

THUMBNAILS



Trinamul Congress supporters celebrate the party's performance in the Lok Sabha elections, in Kolkata on Tuesday. ■ BISWAJIT GHOSHAL

Commissioning of new UP line and loop platform at Jaugram station: The Eastern Railway completed the commissioning of the new Up loop line and loop platform at Jaugram Station yesterday. The major infrastructure enhancement, executed by the Gati Shakti Unit of the Howrah Division through a composite tender, was sanctioned in the fiscal year 2021-22. The new platform is expected to save approximately three minutes per local train, improving EMU locals punctuality. There is also a provision for an up loop cum down departure loop line, the alteration of 41 out of 45 routes, and the reduction of the calling on timer from 120 seconds to 60 seconds. The project includes the construction of a 720-meter up loop line, a 350-meter-long and 5-meter-wide Vacuum Dewatered Flooring (VDF) platform, and an extended foot over bridge.

Train cancellations: Following track maintenance work, involving a four hours traffic and power block in the Bandel station yard line and on UP and Down Naihati line, the Eastern Railway has decided to cancel Bandel 37536 - Naihati local and 37535 Naihati - Bandel local on 5 June. The block is to commence after the arrival of 37529 at Bandel at 9 am and the first train after the block is to be 37538 on Down Naihati Line. According to the ER, one pair of Bandel - Naihati Local out of 22 pairs would remain cancelled during the block.

People have voted against Modi: Mamata

She says that Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union home minister Amit Shah should resign taking moral responsibility

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, 4 JUNE

Trinamul Congress chairperson Mamata Banerjee said Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union home minister Amit Shah should resign taking moral responsibility.

"Modi has broken many political parties and now the people have broken his backbone," she said, adding, "Every time Modi came to the state, the district magistrates and senior police officers were transferred by the ECI. The BJP had maligned Bengal and lowered it before the country. I am not going to tolerate this and will take revenge."

Calling it "victory of the people" she said, "This is INDIA's victory. People have voted against Modi. Bengal was the biggest target. The Union home ministry had sent ED, CBI and Income Tax to scare our leaders. The leaders, up to the level of councillors, were called up and threatened. Shah should resign as people have given him a befitting reply," she said.

She said the Sandeshkhali issue has failed to create any impact as people knew it was done to malign our women. She refused to comment on Ram Mandir. She said, "The MP from Faizabad has lost."

She said she had con-



gratulated Akhilesh Yadav, Uddhav Thackeray, Kapilana Soren and sent a congratulatory message to Rahul Gandhi. She said the Trinamul Congress had lost two to three seats because of Congress. "I am not blaming the central Congress. BJP has given so much money to Congress in some constituencies. In north Kolkata the Congress got money from the BJP," she said, adding, "I told Congress to have an alliance in Bengal as that would have helped Congress to get 100 plus seats in the country."

Miss Banerjee said after receiving a setback in the election, the BJP will not be able to send the ED and CBI whimsically. "Even today the Election Commission of India is trying to help the BJP to increase its seats. Akhilesh had called me and told me that in some seats the ECI is making unnecessary delay to issue certificates to the winning candidates. This has happened in Kanthi seat. We will demand recounting in some seats," she maintained.

She added, "The arrogance of Modi had become intolerable. A leader should

respect the people. I bow down to the people who have blessed our party. The BJP had suspended 147 MPs to get their bills passed. Now, they cannot change the Constitution, as to do it, two third majority is required and this they cannot achieve."

She said the BJP will have to depend on Chandrababu Naidu and Nitish Kumar to form the government. "I welcome everyone, who intends to come to the INDIA block," she said.

Commenting on the exit polls, she said, "I knew well that exit polls were bogus. The media cannot shed its responsibility. I do not blame the journalists, but their owners have been purchased by the BJP. I hope that the media and journalists will be able to work freely now," she said.

Miss Banerjee said, "I do not want anything. I want that the dues of the state governments should be cleared and the poor and the needy are not going to be deprived. There should not be any division in society and people should live peacefully and happily," she said.

Miss Banerjee thanked her party leaders, including Abhishek Banerjee for taking part in the campaign to oust the BJP. "I reiterate, let Modi go away and the country will be saved."

PHOTO BY BISWAJIT GHOSHAL



PHOTO BY BISWAJIT GHOSHAL



PHOTO BY MOUL MONDAL

Lakshmir Bhandar brings handsome rewards for TMC

SUBHENDU MAITI
KOLKATA, 4 JUNE

Winning nearly 73 per cent of total 42 Lok Sabha seats in West Bengal, the ruling Trinamul Congress, led by the chief minister Mamata Banerjee once again proved that women-centric schemes like *Lakshmir Bhandar* brought another spectacular victory for the party after the 2021 Assembly polls in the state.

The major issues like alleged scams in public distribution system (PDS), recruitment in government-sponsored schools, violence in Sandeshkhali, and BJP's Hindutava politics could not restrict Trinamul Congress.

"Mamata Banerjee's vari-

ous beneficiary schemes starting from *Lakshmir Bhandar*, *Sabujshree*, *Kanyashree* etc and *Swasthya Sathi* scheme in connection with women development defeated BJP's aggressive politics of religion in Bengal. Fifty per cent of voters are women and around 2.30 crore financially weak women get direct cash assistance every month through Lakshmir Bhandar scheme," said Prof Biswanath Chakraborty, a political analyst.

The scheme, introduced in 2021, provides direct cash transfer to women between 25 and 60 years. The cash amount has been increased to Rs 1,000 from Rs 500 for the general category.

Women voters constitut-



ing around 50 per cent of total electorates in the state have traditionally shown their mandates for Miss Banerjee since Trinamul Congress came to power in 2011 in the state, ending 34 years' Left regime. According to the latest data from the Election Com-

mission of India (ECI), the state has 3.73 crore women voters, 12 lakh less than the number of registered male voters, 3.85 crore. However, there has been a notable increase in the registration of fresh women voters.

Interestingly, in the 2019 LS

polls, women recorded a high-voter turnout than men, with 81.79 per cent of women casting their votes compared to 81.35 per cent of men. Data showed that in the 2019 elections, women registered a high turnout.

Political analysts pointed out that while women voters have traditionally been loyal supporters of the TMC, along with minorities who share around 32 per cent vote banks in the state.

They said that the TMC has the advantage of having a woman, Mamata Banerjee, at its helm, who has garnered the support of women, especially from marginalised backgrounds, throughout her political career, while the main

opposition state BJP lacks popular women faces.

"A family with three women aged between 25 and 60 can get Rs 3,000 cash assistance with Rs 1,000 each under the Lakshmir Bhandar scheme every month," one of the analysts said.

A glance at the voting pattern in this general election showed that many LS seats have phenomenal turnouts of women voters as compared to men.

Sk Samidul and Sk Rajesh, two youths aged between 22 and 25, of Chandipur, under Tamluk LS constituency, said they voted for Trinamul Congress because "Didi has given our mothers, sisters and other women members, cash assis-

tance under Lakshmir Bhandar scheme. There are several other schemes which give women direct benefits."

The women voters in the state are categorized into four sub-categories: minority, general, subaltern and SC-ST women. In the 2021 Assembly elections, the TMC secured more than 50 per cent of the women votes, while the BJP garnered only 37 per cent.

This time in the LS polls Trinamul Congress has kept its vote share intact obtaining around 46 per cent votes while for the saffron party it is around 38 per cent and for the Left-Congress combine the percentage is close to 11 per cent.

PHOTO BY BISWAJIT GHOSHAL

BJP's weak organisation led to its undoing

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, 4 JUNE

The organizational weakness of the BJP was exposed once again with the party losing two former ministers and past state president in the general election whose results were announced today.

Interestingly, Suwendu Adhikari, Leader of Opposition, who speaks to the media almost everyday refused to face the camera today after a poll debacle of his colleagues started pouring in.

Mr Adhikari got the seat of Debashree Chowdhury who was the minister of state for environment changed whimsically. Mrs Chowdhury had won from Raiganj Lok Sabha seat in 2019. She was fielded in South Kolkata and defeated handsomely by Mala Roy, who was the sitting MP.

Nisith Pramanik, minister of state for home was defeated by Trinamul candidate in Cooch Behar Jagdish Kumar Basunia. However, Shantanu



An empty road in front of state BJP party office after Lok Sabha election results at Kolkata on Tuesday. ■ MOUL MONDAL

Thakur, state minister for shipping was able to retain his seat. Following Mr Adhikari's insistence Dilip Ghosh, former state president and MP from Midnapore was fielded from Bardhaman-Durgapur. Mr Ghosh was defeated by former Test cricketer Kirti Azad.

Political experts said the poor result of BJP is likely to create a dent in Mr Adhikari's career. They said over the years he had misinformed the BJP headquarters in Delhi.

Sandeshkhali, a non-issue was raised by the BJP by making reportedly false allegations of rape. Videos emerged later which claimed the allegations were baseless and the whole issue was engineered by the BJP to reap political benefits. The experts said Mr Adhikari will have to face the central leadership and explain to them the poor performance in Bengal as Mr Modi had said the BJP would get the highest number of seats in Bengal.

Dismal show again: CPM draws a blank

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, 4 JUNE

The people of Bengal rejected the CPM today with all its candidates occupying distant third position.

Veteran CPM leaders, Mohammad Selim and Sujan Chakraborty, who contested from Murshidabad and Dum Dum were handsomely defeated. The young candidates, including Srijan Bhat-tacharya in Jadavpur, Dip-sita Dhar in Srirampur and Sayan Banerjee were defeated. With this, the CPM which did not have any seat in West Bengal Assembly failed to send anyone in the Parliament too. The lone CPM Rajya Sabha MP is Bikas Bhat-tacharya.

The alliance of Congress and CPM did not work well for Adhir Chowdhury who was called the uncrowned king of Berhampur suffered defeat.

The poll results show that the CPM is yet to come out of the shock which it received



CPM Jadavpur candidate Srijan Bhattacharjee at Bijoygarh party office, which was ransacked on Tuesday. ■ SNS

in 2011 Assembly election when the party lost to Trinamul Congress badly. Party heavyweights Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee, Nirupam Sen, Asim Dasgupta, Gautam Deb were defeated. The party has not been able to repair the trauma it has been suffering since then.

From 2011, the CPM started losing all the by-elections and in most of the election the deposits of the candi-

dates were forfeited.

In 2024, the CPM had fielded young candidates and hoped to do well in the election. Party cadres were seen on the roads. But the party's campaign was directionless and it continued to harp on Modi-Mamata secret understanding and did not highlight important issues like unemployment and price rise. Also, the party did not have any penetration in the rural belt. In



a bid to cover its own organizational weakness, it blamed Trinamul terror which came in the way in setting up organization in the rural belt.

From 2011 till date, the CPM did not do any self analysis and went on highlighting Modi-Mamata secret deal. It did not say a word when the BJP deliberately deprived Bengal. The voters did not support this stand of the party and punished the candidates in the EVM.

Most TMC MPs manage to retain their seats



STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, 4 JUNE

The BJP and a section of the media had criticised Abhishek Banerjee, national general secretary of Trinamul Congress when he spoke about the Diamond Harbour model.

Today, his schemes to help the needy have paid dividends and Banerjee was elected from the seat by over 7 lakh votes.

Mr Banerjee had announced that he would win by at least 4 lakh votes but the people voted for him leading to the huge margin which is an all time record from the seat. All the sitting MPs of Trinamul Congress have been elected, some for the third and others for the fourth consecutive time.

Mr Sudip Bandyopadhyay is leading in north Kolkata. He is likely to be elected for the fourth consecutive time. Dr Kaloli Ghosh Dastidar, Satabdi Roy, Saugata Roy were elected for the fourth consecutive time. Dipak Adhikari popularly known as Dev, Mala Roy and Mohua Moitra were elected for the third consecutive time.

Four actor-turned-politicians were elected, namely, Shatabdi Roy, Dev, Rachna Banerjee, June Maliah and Saayoni Ghosh.

PHOTOS BY BISWAJIT GHOSHAL & MOUL MONDAL

TMC win in Durgapur-Burdwan paves way for civic body polls in August

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
DURGAPUR, 4 JUNE

The huge wins of both Trinamul Congress heavyweight candidates in Asansol and Durgapur of West Burdwan district, the largest industrial zone in the state, has boosted the chances of the civil polls of Durgapur Municipal Corporation Elections in August this year. The elections are due for more than a year now.

