer long-lasting protection.

#### Vaccines and lasting protection

The immunity that follows an infection – natural or vaccine-induced – is mainly the result of the body generating antibodies. A specific type of immune cell known as a plasma cell, which comes from B-cells in the lymph nodes, secretes these antibodies.

Not all B-cells and plasma cells are of the same type. Most of them have a short life span: they produce antibodies for a few weeks and die. As a result, the concentration of antibodies in the body declines after a few weeks. But in the lymph nodes, a key lymphatic region, a germinal centre (GC), undergoes a long selection and maturation process known as affinity maturation to produce memory B-cells. GCs are the engines of antibody evolution and the mainstay of immune cells that provide lasting immunity. The name memory B-cells refers to these cells' capacity to memorise the antigen's characteristics over an extended period of time. When the antigen or microbe reenters the body, the memory B-cells swiftly identify it and start producing antigen-specific plasma cells. This rapidly boosts the antibody concentration and protects the individual against the disease.

Some plasma cells, known as long-lasting plasma cells (LLPCs), also migrate to the bone marrow and survive for an extended duration, promoting the production of antibodies in this time. A vaccine's ability to confer long-term protection thus depends on its ability to induce the production of LLPCs. The goal of all vaccine developers is for their



A health worker prepares a dose of a Moderna COVID-19 vaccine in Barboursville, in the U.S. SHOLTER SINGER/AP

vaccines to generate these cells in the bone marrow.

But while most vaccines generate memory B-cells, not all of them turn into LLPCs. Special signals from the B-cell receptors are required for this to happen. Cross-linking between these receptors (called BCR cross-linking) and the antigen present in the vaccine triggers the release of T-cells. Thus the type of antigen in the vaccine, which is also capable of triggering cross-linking, dictates the creation of LLPCs.

#### New evidence on LLPCs

A new study in *Nature Medicine* provided further evidence of the significance of LLPCs. Researchers studied the presence of different subsets of antibody-secreting cells (ASCs): LLPCs and short-lived ASCs (which include non-LLPCs) in the bone marrows of 19 healthy volunteers aged 20–65 years, within 2.5–33 months of receiving a COVID-19 mRNA shot.

They compared this data with the presence of LLPCs and non-LLPCs specific to tetanus and influenza.

All 19 individuals had received a quadrivalent influenza vaccine within 1–12 months of the time of each bone marrow aspirate. All had also received

**The immunity that follows an infection – natural or vaccine-induced – is mainly the result of the body generating antibodies. A specific type of immune cell known as a plasma cell, which comes from B-cells in the lymph nodes, secretes these antibodies**

childhood vaccinations against tetanus, with recent boosters ranging from one month to 24 years from the time of bone marrow aspirates. (Aspirate refers to a way to extract semi-liquid bone marrow.)

The results were striking. While the aspirates demonstrated high and relatively comparable frequencies of non-LLPCs specific to the COVID-19, influenza, and tetanus vaccines, there were hardly any LLPCs specific to COVID-19, even as LLPCs specific to influenza and tetanus were present.

In other words, LLPCs are responsible for durable immunity. Their absence in the bone marrow is responsible for the rapid waning of both vaccine- and infection-induced protection against

COVID-19. The results were similar for ASCs secreting different immunoglobulins (IgG and IgA).

The results echo a previous study of bone marrow aspirates from 20 unvaccinated people infected with COVID-19. It revealed they were "deficient" LLPCs specific to the SARS-CoV-2 virus compared to LLPCs produced by a tetanus shot.

Why mRNA vaccines for COVID-19 failed to generate LLPCs in the bone marrow is now a crucial question. The answer likely lies in the unique surface structure of the SARS-CoV-2 virus, which features spikes that serve as the primary target for most COVID-19 vaccines. The researchers have expressed the belief that widely spaced spikes of SARS-CoV-2 (around 20–25 nanometres apart) prevent BCR crosslinking and the production of LLPCs.

The most popular COVID-19 vaccines during the pandemic were mRNA vaccines. Some other vaccines, including that against the human papillomavirus, utilise the virus-like particle (VLP) platform. Here, the vaccine presents the virus's spikes more effectively to the body's cells, facilitating better BCR cross-linking.

Thus, the distance between spike proteins on the surface of SARS-CoV-2 viral particles may prevent the production of LLPCs after an infection or a vaccine dose. This could then explain why the protection conferred by COVID-19 vaccines, whose effect is based on the spike proteins, wanes rapidly.

Some other researchers are quite sceptical of this explanation and don't believe the spacing of spikes has anything to do with the durability of vaccines, however.

#### The way forward

The generation of LLPCs along with memory B- and T-cells is crucial for the long-term effectiveness of any vaccine. Understanding how the release of these key immune cells can be triggered in different populations and how their effects can be modulated in animal models and humans is essential to designing better vaccines.

Therefore, the future of vaccines protecting against challenging or emerging infectious diseases lies in the design of new immunogens, their release mechanisms, and the mechanisms of action of various adjuvants.