After consecutive drubbing of the Trinamul Congress in the hands of BJP in the 2019 Lok Sabha polls in Durgapur West and East Assembly seats, and in the 2021 Assembly polls in Durgapur West seat, the TMC did not take the risk of holding the polls of Durgapur Municipal Corporation, due since in 2023.



In the 2017 DMC, the TMC had swept the polls by winning all the 43 wards.

In 2023, the state government appointed Anindita Mukherjee as the chairperson of the Board of Administrators (BOA) of DMC. She was mayor of DMC from 2017 to 2023. A top leader of TMC, requesting anonymity, said that with these results the party will go for the polls in August this year.

SS Ahluwalia of the BJP had won by huge margins from

Durgapur East and Durgapur West Assembly seats in the 2023 Lok Sabha polls and Lakshman Ghorui of the BJP had won in 2021 polls from the Durgapur West assembly seat.

However, Pradip Mazumdar wrested the Durgapur East Assembly seat and later became the state panchayat minister.

But Kirti Jha Azad, the member of the 1983 World Cup Winning team contested this time from Burdwan-Durgapur Lok Sabha seat and has defeated former state BJP president Dilip Ghosh.

"We are really happy today and thank the people of Burdwan-Durgapur for showering their blessings upon us. Our performance in the industrial belt of Durgapur has

improved immensely compared to 2019 Lok Sabha polls. The Durgapur Municipal Corporation polls will be held this year and we expect to win easily," said Pradip Mazumdar, state panchayat minister and MLA of Durgapur East.

"I thank the people of Durgapur for keeping their trust in me and I dedicate this win to our Didi Mamata Banerjee, who has emerged as even a greater political leader in the Lok Sabha polls in the country. Hopefully, I will be able to raise the issues of Durgapur and try to solve them," said Kirti Azad.

Since the beginning of counting, Kirti Azad had taken the lead today and ended up as winner with a victory margin of about 1,38,031 votes.

BJP votes led to defeat of five-time MP Adhir

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, 4 JUNE

It's the BJP that virtually

helped the Trinamul Congress candidate Yusuf Pathan to defeat the five-time Congress MP and president of the West Bengal Pradesh Congress Committee (WBPC) Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury in Berhampur Lok Sabha (LS) constituency, a traditional strong citadel of his party in Murshidabad district.

With the defeat of Mr Chowdhury, who is also a member of the Congress Working Committee (CWC) the party suffered a major setback in the state. Congress has won only one seat in Malda Dakshin in the state.

Trinamul Congress had fielded Mr Pathan, former member of the national cricket team, in Berhampur prompting its rival parties like

BJP and Congress to tag him as an 'outsider' because he is a resident of Boroda in Gujarat.

Mr Pathan defeated Mr Chowdhury with a margin of more than 70,000 votes.

The heavyweight Congress candidate did not taste defeat in the last 25 years in Berhampur.

Political observers in Murshidabad felt that Mr Chowdhury's loss was a result of polarized votes in the constituency. For instance, the BJP candidate, Dr Nirmal Saha, who has got around three lakh and fifty thousand votes has paved the way for victory of Mr Pathan, who has secured nearly four lakh and seventy five thousand votes.

Mr Chowdhury has got more than four lakh votes.

"Mr Chowdhury used to get huge votes from both

Hindu and minority camps in previous elections in Berhampur. But this time, BJP votes aggravated his fall and at the same time Trinamul Congress has enjoyed the maximum percentage of minority vote banks," an observer requesting anonymity said.

In the last Assembly elections, in 2021, Trinamul Congress had won six assemblies while BJP had Berhampur only under the Berhampur parliamentary constituency.

Trinamul Congress's strategic move by nominating the former cricketer Mr Pathan in Berhampur made it difficult for Mr Chowdhury to retain the seat for six times in a row.

No national leader like Rahul Gandhi of Congress was found to campaign for him this time in Berhampur.



Chief minister A Revanth Reddy however was left embarrassed as BJP won his home constituency

BRS came second only in two seats, Khammam and Mahabubabad and in Medak which was its citadel, the party came third after it failed to get a lead of even 20,000 from Siddipet where T Harish had won the election by

Most of the defectors such as G Ranjith Reddy and Danam Nagender who joined from BRS to Congress and BRS Patil who went to BJP from BRS also lost except Kavya Kadiyamp of the Congress who won the Warangal seat. BJP which had won only eight seats in Assembly elections banked on Modi magic since most of the sitting MPs except G Kishen Reddy also had contested Assembly elections but lost.

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi has scripted victory again with a lead of 3,50,030

In Pathanamthitta, Antony is inching towards his fourth victory in the seat by a majority of nearly 50,000 votes over his nearest rival CPI-M leader and former state finance minister Thomas Issac. BJP candidate ,Anil Antony, the son of senior Congress leader and former Chief Minister AK Antony, is in third position here.

"Being a regional party won two consecutive state elections with a good majority 63/119 - 2014 88/119 - 2018," wrote K T Rama Rao on social media platform X.

"Currently, the principal opposition with 1/3rd seats 39/119 - 2023. Today's electoral setback is certainly very disappointing. But we will continue to toil and will rise from the ashes again like a Phoenix," he added further.

The results are being declared on June 4.

Jagan also said that it was not new for the YSR Congress to be in the opposition.



YSRCP has won only three Assembly seats and was lead-

Meanwhile, Jagan Mohan Reddy also listed out the major welfare schemes implemented by him and was surprised why the party had to suffer the defeat after

The AIADMK contested

The party leadership under him expelled senior leader and former Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, O. Panneerselvam (OPS) who is highly popular in the southern regions of Tamil Nadu. AIADMK also snapped ties with the BJP in September last year which led to a major erosion in opposition unity against the DMK.

Gowda secured 5.67 lakh votes against Kumaraswamy

As per the official data, Mallesh Babu polled 6.91 lakh votes against Gowtham who managed 6.20 lakh votes.

"We will examine all the fac-

As in the last Lok Sabha

In 2019, JSP had fought alone and won only one seat

Pawan Kalyan also fought against slander as YSRCP called him the "call sheet politician" because of his parallel career as a film hero and also "the adopted son of Chandrababu Naidu." His private life was often discussed as YSRCP leaders including YS Jagan Mohan Reddy took a dig at him for his multiple marriages. Pawan Kalyan, brother of megastar Chiranjeevi goes by the moniker Power star for his fans in the two Telugu states.

The BJP which tried to manage the tribal leader in Banswara district, lost Bagidora assembly bypoll to Kris

Bharatiya Adivasi Party's Raj Kumar Roat in Banswara defeated Mahendrajeet S Malviya by a margin of 247054 votes.

TENDER



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Back to a coalition

With the Bharatiya Janata Party falling well short of the half-way mark, and needing the support of whimsical allies such as N Chandrababu Naidu of the Telugu Desam and Nitish Kumar of the Janata Dal (U), India's politics has retreated to the era of coalitions, one where plans for big-ticket reforms such as the Uniform Civil Code, "One Nation, One Poll" or amending the Preamble, will have to yield space to the compulsions of keeping governance on an even keel. While there is no doubt that the National Democratic Alliance, cumulatively poised for an absolute majority, will form the government, its shape and direction will depend on how adroitly the dominant party within the grouping manages the demands of its partners. Certainly, the BJP is wise enough to know that the TDP and the JD (U) are not the most steadfast allies, led as they both are by politicians with Prime Ministerial ambitions.

Thus the BJP will also work hard on keeping its smaller alliance partners within the flock, and meeting their relatively smaller demands, while seeking numbers from outside the pre-poll coalition to ensure a degree of stability. In any event, this outcome will impact the decisive manner in which the BJP has ruled for the past 10 years, whether it was in introducing reforms or in dealing with political opponents.

An Opposition with more than 200 members in the lower house can make governance in the style the BJP has got used to quite difficult; compromise and accommodation will perforce be the new normal. At the same time, the BJP will need to introspect on where it went wrong, especially in Uttar Pradesh, where the Prime Minister saw his victory margin shrink substantially and the Faizabad (Ayodhya) seat seems to have been lost despite the temple brouhaha, and to a lesser extent in Maharashtra, West Bengal, Rajasthan and Assam. Having said that, the party will draw succor from its successes in Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat, and from the acceptance in the Kashmir valley of its narrative that politicians such as Mehbooba Mufti and Omar Abdullah are opportunists.

The Opposition has no doubt got a shot in the arm, and there is no bigger gainer in this election than the Indian National Congress, a party written off by pollsters and pundits alike. As the natural leader of the Opposition, the party will have to practice its politics adroitly if it wishes to stake a claim to governance in 2029. For the first time in recent memory, the party was accommodative of allies and stitched together a viable coalition in the form of the INDIA alliance. In the days and years ahead, it will have to remember these lessons, and eschew the desire to revert to its overbearing ways, especially in dealing with political partners.

Among regional parties, the Trinamul Congress, the DMK, the Samajwadi Party, the Shiv Sena faction of Uddhav Thackeray and the NCP of Sharad Pawar all have reason to be pleased by the results. While further analysis will have to await a fuller disclosure of the results and the positions that political formations take, a final point must be made. Exit polls, pollsters and analysts who had projected numbers far at variance from the results have been left with egg on their faces ~ it is time to accept that their projections are at best semi-educated guesses and must be taken with dollops of salt.

AP and Odisha

Political tsunami in Andhra Pradesh and a competitive battle in Odisha are what results of assembly elections in the two states have delivered. The sweeping victory of the Telugu Desam Party (TDP) in Andhra Pradesh signals a dramatic shift in the state's political landscape. Meanwhile, in Odisha, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has mounted a successful challenge to the long-dominant Biju Janata Dal (BJD), making this election a crucial turning point for both states. In Andhra Pradesh, the TDP, under the leadership of N. Chandrababu Naidu, has stormed back to power, and will have a two-thirds majority on its own.

Its allies ~ the BJP and the Jana Sena Party ~ too have done well. The overwhelming mandate reflects a clear rejection of the YSR Congress Party led by Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy. The electorate's dissatisfaction with Mr Reddy's governance appears to have catalysed this landslide, propelling Mr Naidu and his allies to the forefront with promises of development and stability. Key figures like JSP's Pawan Kalyan and BJP's Y.S. Chowdary also made their mark, indicating a broad coalition appeal that resonated across different demographics.

The NDA's comprehensive strategy, combining grassroots mobilisation and robust campaign rhetoric, effectively cashed in on anti-incumbency sentiment in the state. The TDP's return to power in Andhra Pradesh not only realigns state politics but also positions the NDA strongly for future electoral contests. At the same time, it will signal the end of the controversy about the state's new capital, while Mr Naidu's clout in the national coalition will mean that the demand for special status for the state will resonate loudly in New Delhi.

In Odisha, the political landscape is witnessing a different kind of upheaval. The BJP's aggressive campaign targeting a popular Chief Minister's health and succession plans has paid dividends. The party is heading for a clear majority but the BJD has not entirely lost face. While the results have gone against him, Naveen Patnaik can draw solace from the fact that over the 24 years he ruled, he emerged as the tallest politician the state has ever produced. In many ways, he was the helmsman who transformed the state, and gave its people self-belief, without once being lured by the desire to play a role in national politics. The vote was not so much against his policies, as it was against his age, health and succession plans. As the dust settles on the election, Andhra Pradesh and Odisha are on the cusp of major transformations.

Presidential Amorality

George W Bush was questioned about the lies that took him to the Second Gulf War including claimed Weapons of Mass Destruction etc., but it was his father, George HW Bush, who was far more guilty of having brazenly manipulated lies to start the First Gulf War. He had infamously got a 15-year-old girl called 'Nayirah' to get coached and tearfully narrate to US Congressmen as to how Iraqi soldiers had removed babies from incubators and left them to die. She had ostensibly used an assumed name to protect herself. It was only years later that it turned out that she was no such victim but the daughter of the Kuwaiti Ambassador to US!



Ronald Reagan loved using the phrase "Shining city on a hill" as a metaphor for America and all its purported greatness. Implicit in the phrase were insistences of nobility, morality, and uprightness that were specifically American.

The romantic folklore of the "greatest beacon of hope and democracy that the world has ever known" is from the same fount of American rah-rah-rah. Over time the same sentiment evolved into an even more rousing expression i.e., "American exceptionalism".

Again, it suggested unique virtues of honour, integrity and conduct that were inherently superior to all others. But is it true? Is there such a thing as 'American exceptionalism'? Was it ever so? Or is it yet another case of brilliant brand building with smooth storytelling in the highest temple of capitalism?

Part of this romantic notion and brand appeal extends to its bipartisan national leadership which like the country was invariably made of stellar leaders with impeccable credentials ~ righteous, honourable, and upright.

Like some comic book superheroes, the occupants to the Oval Office were always dashing men (because the gender glass ceiling hasn't been broken as yet in the White House) of steel in a world full of aimless straws blowing in the windy world! Or so we were made to believe, as the monopoly-on-truth was always with Uncle Sam.

Ironically in a rare Op-ed in the *New York Times*, the much-despised Russian leader, Vladimir Putin noted, "It is extremely dangerous to encourage people to see themselves as exceptional, whatever the motivation.... We are all different, but when we ask for the Lord's blessings, we must not forget that God created us equal."

Despite it coming from an

authoritarian who can ill afford to talk of moral leadership, Putin did make solid points by putting the mirror in front of Americans, who pretended to be 'exceptional', and somehow superior in thought and action to all others.

They are undoubtedly the best storytellers and brand builders, but beyond that glib marketing, they are like the rest of the world, or perhaps worse.

The current bonhomie between Washington DC and Delhi too, is a topical and transactional necessity. In a deeply and dangerously fractured world (no longer Unipolar) it is even given to 'win-win' portents.

But it barely masks the historical hypocrisy and amorality of the US, when it comes to its conduct pertaining to India.

In the 1971 Indo-Pak war, the Americans were fully aware of the ground atrocities and genocide as reported by the American Consul General at Dhaka ~ but they ignored the same and knowingly kept supporting the ironfisted dictator, General Yahya Khan.

Even more despicably, they had menacingly sailed their 7th Fleet into the Bay of Bengal, but it was too late, as Dhaka had fallen. Later, declassified White House transcripts from that time would point to the vilest and most ignoble form of Presidential racism and misogyny that got infamously exchanged between the President of the USA and his Secretary of State ~ India and Indira Gandhi in particular were the specific targets of the uncouth Presidential diatribe.

Actually, US Presidential duplicity is genealogical in that no less than the first Comman-

der-in-Chief or President, the much-revered George Washington, is guilty of attempting to re-write a winning (though false) story of being the real victorious visionary over British forces in Yorktown in the Revolutionary Wars ~ when it was actually the French allies who had masterminded that battle in Virginia.

Washington's biographer

concocted the story of a young idealist George confessing to his father, "I can't tell a lie, pa" ~ which goes down popular conscience as a sign of a precocious and moral prodigy, except that it was just a made-up story, not a fact.

Generations

later, George W Bush was questioned about the lies that took him to the Second Gulf War including claimed Weapons of Mass Destruction etc., but it was his father, George HW Bush, who was far more guilty of having brazenly manipulated lies to start the First Gulf War.

He had infamously got a 15-year-old girl called 'Nayirah' to get coached and tearfully narrate to US Congressmen as to how Iraqi soldiers had removed babies from incubators and left them to die. She had ostensibly used an assumed name to protect herself.

It was only years later that it turned out that she was no such victim but the daughter of the Kuwaiti Ambassador to US! Whereas President George HW Bush had repeatedly invoked the 'Nayirah' story to galvanise the national mood and launch Operation Desert Storm.

From impeachments of President Andrew Johnson and Bill Clinton to Nixongate and John F Kennedy's personal dal-



BHOPIINDER SINGH

The writer is Lt Gen PVSM, AVSM (Retd), and former Lt Governor of Andaman & Nicobar Islands and Puducherry

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

editor@thestatesman.com

Uncertainty in SA

SIR, There is a tectonic shift in the political scenario of South Africa where the African National Congress (ANC) has lost its political monopoly after ruling the country for three decades. Election results showed that the party had fallen short of winning an absolute majority for the first time since the end of apartheid in 1994. The ANC which rose to international acclaim on the shoulders of Nelson Mandela is now busy trying to buy its majority in Parliament, which elects the president. It has two weeks to cobble together a government and elect a President. The ANC received about 40 per cent of the vote, which was the largest share but a dramatic drop from the nearly 58 per cent it received in 2019. Rival parties, however, have derided the ANC as corrupt and have vowed never to form an alliance with it. A big question now is whether the ANC would ally with Jacob Zuma, its former leader, who resigned as president in 2018 because of corruption allegations.

A new party that he helped start just six months ago won almost 15 per cent of the vote.

The Democratic Alliance drew the second-largest share, nearly 22 per cent. It is a potential ally for the ANC, but some ANC members have accused the Alliance of promoting policies that would essentially take the country back to apartheid. Incidentally South Africans face one of the world's highest unemployment rates, shortages of electricity and water, and rampant crime. Many voters see the ANC as something of a relic. ANC leaders will have to pull together their highly factionalized party to form a coalition and try to remain relevant in South African politics.

Yours, etc., Shovanlal Chakraborty, Kolkata, 3 June.

LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

SIR, The centre-page article in today's edition, "Language and thinking-I," has raised many pertinent questions regarding the

interrelationships between language, thinking and culture.

In a 2008 publication, "The Legacy of French Rule in India (1674 to 1954): An investigation of a process of Creolization," I extensively used the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis mentioned by the author in an attempt to analyze the difference between a Tamilian of French ancestry and an anglophone Tamilian in the erstwhile French colony of Puducherry. In my opinion, this hypothesis has a significant validity and is not to be dismissed as has been so by scholars such as the linguist Guy Deutscher as quoted by the writer. What is required is a judicious negotiation between the strong and weak versions of the hypothesis bringing into play the related notions of acculturation, deculturation, assimilation and creolization.

It is only after the acquisition of a certain critical mass of this linguistic, cultural and cerebral combination that the hypothesis becomes relevant. This can be amply demonstrated by having an informal conversation in French with a francophone Puducher-

rian as opposed to having a conversation in English with a local Puducherrian.

The stimuli which one would receive from each would be different thus taking into account the weak version of the hypothesis whereas the different world-views of the duo would be reflective of the strong version as the francophone Puducherrian's

would be similar to that of a Senegalese or a Tunisian whereas the anglophone Puducherrian's would be akin to that of a Gujarati or a Bengali.

In the final analysis, these two individuals would be illustrative of differences between French and British colonialism.

Yours, etc., Animesh Rai, Noida, 2 June.

WINS AND LOSSES

SIR, With reference to your report, "BJP secures landslide victory in Arunachal, wins 46 of 60 seats", Prema Khandu's victory has established him as a power centre in the state of Arunachal Pradesh. And he has successfully filled the void created after his father Dorjee Khandu's death. There are some serious questions for the Congress though as this is the state which it ruled for three decades. In this election it even found it difficult to put up candidates in all the seats and contested only 19. And some of its candidates were not even aware of the last date for nominations. In Sikkim, Sikkim Krantikari Morcha won an unprecedented mandate winning 31 out of 32 seats, thanks to Prem Singh Tamang's common man's chief minister image and his pro poor measures like Rs 2000 per month to unmarried women. BJP which parted ways with SKM just before the elections would be sulking big time as it got zero seats in the state. Hope both governments will work for the betterment of their people in the next five years and bring development and job opportunities.

Yours, etc., Bal Govind, Noida, 3 June.

A MEMBER OF THE

ANN ASIA NEWS NETWORK



ASIAN VOICES

Babies are not for sale

The Department of Justice (DOJ) shared the good news that at least 500 Facebook accounts closely linked to the black market sale of babies had finally been taken down. The DOJ is not celebrating this feat, however, as it knows only too well that there are many more out there that are actively facilitating the outright sale of babies ~ in some cases by the parents themselves ~ to aspiring parents for some P50,000 each.

"[The online sale of babies] is still prevalent. There are still many accounts that have to be closed down," said Justice Assistant Secretary Jose Dominic Clavano IV, adding that the Marcos administration deems the trafficking of these babies so abhorrent that President Marcos himself wants to be involved. "The President believes the Philippines will not progress if it has such a problem," Clavano said.

As such, the DOJ, through its cybercrime division, has stepped up discussions with the National Bureau of Investigation, the Inter-Agency Council Against Trafficking, and Facebook owner Meta, which it believes can and must do more to rid its site of these online sites enabling the sale and illegal adoption of babies.

Clavano said Meta should have more "initiatives, programs, and mechanisms to ensure the widespread protection of children online." The government had in fact been trying to convince Meta to ramp up their monitoring since 2020 when social media emerged as a popular platform for the clandestine baby trade. There have



been some results as seen in the taking down of an increasing number of sites, but still far from expectations.

To help compensate, the DOJ has also enlisted the help of the Filipino public to immediately report illegal activity that may surface on their feed.

But while these initiatives are laudable and should be encouraged, the government should double down on putting the actual criminals behind bars to send a clear and unequivocal signal that these horrendous activities will not be tolerated. Justice Secretary Jesus Crispin Remulla set the right tone when he said that "children are the most precious treasures of society meant to be fully protected by law."

"They are the best investments of today for a better tomorrow. We will never allow anyone to exploit them in any way," Remulla added.

The DOJ has taken a decisive step in this direction after filing qualified trafficking and child exploitation charges against 29-year-old Ma. Chariza Dizon, who tried to sell her 8-day-old baby boy for P50,000 to P90,000 with the help of a government employee, Arjay Malabanan, who acted as her broker.

The boy has since been turned over to the Department of Social Welfare and Development while Dizon and Malabanan are facing a life sentence if found guilty of qualified trafficking and child exploitation.

And the reach of the law should extend not just to the peddlers but to the buyers, too, as they are participants in the trafficking scheme that use the anonymity of the internet to carry out their nefarious deeds.

The genuine desire to be parents is not an excuse because there are legal ways to adopt a child.

The National Authority for Child Care (NACC) of the DSWD has already issued the reminder: "We enjoin the public not to patronize or engage in adoption via online ... This is trafficking in persons and you will be held liable under the rule of law."

Institutional arbitration must get some teeth

P. MADHAVA RAO

On 30 July 2017, Justice B.N. Srikrishna, Retired Judge, Supreme Court of India, Chairperson of the High-Level Committee to Review the Institutionalisation of Arbitration Mechanism in India, submitted his report on the need to institutionalise arbitration mechanisms in India. The Government of India took prompt notice of the report and made the necessary amendments to the Arbitration and Conciliation Act, 1996, which have yet to be notified in order to become operational.

With the amendments to the Arbitration and Conciliation Act 1996 in 2019 and 2022, the Government of India ushered in a new era in India's arbitration system, which was previously limited to courts and individual choices. Historically, disputes within families and communities have been resolved by elders. In feudal societies, only a few cases were resolved by monarchs or other formal dispute resolution systems.

Formal judicial systems, or today's courts, evolved alongside the development of democracies and other widely accepted forms of government. India is not exempt from this rule. As the rights-based approach to justice delivery gains traction on a global scale, bureaucratic processes stifle access to justice. The growing burden of over 4.9 crore pending cases in Indian courts has prompted policymakers to consider strengthening



alternative dispute resolution (ADR) mechanisms.

The institutionalisation of arbitration was expected to bring about a paradigm shift in Indian arbitration jurisprudence, allowing arbitration centres to professionally manage arbitration cases directly from disputants without interference or reference by courts. The only requirement for these institutions to arbitrate a dispute is the existence of an arbitration clause in the disputants' contracts or their mutual agreement to arbitrate.

The Justice Srikrishna committee examined the operations of the International Centre for Alternative Dispute Resolution (ICADR), India's only international arbitration centre overseen by the Government of India and

the Supreme Court of India. This was India's first International Arbitration Centre, with headquarters in New Delhi and regional centres in Bengaluru and Hyderabad.

The ICADR was established in 1995 under the Ministry of Law and Justice, Government of India, with the goal of promoting alternative dispute resolution methods and providing facilities for them. This was part of a larger agenda to facilitate quick dispute resolution and reduce the burden on courts. The ICADR is a Society registered with the SRA that operates autonomously.

No one is aware of ICADR's presence anywhere in the country, and it is unclear whether it died naturally or was suffocated by private institutions.

Arbitration, and more specifically Institutional Arbitration, provides an opportunity for parties to dispute the performance or non-performance of agreed-upon activities under any contract that binds them. Property disputes, financial disputes, partnership disputes, franchise disputes, construction disputes, and any other commercial or business disputes may be arbitrated if a contract includes arbitration as a dispute resolution mechanism.