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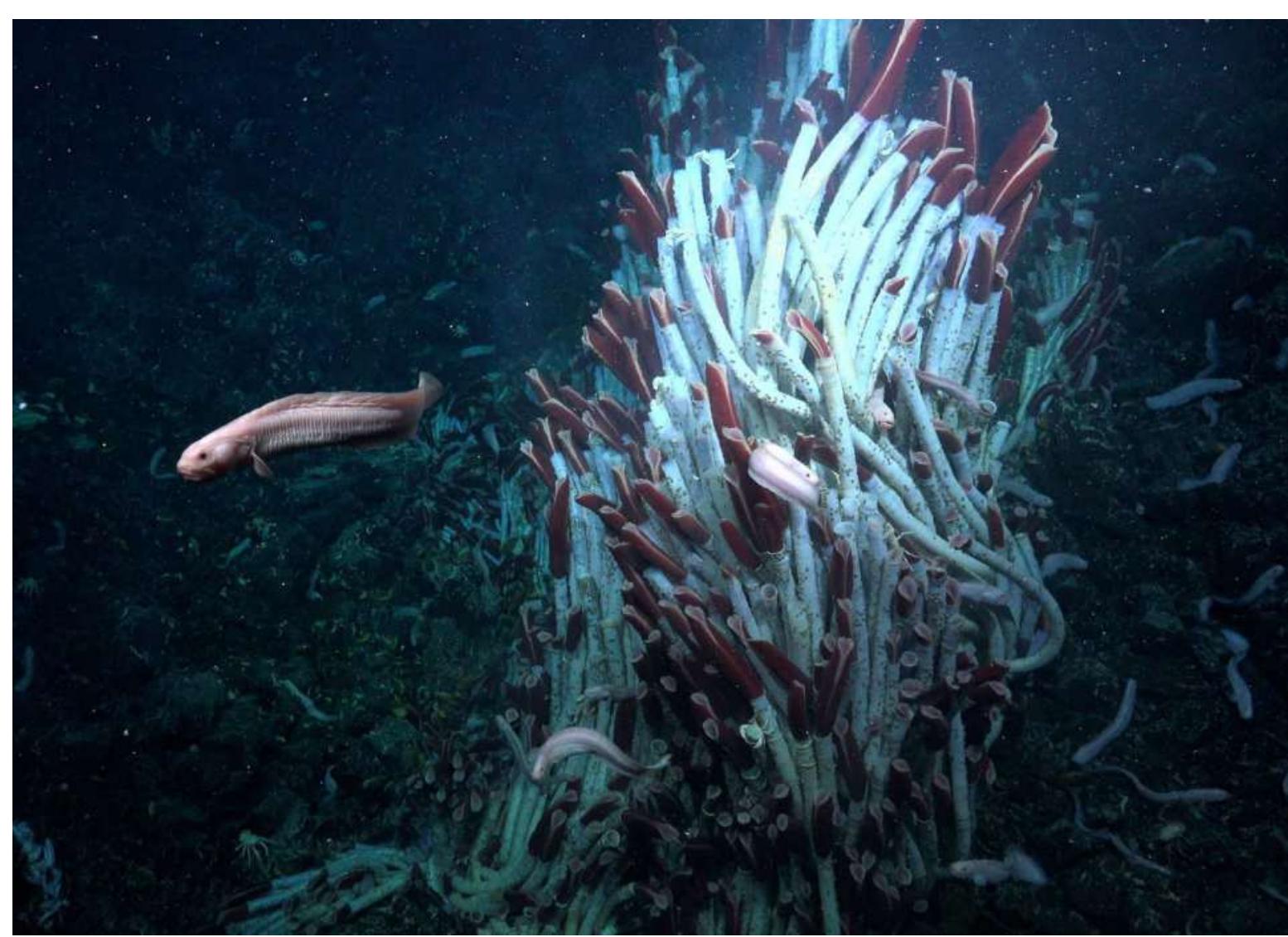
## THE GIST

The challenges developers face are vaccines' durability, lack of immune correlates of protection, and inability to protect against infection and transmission. But the greatest challenge is the inability to confer long-lasting protection

Long-lasting plasma cells migrate to the bone marrow and survive for an extended duration, promoting the production of antibodies. The goal of all vaccine developers is for vaccines to generate these cells in the marrow

The future of vaccines protecting against challenging or emerging infectious diseases lies in the design of new immunogens, their release mechanisms, and the mechanisms of action of various adjuvants

## BIG SHOT



This handout photograph released by the Schmidt Ocean Institute shows an eelpout swimming by tube worms at a depth of 2,500 metres at the Tica Vent, a site on the East Pacific Rise. Scientists have discovered giant worms on the seabed, suggesting the presence of a larger ecosystem in these hostile environments than initially believed. AFP

## QUESTION CORNER

### Fizz in the sea



**Q: What causes the seas to foam?**

**A:** Sea foam needs two ingredients: something to increase the surface tension of the water, like a bubble bath, and something to froth it up, like water running into a tub.

In the ocean or sea, the bubble bath is usually dissolved organic material, and strong surface winds or the breaking of waves on the beach stir up the water with air to make bubbles.

The organic material comes from a number of sources, usually a concentration of biomass such as the phytoplankton bloom that causes a red tide or a fish kill. A bloom is an increase in the numbers of some species or complex of species that then die or are eaten, releasing organic material.

The material can also come from sewer spills and other terrestrial runoff.

In addition, there are a number of mechanisms that concentrate the foam, which is commonly blown up on the beach, for example. Seafoam is seldom seen in the open ocean as most areas do not support high concentrations of plankton, though there are spots where the right conditions for an organic bloom occur.



A flock of pelicans flies over a frothy sea. AARON BURDEN

For feedback and suggestions for 'Science', please write to [science@thehindu.co.in](mailto:science@thehindu.co.in) with the subject 'Daily page'