The arbitration institutions maintain complete confidentiality throughout the procedure. Small and medium-sized businesses, the construction industry, civil contractors, families seeking property division among siblings, and others with arbitrable cases can walk into the offices of Arbitration

Institutions and file their cases for arbitration without the assistance of lawyers or advocates, as opposed to litigating. Arbitration preserves time, money, and relationships.

Despite much talk about institutionalising arbitration through seminars, workshops, and arbitration weeks, as well as comments from none other than India's honourable vice-president that it was becoming an "old boys club," the speed with which the Act was amended is not evident in its implementation. Section 11(3A) of the Act requests that the High Courts and Supreme Court designate Arbitration Institutions, which remains a non-starter, and the Arbitration Institutions' applications are pending with the High Courts for unknown reasons.

Four years after the law was passed, the promised Arbitration Council of India, which would authorise and regulate arbitration institutions, is yet to be fully operational. Except for a small number of Arbitration Institutions founded and funded by well-known law firms, state governments do not provide support for other professionally established Arbitration institutions. Thus, there is an urgent need for the Centre and all High Courts in the country to take note of the Arbitration Institutions operating in each state and designate them as Arbitration Institutions in order to alleviate the much-discussed burden on courts and make India a hub for Alternative Dispute Resolution.

(The writer is former Senior Advisor, United Nations Development Programme.)

OCCASIONAL NOTE

THE All-India Muslim League wants Swaraj at once, and has passed a resolution to that effect. On the other hand, it has also regretted the fact that Hindu-Muslim relations in various parts of the country are greatly strained. In order to reconcile the first resolution with the conditions postulated by the second, it has passed a third with a view to guaranteeing the continuance of the Muslim majorities in the Punjab and Bengal. In moving the original resolution, Sheikh Abdul Qadir pointed out that "there must be some guarantee so that people might live at peace when Swaraj was attained." Now that the All-India Muslim League has passed the resolutions above referred to, the guarantee has presumably been given. But who is going to see that it is carried out?

INDIAN HOME RULE

MRS. ANNIE BESANT'S PREDICTION

(FROM OUR CORRESPONDENT.) Speaking in London last night Mrs. Annie Besant said that the only way to prevent relations between Britain and India becoming like those that existed between England and Ireland during the Irish war, was for England to deal with India in a spirit of fairness.

England ought to realize that India was capable of governing herself and that the constitution should be drawn up by the Indians them-selves.

Mrs. Besant said she knew that Mr. Ramsay MacDonald's heart was with them, and if Labour was returned with a majority at the next election, India would get Home Rule.

LORD OLIVIER

WHY FAMOUS LETTER WAS PUBLISHED

WITH reference to the questions in the House of Commons regarding the letter of Lord Olivier to Mr Satyamurthi, in a statement to the press Mr. Satyamurthi says that he took the entire responsibility for the publication of the same because (1) the letter was not marked private as letters of men occupying similar positions to Lord Olivier were marked "private" when not intended for publication; (2) the subject matter of the letter was only on public matters on which the Secretary of State had expressed himself before; and (3) the correspondence was purely in a public capacity.

Mr. Satyamurthi regrets that he is not in position to publish his letter to Lord Olivier since he has not kept a copy, but he has no objection to the publication of the letter. To the best of his recollection he did not object in that letter to communal representation as such, but only took exception to the Ministry being formed on a communal and non-political basis.

Mr. Satyamurthi says that his object in publishing the letter was merely to promote a better understanding between the progressive elements in India and England, and not to create any difficulties for the Labour Government or Lord Olivier. If he has unwittingly done so he sincerely regrets it.

HEDJAZ PILGRIMS

PREPAYMENT OF RETURN PASSAGES

The following has been issued by the Government of Bengal:

"It is understood from information received from the Government of Bombay that, by agreement with the principal shipping companies engaged in the pilgrim traffic, third class tickets for the voyage to the Hedjaz are not issued unless a deposit of Rs. 60 is made with the Company to cover the cost of return passage in addition to the fare to the Hedjaz. This involves no increase in the total expense of the pilgrimage, and, as pilgrims leaving from Bengal will normally take with them funds to cover the journey to the Hedjaz and the return, it will make little practical difference. It is thought desirable to publish the information, however, for the convenience of pilgrims from Bengal on their arrival in Bombay."

LONDON TEA SALES

GOOD INQUIRY FOR ALL GRADES

(FROM OUR CORRESPONDENT.) Reporting on the London tea market Messrs. W. J. and H. Thom son state that during the week the quantities brought forward have totalled 42,000 packages of Indian teas, 19,000 packages of Ceylon teas, and 6,000 packages of Java teas.

The market is strong, and there is a good inquiry for all grades and qualities; the tone is active with a tendency to advance. Withdrawals have been few.-Copyright.

Israel's isolation grows as war continues

AMRIT POUDEL

Rashid Khalidi, in his acclaimed work *Hundred Years of War on Palestine*, outlines the Zionist control over the statehood of Palestine, inter alia, initially through British imperialism and then by American hegemonic ambitions. The longest conflict of the 21st century has erupted into a full-fledged war, this time with Hamas at the forefront, fighting for Palestinian statehood. While Israel maintains military dominance over the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip, recent events have shattered its image of having an unbreachable defense and a powerful, moral military. In this piece, we will examine the events that have unfolded since the armed incursion and their implications.

Following the Palestinian "intifadas" (uprisings) in 1987 and 2000 against Israeli occupation, Palestinians have continued their struggle through various means, including protests, boycotts, art and theatre. Though these intifadas led to the signing of the Oslo Accords and Israeli disengagement from Gaza, respectively, they have not yielded significant results. Soon after, despite being considered a terrorist organisation by countries like the United States, Hamas secured a victory over the ruling party, Fatah, in the second Palestinian Legislative Election held in 2006. The rise of Hamas, driven by anti-Zionist and anti-imperialist ideologies, led to several Israeli raids in Gaza and the West Bank, resulting in the capture of senior leaders and the imposition of sanctions.

Fast forward to 7 October 2023, Hamas carried out an armed incursion (Operation Al-Aqsa Flood) from the Gaza Strip into Southern Israel and took Israeli hostages as leverage for the diplomatic efforts. While this



event tarnished Israel's image of an unbreachable defense, the consequences of the event thereafter have proved fatal for the Palestinians. The Israeli military ordered an evacuation of 1.1 million Gazans living in the north of Gaza within 24 hours on October 13, which the Palestinians describe today as the "second Nakba (displacement)". Armed by the US and its allies, Israel started its ground invasion in Gaza on October 27, followed by the indiscriminate bombing of hospitals and civilian infrastructure with the aim of eliminating Hamas.

However, the extreme measures taken by the Israeli government led by Benjamin Netanyahu have proved catastrophic in a geopolitical context and are far from achieving its goal of eradicating Hamas. Moreover, the adventure has become an uphill battle for the Israelis and their allies.

Houthis in Yemen joined the force of resistance by blocking the passage of the Red Sea for Israeli ships and its allies. The initiative of the US

to hold Yemen responsible for its action, which involved the bombing of Yemeni military facilities along with the UK and the formation of a multinational force to protect trade in the Red Sea, has failed.

Additionally, the possibility of Hezbollah - a Lebanese political and military group led by Hassan Nasrallah, which has been very vocal in its support for the ongoing resistance by Hamas - joining the conflict full-fledged still lingers as Israel and Hezbollah continue to engage in frequent skirmishes on parts of Israel-Lebanon border, occupied Golan Heights and Syria. However, this would be a big blow to Netanyahu's government, as Hezbollah is a far superior military group than Hamas.

Losing support at home and flexing its military prowess, Netanyahu's government struck the Iranian Embassy Complex in Syria, killing 16 people, including eight members of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) in April. One can also interpret this attack as a sign of

Israeli frustration with the Iranian-backed resistance groups in the region (including Hamas, Hezbollah and other proxies) and an attempt to drag the US into a confrontation. This attack, condemned by numerous countries, led to Iran retaliating with missile and drone strikes on some Israeli military bases. The response by the Iranians to the unprecedented attack on its embassy sent a clear message to both the United States and the Israelis about its military arsenal and its readiness to retaliate against any escalation. This event not only exposed a gaping hole in Israel's defense but also etched Iran as a formidable power in the region.

Furthermore, the ongoing Israel-Hamas conflict has left inedible repercussions on Israel's standing in the global community. The harrowing images and videos coming out of the Gaza Strip have left the international governing body speechless and have led people to reason for Israel as a genocidal state.

Since the start of the conflict, the Palestinian death toll has exceeded 35,000, with 80,000 more injured. The repercussions of these events are sure to leave an indelible mark on Israel's image, as the International Criminal Court has sought legal action by issuing an arrest warrant against Prime Minister Netanyahu and Defence Minister Gallant. In the diplomatic fallout, Bolivia has severed all diplomatic ties with Israel, while Chile, Colombia, Jordan, Bahrain, Honduras, Turkey, Chad, South Africa and Belize have recalled their ambassadors.

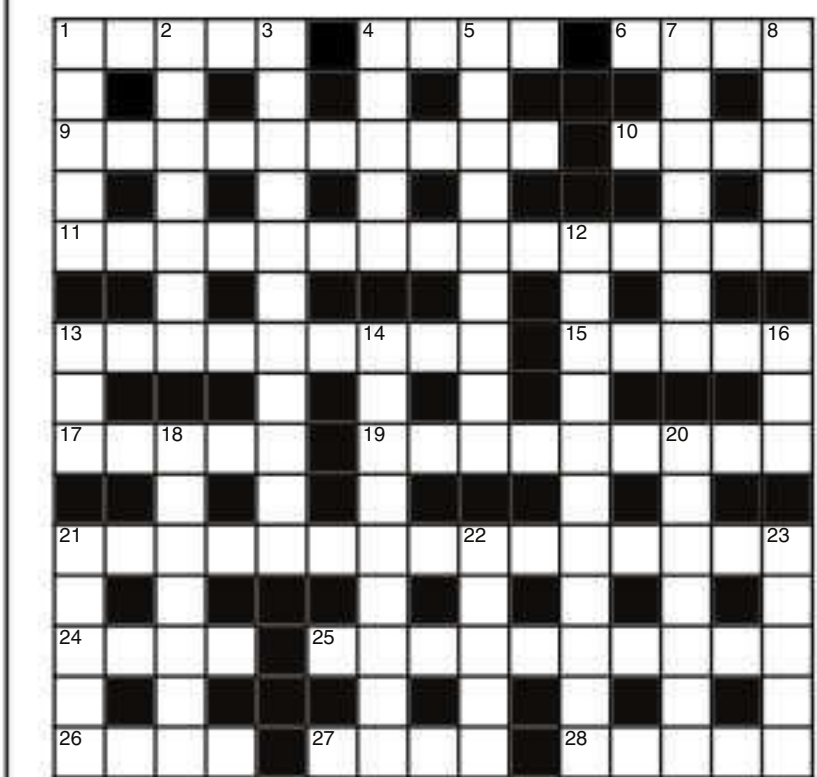
Additionally, pro-Palestinian protests across US campuses, which later spread to Europe and other regions, have dealt a significant blow to Israel, both from the public relations and diplomatic perspective. To add to that, talks on a two-state solution have gained much more momentum in the international community, and recently, Norway, Ireland and Spain have announced their willingness to recognise Palestine.

However, the growing isolation of Israel in the international community has had little to no effect on its approach to the ongoing conflict. Days after the International Court of Justice (ICJ) ruling to stop the Rafah offensive, Israel conducted an air strike, which left hundreds of civilians dead, including children.

The silence of Western countries at a time when humanity is at stake is both tragic and horrifying. In contrast, to show strong support for the Israeli government, Speaker of the United States House of Representatives Mike Johnson recently invited Netanyahu to speak in the US Congress. It is likely to undermine US diplomacy and its credibility as a peacekeeper across the globe in the future as it facilitates Israel's conduct of a war that's been argued to be a "genocide".

The Kathmandu Post/ANN.

CROSSWORD



YESTERDAY'S SOLUTION

PERTINENT, INFALLIBLE, OBJECT, OLIVER, RASSEGMENT, CATIONS, TIENTIA, TTY, MOMENT OF TRUTH, A E I N N R N E S, SANEST, MANDOLIN, T B S Z E A, EMPHASIS, DRUMUP, R A L D S T A D, ROLLERCOASTER, S L R R K T A, TROCHEE, ERELONG, U U U A E R C O, BORDERLINE, AKIN

ACROSS

- Chastise wife that's turned against child (5)
- Small object does not have small volume (4)
- Way of working leads to some surprisingly low-level growth? (4)
- Engineers sign code that's compiled and accepted as valid (10)
- Reunifying divided African country's capital (4)
- Skinhead perhaps receives accidental punishment (5,5,5)
- Individuals who aren't qualified to bet on race (9)

- Patient daughter looked around before taking on job? (5)
- Sports merchandise for sale as advertised on the radio (5)
- Boy left upset about unpleasant incident using offensive language? (9)
- Be active in Samaritan organisation preserving international philanthropy (15)
- Excellent service disrupted by new complaint (4)
- John confronts drunk punching two bores (10)
- Church official cited over missing Mass (4)

- Where patient might go when heart's lost pulse (4)
- Polish hospital observed nurses (5)
- DOWN
- Queen's cut up about poet (5)
- Building on hill in deserted city (7)
- Lofty idealist's ultimate motive for betrayal (4,7)
- Try to obtain confidential information from man in pub (5)
- Depressing directive to cut back on applause (9)
- I believe texting about intelligence is sinister (7)

- Bored about wife's ostentatious display (5)
- Office staff concealed sign (11)
- Exposed weaknesses in principle (3)
- Speed of racing driver going flat out (9)
- What appears regularly in diary? (3)
- Gas starts to oxidise metal, affecting main supply (7)
- Complex organisation implicated if I censure banks (7)
- Attended to large group during speeches (5)
- Term for being "in control" (5)
- He possesses special ring (5)

NOTE: Figures in parentheses denote the number of letters in the words required. (By arrangement with The Independent, London)

Job portals saw 22 pc surge in job postings in India over past year. Job portals have witnessed a surge of 22 per cent in job postings in India over the past year, a new report showed on Tuesday. According to HR recruitment company CIEL HR, the number of job postings in December 2022 was 7,143, while in February 2024 it was 8,746. About 65 per cent of Indian startups are now planning to ramp up hiring over the next six months. The report is based on the analysis of 130,896 employees working in 70 startups operating in the country. Last year, the startup ecosystem faced challenges due to economic uncertainty and cautious investor sentiment, which led to a decline in funding and hiring activity. "However, there is optimism for the future, with a majority of startup employees expressing confidence in increased hiring intent over the next six months," the report said. With automation and digitisation cutting across all industry verticals, software development stands top in terms of talent requirement closely followed by sales roles in pre-sales, retail sales and enterprise sales. Moreover, a significant 67 per cent of startup employees expressed openness to transitioning to established companies.

C M Y K
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TENDER

EASTERN RAILWAY

Tender No. DL AMC EOT CRANE.
HWH 122 dated 31.05.2024. Sr. Divisional Mechanical Engineer/ Diesel, Eastern Railway, Howrah, DRM Building near Railway station, Howrah-711101 invites open E-Tender in single packet system against Tender No. DL AMC EOT CRANE_HWH_122 closing date 02.07.2024 at 15.00 hrs. Bidders will be able to submit their original/revived bids upto closing date and time only. Manual offers are not allowed against this tender and any such manual offer received shall be ignored. **Name of Work:** Annual Maintenance Contract of 7 nos. EOT Crane at Diesel Shed, Eastern Railway, Howrah for 2 years. **Advised value :** Rs. 1,02,95,550/- **Earnest Money :** Rs. 20,600/- **Tender document cost:** 0/- **Date/Time of Uploading Tender:** 31.05.2024 at 12.45 hrs. **Validity of offer :** 120 days. **Period of completion :** 24 months. **Bidding start date :** 18.06.2024. **Bidding style :** Single rate for each schedule item. **Contract type :** Works. **Contract Category :** Expenditure. **Ranking order for bids:** Lowest to highest. **Expenditure type:** Capital (Works). (HWH-80/2024-25)
Tender Notices are also available at Website www.er.indianrailways.gov.in / www.ireps.gov.in
Follow us at : [@EasternRailway](https://twitter.com/EasternRailway) [@easternrailwayheadquarter](https://www.facebook.com/easternrailwayheadquarter)

EASTERN RAILWAY

Detailed Tender No. 6WTCACOR 2024-25 : Open E-Tender in Two Stage Reverse Auction System, dated 31.05.2024. Tender for open e-tendering is invited by the Chief Administrative Officer/Con, Eastern Railway, Kolkata, 17, Netaji Subhas Road, Fairlie Place, Kolkata-700001 for the following work: **Name of work:** Earthwork in cutting and filling, blanketing, construction of minor bridges, major bridges, RUB, ROB, retaining wall, level crossing, side drain, catch water drain, P-way work and other ancillary works in between Kalipahari to Asansol division including yard from IR Ch. 205.00 Km to 260.2 Km in connection with construction of multi tracking Railway BG line. **Approx value :** Rs. 947,57,32,247.14. **Earnest Money:** Rs. 1,00,00,000/- **Cost of tender document :** Nil. **Completion period :** 36 months. **Date of closing :** 12.07.2024 at 15.00 hrs. The tender documents and other details can be obtained from the website www.ireps.gov.in. In the bidding for the tender is to be submitted through e-tendering on above website. Manual offers are not allowed against this tender and any manual offer if received, shall not be accepted and will be summarily rejected. (CON-24/2024-25)
Tender Notices are also available at Website www.er.indianrailways.gov.in / www.ireps.gov.in
Follow us at : [@EasternRailway](https://twitter.com/EasternRailway) [@easternrailwayheadquarter](https://www.facebook.com/easternrailwayheadquarter)

NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY

E-Procurement Tender Notice No. 24/38 Date. 04.06.2024
E-Procurement Tender Notice
On behalf of the President of India, The Principal Chief Materials Manager, North Central Railway, Prayagraj, (An ISO 9001: 2015 certified unit) invites the following E-Procurement Tenders.

S. N.	Tender No.	Short Description	Qty.	Tender Opening Date
1	80231017C	Shell Gadus S 5 V 42 P 2.5 Grease	1342 Kgs	24.06.2024
2	80244000	Servoplex SHC-120 (OCL) Grease	1700 Kgs	27.06.2024
3	80244101	Hydraulic Oil HLP-68	77180 LTR	05.07.2024
4	64235159	Hydraulic Pin Puller	23 Set	01.07.2024
5	64235108C	Seal Kit	962 Set	08.07.2024
6	64245022A	Fan Drive Motor	03 Nos.	01.07.2024
7	64245100A	Hydraulic Pump	07 Nos.	01.07.2024
8	64245082A	Shaft and Seal	08 Nos.	03.07.2024
9	64245083A	Shaft for Cutting Chain and Seal	09 Nos.	03.07.2024
10	64235079E	Adaptor	5360 Nos.	03.07.2024
11	63245357	Polyethylene Dowels for Concrete Sleepers to RDSO Drg. No. T-3002	100000 Nos.	26.06.2024
12	63235125C	Manufacture and supply of Prestressed Monoblock Concrete Sleepers Sets (Pretensioned type) for BG Fan shaped Turn out 1 in 12 as per RDSO Drg. No. T-4218/T-4732	835 Set	24.06.2024
13	20242798	OIL INJECTOR PUMP COMPLETE	11 Nos.	01.07.2024
14	20231990B	ABUTMENT PIECE FOR TRACTION MOTOR	74 Nos.	28.06.2024

Note: The complete information of above tenders can be seen and downloaded from IREPS website i.e. <http://www.ireps.gov.in>. For any change/corrigendum in tender, please visit this website regularly. No separate corrigendum/change will be published in news paper. 966/24(DG)
f North central railways [@PCRONCH](https://twitter.com/PCRONCH) [northcentralrailway](https://www.facebook.com/northcentralrailway) www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in

EASTERN RAILWAY

E-Auction Notice No. COMPUB/HWH/RDN/LOCO, Dtd. 31.05.2024. E-Auction is invited by Sr. Divisional Commercial Manager, Eastern Railway, Howrah, 3rd Floor, New Complex Building, Howrah-711101 for awarding contract of commercial publicity rights. The Auction Catalogue have been uploaded in www.ireps.gov.in Catalogue No. : HWH-RDN-LOCO. Seq. No., Lot No. & Description are as follows :
AA/1, ADVT-HWH-BWN-OSD-86-23-1, Awarding rights for Display of Railway information and Advertisement through Railway installed 6 nos. of Video Walls inside Bardhaman station at different locations on 50:50 time/space sharing basis for a period of three years. **AA/2, ADVT-HWH-HWH-OSD-94-23-1,** Installation, operation and maintenance of Digital Passenger Reservation Chart Board Kiosk at Howrah station (PF-9) with scope of commercial advertisements on 50:50 time/space sharing basis for a period of five years. **AB/1, ADVT-HWH-BZL-OSN-22-22-1,** Awarding contract of Commercial Publicity Rights at Belanganar station. **AB/2, ADVT-HWH-KCY-OSN-52-22-1,** Awarding contract of Commercial Publicity Rights at Kaichar station. **AB/3, ADVT-HWH-DNH-OSN-35-22-1,** Awarding contract of Commercial Publicity Rights at Dhanikahali Halt station. **AB/4, ADVT-HWH-GRAE-OSN-38-23-1,** Awarding contract of Commercial Publicity Rights at Gurup station. **AC/1, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-95-23-1, AC/2, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-96-23-1, AC/3, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-97-23-1, AC/4, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-98-23-1, AC/5, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-99-23-1, AC/6, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-100-23-1, AC/7, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-101-23-1, AC/8, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-102-23-1, AC/9, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-103-23-1, AC/10, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-104-23-1, AC/11, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-105-23-1, AC/12, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-106-23-1, AC/13, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-107-23-1, AC/14, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-108-23-1, AC/15, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-109-23-1, AC/16, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-110-23-1, AC/17, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-111-23-1, AC/18, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-112-23-1, AC/19, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-113-23-1, AC/20, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-114-23-1, AC/21, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-115-23-1, AC/22, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-116-23-1, AC/23, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-117-23-1, AC/24, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-118-23-1, AC/25, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-119-23-1, AC/26, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-120-23-1, AC/27, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-121-23-1, AC/28, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-122-23-1, AC/29, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-123-23-1, AC/30, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-124-23-1, AC/31, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-125-23-1, AC/32, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-126-23-1, AC/33, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-127-23-1, AC/34, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-128-23-1, AC/35, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-129-23-1, AC/36, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-130-23-1, AC/37, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-131-23-1, AC/38, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-132-23-1, AC/39, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-133-23-1, AC/40, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-134-23-1, AC/41, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-135-23-1, AC/42, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-136-23-1, AC/43, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-137-23-1, AC/44, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-138-23-1, AC/45, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-139-23-1, AC/46, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-140-23-1, AC/47, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-141-23-1, AC/48, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-142-23-1, AC/49, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-143-23-1, AC/50, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-144-23-1, AC/51, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-145-23-1, AC/52, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-146-23-1, AC/53, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-147-23-1, AC/54, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-148-23-1, AC/55, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-149-23-1, AC/56, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-150-23-1, AC/57, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-151-23-1, AC/58, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-152-23-1, AC/59, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-153-23-1, AC/60, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-154-23-1, AC/61, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-155-23-1, AC/62, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-156-23-1, AC/63, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-157-23-1, AC/64, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-158-23-1, AC/65, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-159-23-1, AC/66, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-160-23-1, AC/67, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-161-23-1, AC/68, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-162-23-1, AC/69, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-163-23-1, AC/70, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-164-23-1, AC/71, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-165-23-1, AC/72, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-166-23-1, AC/73, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-167-23-1, AC/74, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-168-23-1, AC/75, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-169-23-1, AC/76, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-170-23-1, AC/77, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-171-23-1, AC/78, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-172-23-1, AC/79, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-173-23-1, AC/80, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-174-23-1, AC/81, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-175-23-1, AC/82, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-176-23-1, AC/83, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-177-23-1, AC/84, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-178-23-1, AC/85, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-179-23-1, AC/86, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-180-23-1, AC/87, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-181-23-1, AC/88, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-182-23-1, AC/89, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-183-23-1, AC/90, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-184-23-1, AC/91, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-185-23-1, AC/92, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-186-23-1, AC/93, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-187-23-1, AC/94, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-188-23-1, AC/95, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-189-23-1, AC/96, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-190-23-1, AC/97, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-191-23-1, AC/98, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-192-23-1, AC/99, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-193-23-1, AC/100, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-194-23-1, AC/101, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-195-23-1, AC/102, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-196-23-1, AC/103, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-197-23-1, AC/104, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-198-23-1, AC/105, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-199-23-1, AC/106, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-200-23-1, AC/107, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-201-23-1, AC/108, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-202-23-1, AC/109, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-203-23-1, AC/110, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-204-23-1, AC/111, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-205-23-1, AC/112, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-206-23-1, AC/113, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-207-23-1, AC/114, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-208-23-1, AC/115, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-209-23-1, AC/116, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-210-23-1, AC/117, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-211-23-1, AC/118, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-212-23-1, AC/119, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-213-23-1, AC/120, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-214-23-1, AC/121, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-215-23-1, AC/122, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-216-23-1, AC/123, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-217-23-1, AC/124, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-218-23-1, AC/125, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-219-23-1, AC/126, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-220-23-1, AC/127, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-221-23-1, AC/128, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-222-23-1, AC/129, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-223-23-1, AC/130, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-224-23-1, AC/131, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-225-23-1, AC/132, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-226-23-1, AC/133, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-227-23-1, AC/134, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-228-23-1, AC/135, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-229-23-1, AC/136, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-230-23-1, AC/137, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-231-23-1, AC/138, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-232-23-1, AC/139, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-233-23-1, AC/140, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-234-23-1, AC/141, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-235-23-1, AC/142, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-236-23-1, AC/143, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-237-23-1, AC/144, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-238-23-1, AC/145, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-239-23-1, AC/146, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-240-23-1, AC/147, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-241-23-1, AC/148, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-242-23-1, AC/149, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-243-23-1, AC/150, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-244-23-1, AC/151, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-245-23-1, AC/152, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-246-23-1, AC/153, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-247-23-1, AC/154, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-248-23-1, AC/155, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-249-23-1, AC/156, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-250-23-1, AC/157, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-251-23-1, AC/158, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-252-23-1, AC/159, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-253-23-1, AC/160, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-254-23-1, AC/161, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-255-23-1, AC/162, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-256-23-1, AC/163, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-257-23-1, AC/164, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-258-23-1, AC/165, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-259-23-1, AC/166, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-260-23-1, AC/167, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-261-23-1, AC/168, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-262-23-1, AC/169, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-263-23-1, AC/170, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-264-23-1, AC/171, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-265-23-1, AC/172, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-266-23-1, AC/173, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-267-23-1, AC/174, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-268-23-1, AC/175, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-269-23-1, AC/176, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-270-23-1, AC/177, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-271-23-1, AC/178, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-272-23-1, AC/179, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-273-23-1, AC/180, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-274-23-1, AC/181, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-275-23-1, AC/182, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-276-23-1, AC/183, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-277-23-1, AC/184, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-278-23-1, AC/185, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-279-23-1, AC/186, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-280-23-1, AC/187, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-281-23-1, AC/188, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-282-23-1, AC/189, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-283-23-1, AC/190, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-284-23-1, AC/191, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-285-23-1, AC/192, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-286-23-1, AC/193, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-287-23-1, AC/194, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-288-23-1, AC/195, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-289-23-1, AC/196, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-290-23-1, AC/197, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-291-23-1, AC/198, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-292-23-1, AC/199, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-293-23-1, AC/200, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-294-23-1, AC/201, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-295-23-1, AC/202, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-296-23-1, AC/203, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-297-23-1, AC/204, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-298-23-1, AC/205, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-299-23-1, AC/206, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-300-23-1, AC/207, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-301-23-1, AC/208, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-302-23-1, AC/209, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-303-23-1, AC/210, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-304-23-1, AC/211, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-305-23-1, AC/212, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-306-23-1, AC/213, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-307-23-1, AC/214, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-308-23-1, AC/215, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-309-23-1, AC/216, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-310-23-1, AC/217, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-311-23-1, AC/218, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-312-23-1, AC/219, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-313-23-1, AC/220, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-314-23-1, AC/221, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-315-23-1, AC/222, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-316-23-1, AC/223, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-317-23-1, AC/224, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-318-23-1, AC/225, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-319-23-1, AC/226, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-320-23-1, AC/227, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-321-23-1, AC/228, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-322-23-1, AC/229, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-323-23-1, AC/230, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-324-23-1, AC/231, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-325-23-1, AC/232, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-326-23-1, AC/233, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-327-23-1, AC/234, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-328-23-1, AC/235, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-329-23-1, AC/236, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-330-23-1, AC/237, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-331-23-1, AC/238, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-332-23-1, AC/239, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-333-23-1, AC/240, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-334-23-1, AC/241, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-335-23-1, AC/242, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-336-23-1, AC/243, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-337-23-1, AC/244, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-338-23-1, AC/245, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-339-23-1, AC/246, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-340-23-1, AC/247, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-341-23-1, AC/248, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-342-23-1, AC/249, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-343-23-1, AC/250, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-344-23-1, AC/251, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-345-23-1, AC/252, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-346-23-1, AC/253, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-347-23-1, AC/254, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-348-23-1, AC/255, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-349-23-1, AC/256, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-350-23-1, AC/257, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-351-23-1, AC/258, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-352-23-1, AC/259, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-353-23-1, AC/260, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-354-23-1, AC/261, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-355-23-1, AC/262, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-356-23-1, AC/263, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-357-23-1, AC/264, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-358-23-1, AC/265, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-359-23-1, AC/266, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-360-23-1, AC/267, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-361-23-1, AC/268, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-362-23-1, AC/269, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-363-23-1, AC/270, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-364-23-1, AC/271, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-365-23-1, AC/272, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-366-23-1, AC/273, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-367-23-1, AC/274, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-368-23-1, AC/275, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-369-23-1, AC/276, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-370-23-1, AC/277, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-371-23-1, AC/278, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-372-23-1, AC/279, ADVT-LOCO-HWH-HWH-373-23-1, AC/280, 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The saffron party failed to counter the narrative of PDA and the caste equation built by the Opposition

The RLD won the Bijnore and Baghpat seats. The Apna Dal (S) won Mirzapur while the Azad Samaj Party won the Nagina seat.

Chandrashekhra polled 4,91,045 votes while the BSP's Surendra Pal Singh secured 12,864 votes so far.

answer to previous puzzle

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

India's record-breaking heatwave: A sign of worsening climate change

India is being hit by one of its hottest heatwave ever, with many parts of the country experiencing consistent temperatures of over 50 degrees Celsius. An outlier temperature of above 52 degrees Celsius was reported in Delhi, but this is still being evaluated and rechecked, while city authorities also warned of a risk of water shortages and the power grid tripping. Delhi's city record of 49.2 degrees Celsius from 2002 had been broken with temperatures reaching 49.9 degrees Celsius on 27 May 2024.

Climate change, predominantly caused by burning fossil fuels and exacerbated by human interference, is making heatwave hotter and more likely to happen everywhere in the world, according to scientists who study how extreme events are changing. Cities are more vulnerable to the compounding effects of urbanisation and climate change.

Dr Friederike Otto, Imperial College London and director of World Weather Attribution says, "This devastating heat is not a natural disaster. The suffering India is facing is worse because of climate change caused by burning coal, oil and gas and deforestation. What we are seeing in India is exactly what scientists said would happen if we didn't stop heating the planet. To avoid making the problem worse, the world needs to end fossil fuel use. Unless we do it, terrible heat like this will happen more and more often, and it will get even hotter. The heat will become worse, and the death toll will continue to rise, fast."

Dr Krishna AchutaRao, Professor and Dean, Centre for Atmospheric Sciences, Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi adds "The widespread, long-lasting and intense heatwave conditions over India and many other parts of the world are the direct result of climate change caused by human emissions of greenhouse gases. There is an urgent need to take adaptation steps to control the rising global average tempera-

tures, else the result is in front of us."

According to the IPCC, heatwave that occur once every 10 years without human-caused warming are now likely to occur 2.8 times more often (or once every 3.6 years) and are 1.5 degrees Celsius warmer because of climate change caused by burning fossil fuels. Extreme heatwave that occurred once every 50 years without human-caused warming are now likely to occur 4.8 times more often (or once every 10.4 years) and are 1.5 degrees Celsius degrees warmer. If emissions are not cut much faster than planned, they will become 2-3 times more common again. Elaborating on this further, Aarti Khosla, Director, Climate Trends comments, "Heatwaves are clearly the single largest threat to India's well being today. Record-breaking heat of over 48 degrees Celsius across north, west and central India shows that climate crisis is a nice-to-push rhetoric as long as one hasn't experienced a 50 degrees Celsius heatwave.

"It is very concerning that annual trends in heatwaves now show temperature departures of 5-9 degrees Celsius from the normal summer weather. The latest research also shows that urbanisation alone has led to an overall 60 per cent enhancement in warming across Indian cities. This means that the more we develop new cities, the more we have to be mindful of not throwing people in the ditch with high heat.

"This is a wake up call for urgent transformations to reduce the impact of the heat island effect. Between 1970 and 2018, India's urban population increased fourfold to 460 million. That's more than one-third of Indians living in extreme vulnerability to climate threats, impacting both productivity and health."

Extreme heat forced schools to close early for the summer in India. Temperatures in at least 37 cities exceeded 45 degrees Celsius, with warnings of a 'very high likelihood' of

heat illnesses for the entire population. Night time temperatures remained as high as 36 degrees Celsius in some locations - which is particularly dangerous as it means people cannot cool off at night.

There have been over 16,000 heat stroke cases and 60 heat-related deaths since March 2024, although this number is likely a huge underestimate. Aditya Valiathan Pillai, Fellow, Coordinator - Climate Adaptation and Resilience, Sustainable Futures Collaborative says "Delhi sustained high temperatures nearing the 50s brings the focus back on its Heat Action Plan. In this infernal heat, millions of heat-exposed workers without access to cooling will struggle to earn their wages, protect their families and stay safe. Heatwave preparedness and response measures in Delhi's newly minted Heat Action Plan must be implemented immediately.

"Of equal importance are long term solutions like trees, changing how buildings are structured and reducing the density of built areas to combat the urban heat island effect." Heat in India and South Asia is characterised by being extremely humid, which makes it more dangerous for human health. High humidity levels prevent the body from cooling itself through sweating, raising the risk of heat strokes and other life-threatening conditions. The combination of intense heat and humidity poses life-threatening risks to the population, exposing the population to conditions that exceed human tolerance.

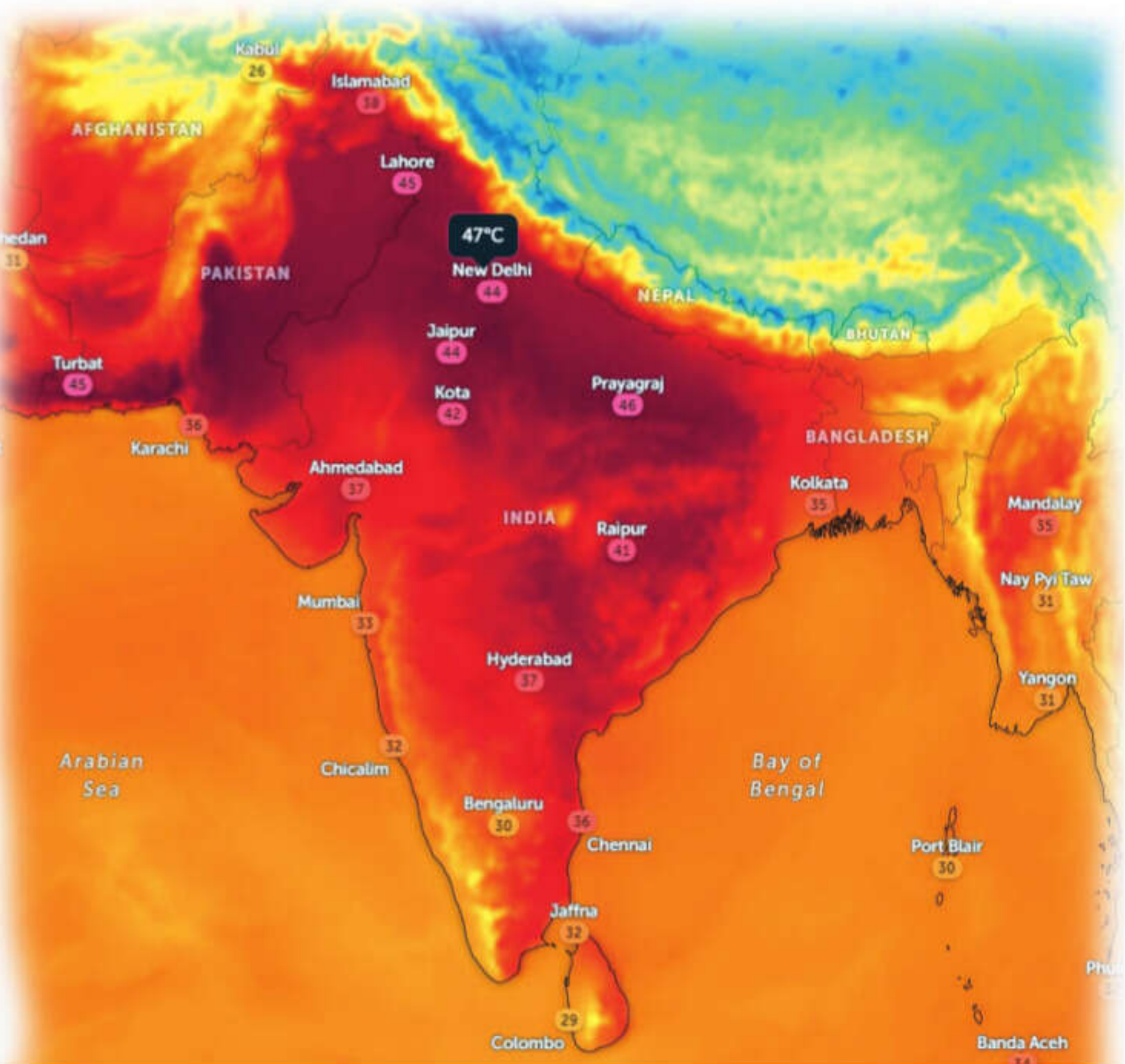
This risk is further increased in cities, as they are often warmer than rural areas. Dr Arun Sharma, Professor, Community Medicine comments "Exposure to high atmospheric temperatures is harmful for the human body. Prolonged exposure to such high temperatures can cause heat stroke. It is recognised by fever above 104 degrees Fahrenheit, dry skin and loss of consciousness. High temperatures

may also cause sunburn, irritation in the eyes and dehydration.

"To protect and avoid exposure to direct sunlight, use an umbrella and sunglasses. Keep the body hydrated

with frequent, small intakes of water, fruit juice, coconut water, lemon drinks, etc. Avoid going out in extreme heat conditions. Sunscreen lotions also help protect against adverse effects on

the skin. If eyes start itching, wash frequently with clean, cold water. Avoid sudden changes in temperature, like walking out of air-conditioned rooms straight into sunlight and vice versa."



Escherichia coli- A complete walkthrough and guide

DR TAPAN KUMAR MAITRA

The organism was first isolated from faeces in 1885 by T. Escherich. *E. coli* is a common inhabitant of the large intestine of humans and mammals. It is also found in the guts of birds, reptiles, amphibians, and insects. The bacteria are excreted in great numbers from within the faeces and are always present in the external environment (soil, water, food, and other objects).

E. coli are straight rods measuring 0.4-0.7 in breadth and 1-3 in length. They occur as individual organisms or in pairs and are marked by polymorphism. There are motile and non-motile types. The G+C content in DNA is 50-51 per cent. *E. coli* is a facultative anaerobe.

Certain strains of *E. coli* are conditionally pathogenic. They contain a gluco-lipo-protein complex with which their toxic, antigenic, and immunogenic properties are associated. Some strains possess haemolytic properties determined by plasmids. Pathogenic cultures possess endotoxins and thermolabile neurotropic exotoxins.

The antigenic structure of *E. coli* is characterised by variability and marked individuality.

Genus *Escherichia* includes one *E. coli* species consisting of several biotypes and serotypes. They are differentiated according to cultural, biochemical, and serological properties.

The genus *Escherichia* includes *E. coli*, *E. freundii*, *E. intermedia*, and others.

E. coli survives in the external environment for months. It is more resistant to physical and chemical factors of the external environment than the typhoid and dysentery bacteria. *E. coli* is killed comparatively rapidly by all methods and preparations used for disinfection.

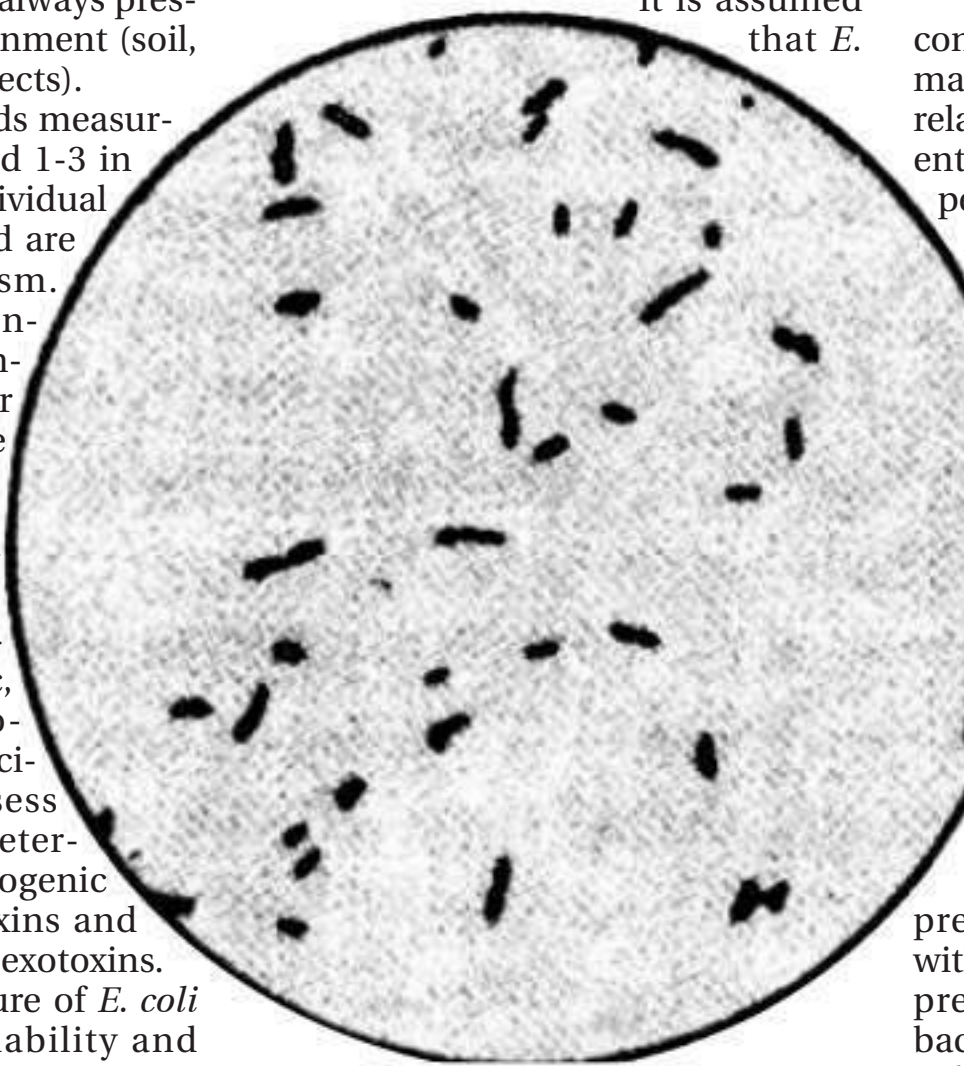
The pathogenic serovars of *E. coli* cause severe infections in calf sucklings giving rise to an extremely high mortality. A parenteral injection of the culture into rabbits, guinea pigs, and white mice results in a fatal toxico-septic condition.

Definite *E. coli* serogroups are capable of causing various acute intestinal diseases in humans: (1) the causative agents of *E. coli* enteritis in children are O-groups-25, -26, -44, -55, -86, -91, -111, -114, -119, -125, -126, -127, -128, -141, -146, and others (they cause diseases in infants of the first months of life and in older infants); (2) the causative agents of dysentery-like

diseases are *E. coli* of the O-groups-23, -32, -115, -124, -136, -143, -144, -151, and others; (3) the causative agents of cholera-like diarrhoea are the O-groups-6, -15, -78, -148, and others, they produce thermolabile and thermoresistant enterotoxins.

The infection is acquired from sick children or carriers. Pathogenic *E. coli* serovars are found on various objects.

It is assumed that *E.*



Smear from *E. coli* culture

coli enteritis is transmitted not only by the normal route for enteric infections but also through the respiratory tract by droplets and dust.

E. coli may cause colibacillosis in adults (peritonitis, meningitis, enteritis, toxoinfections, cystitis, pyelitis, pyelonephritis, angiocholitis, salpingo-oophoritis, appendicitis, otitis, puerperal sepsis, etc.). Overstrain, exhaus-

tion, and conditions following infectious diseases facilitate the onset of various *E. coli* infections. In a number of cases, the organism is responsible for food poisoning.

In individuals who have suffered diseases caused by pathogenic *E. coli* serovars, cross-immunity is not produced, owing to which re-infection may occur.

Over 85 per cent of *E. coli* strains contain inhibiting substances, colicins, marked by antagonistic properties in relation to pathogenic microbes of the enteric group; they are used as therapeutic and preventive agents, e.g. colibacterin (*E. coli* M 17, etc.).

Besides this, *E. coli*, as well as other common inhabitants of the intestine, are capable of synthesising various vitamins (K2, E, and group B), which are indispensable to the human organism. The ability of various *E. coli* serovars to suppress the growth of *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* has also been observed. The suppression of *E. coli* and other members of the biocoenosis may result in a chronic disease known as dysbacteriosis.

Patients with *E. coli* enteritis are prescribed antibiotics (tetracycline with vitamins C, B1 and B2) and biopreparations (coli autovaccine, coli bacteriophage, colicin, bacterin, bifidol, bifidumbacterin). Physiological solutions with glucose are injected to control toxicosis.

This organism is widely spread in nature. It occurs in soil, water, food ingredients, and on various objects. For this reason, *E. coli* serves as an indicator of faecal contamination in the external environment.

The author is an associate Professor (retd.) & former head of the Department of Botany at Ananda Mohan College.



Hush no more: Breaking the silence around STIs

SRISHTI BHOWMICK

Silence is powerful only until you break it. Today, as the world triumphs over groundbreaking inventions in the realm of medicine, a grave epidemic seems to rear up its ugly head in a silent sneer. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), about 2.5 million people lose their lives annually owing to global HIV, viral hepatitis and sexually transmitted infections (STIs). Such alarming numbers call for urgent action and a much-needed shift in our approach to sexual health.

While we all go about our lives thinking that it wouldn't happen to us, STIs could practically happen to anyone regardless of age, gender, or sexual orientation. In a WHO report, approximately eight million adults aged 15-49 were infected with syphilis and over 500 million people were estimated to have contracted herpes simplex virus (HSV). More so, human papillomavirus (HPV) infection is related to 311,000 cervical cancer deaths each year. Most of the STIs, though curable, often remain asymptomatic. This makes them a silent yet deadly challenge, as one can carry and transmit the infection without even knowing it. But regular tests and proper vaccination can help us take huge leaps in preventing severe health outcomes like infertility, cancer, pregnancy complications and a heightened risk of Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV).

The hardest challenge lies in breaking the silence and stigma around STIs. Many shy away from seeking the help they need due to social stigma and misconceptions about sexual health. Dr Chaitali Roy, a leading gynaecologist & obstetrician in Kolkata with more than 24 years of experience, says, "It is important that the patient feels free enough to open up. Their lack of awareness about the vital need for safe sex practices holds them back. I often find them too embarrassed to get tested or even talk about their symptoms".

One patient who wishes to stay anonymous

shares, "I was so scared and confused when I first noticed the symptoms. I could only read about my symptoms online. It took me a lot of time to gather the courage to see a doctor because I was embarrassed by what others might think". If only we choose to speak about STIs more openly and without undue shame, people might be able to seek treatment sooner, just like they do for any other infection.

In order to create awareness, public health initiatives must invest their efforts

towards education and open dialogue about safe sex practices. The silence needs to evaporate first. Conversations about sexual health within families, schools and communities can encourage individuals to make safer choices. Prevention is surely better than cure. Using condoms, getting vaccinated, and regular screenings can drastically reduce the risk of contracting STIs.

22-year-old Sucheta Halder mentions how she came to know about the HPV vaccine, "I thought it would be just another boring seminar at college. But that day, I learnt that taking the HPV vaccine can exponentially reduce the chance of cervical cancer. Surprisingly, it is also very easily accessible."

While the conversations need to start, it is important that healthcare professionals are better trained to handle STI cases sensitively and maintain confidentiality, which will help the patients open up as they will feel safe and heard.

Government and health organisations, in a collaborative effort, can help solve the problem by

investing in sexual education programs, improving healthcare infrastructure and promoting further research into prospective treatments.

As the tide of STIs takes over the globe, it can prove hazardous to

be intimidated into silence. But by bringing up the topic first, each of us can contribute to the safety of our collective sexual health. As more and more voices pour in, the pervading silence that was once powerful will break apart and give way to a world where sexual health is no longer hushed away; instead, it is prioritised and protected.



The Statesman Sport



‘INDIA’S TEAM BALANCE COULD BE A PROBLEM’

Former New Zealand all-rounder Scott Styris feels that the Rohit Sharma-led Team India has a problem with their team balance in the ongoing T20 World Cup. Styris acknowledged the talent of the Indian squad but also pointed out their weak points while announcing his five favourite teams of the tournament. "I think there are probably four or maybe five (favourites) at any given time if they all find their form. South Africa looks quite good coming in. The conditions will be very interesting, it can be the determining factor. India has got a lot of talent, but they have holes as well. They don't field really well. The balance of the team could be a problem," Styris told agencies.

For more updates www.thestatesman.com

T20 WC: India look for winning start against Ireland

The Irish team is expected to face an uphill task from the likes of Kuldeep Yadav and Jadeja and the Indian pace unit

TRIDIB BAPARNASH
NEW DELHI, 4 MAY

There is no doubt that the 2024 Lok Sabha poll results will attract Page 1 headlines on Wednesday, but far from the political slugfest, there is another exciting battle on the cards that could keep India glued to TV sets on Wednesday.

The heartbreak of November 19, 2023 is still very fresh for every Indian cricket fan even as the cricket team gears up for another shot at glory when the Rohit Sharma-led side takes on a plucky Ireland in their first Group A match of the T20 World Cup in New York.

The poignant sight from the Narendra Modi Stadium on that fateful November evening, when Rohit Sharma desperately tried to hide his welled-up eyes from the TV cameras as he quietly climbed the steps of the dressing room. There was also Virat Kohli, who even after scoring those 765 invaluable runs, had to satisfy himself with the runner-up medal.

Both Rohit and Kohli have individually laid their hands



on the global silverware, but the other senior pros in the Indian team, like Jasprit Bumrah and Ravindra Jadeja will be desperate to finally find themselves a part of a champion team when the Indian team officially starts their campaign on Wednesday.

Even as the Indian selectors reposed faith in their most experienced lot, despite the current batch faltering at the final two hurdles way too many times, it remains to be seen whether they can finally

get over the line in the knockouts.

Having comfortably won the warm-up contest against Bangladesh, the Indian team has got a fair idea about the nature of the virgin wickets in the US, and as is clear from the games so far, run-scoring won't be as easy as was during the Indian Premier League the last couple of months.

Heading into the contest against a gutsy Irish side, and isn't exactly a minnow



in this format, it will be interesting to see whether India persist with the tried and tested combination at the top of the order or promote Kohli to open with Rohit, sacrificing Yashasvi Jaiswal.

In the practice game, India's experiment to open with Sanju Samson didn't materialise, but Rishabh Pant's batting at No.3 was like a breath of fresh air. But with Kohli back in the mix, it remains to be seen whether Pant bats down the order to

accommodate Jaiswal at the top.

The other positive from India's warmup game was the form of Hardik Pandya with both the bat and ball, and he would be raring to have a cracker of a World Cup to drag himself out of a low phase in the last couple of months.

At the Cantigue Park nets on Monday, Pandya was spotted bowling to Kohli, Suryakumar Yadav and Rohit, and if he can bowl at least three overs every match, the team can also

look to play Shivam Dube and include an extra spinner in the line-up.

On a slow track and a sub-par outfield at the Nassau County ground, the key to India's success could be to handle Irish left-arm spinner George Dockrell. Besides Dockrell, the Irish side boasts of a number of experienced campaigners in Paul Stirling, Josh Little, Harry Tector, Andy Balbirnie, who will be keen on creating an upset, especially after managing to beat Pakistan at home very recently. Little also is fresh from his IPL stint with the Gujarat Titans and the trioka of Balbirnie, Stirling and Tector are more than reliable rolling their arms.

Having said that, the Irish team is also expected to face an uphill task from the likes of Kuldeep Yadav and Jadeja, apart from the Indian pace unit.

All said and done, a comfortable win against the 'Green Shirts' on Wednesday will give Rohit & Co the much-needed momentum before they take on the more famous Men-in-Green in the high-octane June 9 clash at the same venue.

Norway Chess: Praggnanandhaa defeats reigning world champion Liren in Armageddon

AGENCIES
STAVANGER, 4 JUNE

Round 7 of the Norway Chess tournament witnessed gripping matches with tense moments that significantly impacted the standings as India's prodigy R Praggnanandhaa scored another upset by defeating world champion Ding Liren in the armageddon game and, Magnus Carlsen lost his armageddon game against Hikaru Nakamura on time.

One of the highlights of the day was the match between Koneru Humpy and Vaishali R as Koneru Humpy scored the only classical victory of the day in both tournaments. With this loss, the former tournament leader Vaishali's winning chances have significantly decreased.

The world champion Ding Liren, who has been underperforming with four losses in a row, finally stopped the bleeding with a much-needed draw against India's Praggnanandhaa R. However, he missed a trick and lost the armageddon tie-breaker, with Pragg remaining on the third spot of the standings (11 points).

In the highly anticipated game between Magnus Carlsen and Hikaru Nakamura, the classical game ended in a draw relatively quickly, as both sides avoided complicated positions. The armageddon tiebreak was one of the most intense games so far in the tournament, as Nakamura won when Carlsen's time ran out on the clock. This win brought Nakamura within half a point of Carlsen, who is leading the tournament with 13 points.



Fabiano Caruana sacrificing his knight against Alireza Firouzja almost backfired but managed to play a draw in classical chess before the latter gave no chances in the decider.

In the Norway Chess women's tournament, the classical game between co-leaders Anna Muzychuk and Ju Wenjun ended peacefully. However, it was Muzychuk who won the armageddon tiebreak to lead the standings with just half a point ahead of the world champion Wenjun. In another closely-fought game of the day, Lei Tingjie defeated Pia Cramling in the armageddon.

‘We’re on to final stage of preparations’: India head coach Igor Stimac before facing Kuwait

AGENCIES
KOLKATA, 4 JUNE

India head coach Igor Stimac opened up on Blue Tigers' preparation for the upcoming FIFA World Cup Qualifiers against Kuwait and Qatar and said that they are on the final stage of practice now.

The Blue Tigers had started training in Bhubaneswar on May 11 before travelling to Kolkata.

Stimac took to his official X account and said that they are ready to face Kuwait and Qatar in the upcoming qualifier matches. He added that they need to make their tactics right and need to be mentally strong.

"The players are ready to go, we're on to the final stage of preparations for Kuwait and Qatar. It's all about getting out tactics right and making sure we are all mentally exactly where we need to be," Stimac wrote on X.

The match has a lot of significance for Indian football fans as it will mark the last appearance of legendary captain Sunil Chhetri in an international outing. Earlier in May, the 39-year-old announced that June 6 would be his last appearance in the international arena.



India are currently placed second in the group, with four points from four matches. The top two teams in the group will qualify for Round 3 of the FIFA World Cup Qualifiers and book their berth at the AFC Asian Cup Saudi Arabia 2027.

India's quest for a place in the third round of the FIFA World Cup 2026 and AFC Asian Cup 2027 Preliminary Joint Qualifiers suffered a serious jolt when they went down to Afghanistan 1-2. The winners trailed 0-1 at half-time. The Blue Tigers will take on Kuwait on June 6 at the iconic Salt Lake Stadium. The second qualifier match will be played on June 11 against Qatar. The second match will be played at Jassim Bin Hamad Stadium at Al Sadd Club in Qatar.

India Squad:
Goalkeepers: Amrinder Singh, Gurpreet Singh Sandhu.

Defenders: Amey Ganesh Ranawade, Jay Gupta, Lalchungnunga, Muhammad Hammad, Narender, Nikhil Poojary, Roshan Singh Naorem.

Midfielders: Brandon Fernandes, Edmund Lalrindika, Imran Khan, Isak Vanlalrathfela, Jeakson Singh Thounaojam, Mahesh Singh Naorem.

Mohammad Yasir, Nandhakumar Sekar, Rahul Kanholi Praveen, Suresh Singh Wangjam, Vibin Mohanan.

Forwards: David Lalhansanga, Jithin Madathil Subran, Lalrinzuala, Parthib Sundar Gogoi, Rahim Ali, Sunil Chhetri.

NADA revokes wrestler Bajrang Punia's provisional suspension

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, 4 JUNE

Tokyo Olympics bronze medalist grappler Bajrang Punia received a much-needed shot in the arm after the Anti Doping Disciplinary Panel (ADDP) has revoked the provisional suspension slapped on him a couple of months back.

Punia was served a notice by National Anti Doping Agency (NADA) on April 23 following his refusal to give a sample after the selection trial for Olympics qualifier on March 10 in Sonapat, and subsequently the world governing body UWW also took similar action.

Bajrang had challenged the provisional suspension through his lawyers and reiterated in his reply to ADPP that he never refused to provide sample but just wanted to know why NADA has not replied to his earlier query on action taken by the National Anti-Doping Agency for sending expired kit to take his sample in December 2023.

The NADA Disciplinary Panel, comprising Sunny Choudhary, Dr. Rana Chennappa and Abantika Deka, on May 31 noted that "the



notice of charge is yet to be issued to the athlete" and ordered "the provisional suspension of the athlete is revoked till NADA decides to issue the notice of charge to the athlete for the violation of anti-doping rules."

It remains to be seen whether NADA pursues the matter further and decides to issue Notice of Charge to Bajrang. If the Notice of Charge is not issued, the matter will be closed and if it is issued, a final hearing will be conducted.

The NADA disciplinary panel said it is premature to go into the merits and demerits of the case, and added if NADA decides to issue the notice of charge to the athlete then the matter will be listed for final hearing.

T20 World Cup: Farooqi takes five wickets as Afghanistan crush Uganda

AGENCIES
GEORGETOWN, 4 JUNE

Fazalhaq Farooqi's five-wicket haul powered Afghanistan to a dominating 125-run win over debutants Uganda in the Group C match of the ICC Men's T20 World Cup on Tuesday (as per IST), here at Providence stadium.

Despite fightback from Uganda bowlers in the death overs, Afghanistan posted a strong total of 183/5 on the back of a brilliant opening stand of 154 runs between Ibrahim Zadran (70 off 46) and Rahmanullah Gurbaz 76 off 42).

In defense of a huge total, Farooqi set the tone for the win with his scintillating bowling display, picking up 5-9 to bundle out Uganda for 58 in 16 overs and wrap up a massive win for his side.

Brian Masaba won the toss and elected to bowl first. Afghanistan's openers capitalised on favorable batting conditions and Uganda's fielding lapses. Gurbaz led initially, with Zadran joining him, hitting four boundaries in the sixth over.

The duo continued to dominate, with Gurbaz reaching his maiden T20 World Cup fifty in the ninth over, featuring four sixes and two fours.



Afghanistan crossed the 100-run mark by the 10th over, aided by an eventful 25-run over from Bilal Shah, which included five no-balls and five wides, propelling them past 150. Skipper Masaba eventually claimed Uganda's first wicket, dismissing Ibrahim Zadran and breaking the 154-run opening stand.

Experienced tweakers Alpesh Ramjani and Masaba then picked two more over the next couple of overs to clean up the Afghanistan top-order. Uganda bowlers got their act right in the death, conceding 22 runs for merely three wickets in the final four overs.

Defending 183, Farooqi gave Afghanistan the perfect start dismissing Ronak Patel (4) and Roger Mukasa (0) off back-to-back deliveries. While he missed out on a hat-trick, with Riazat Ali Shah surviving

by the barest of margins, Afghanistan had their third when Mujeeb Ur Rahman dismissed Simon Ssezai for 4.

When Naveen-ul-Haq the third bowler to be introduced in the game, picked two wickets in his first over, Uganda were in dire straits at 18/5. A brief stand between Riazat Ali and Robinson Obuya steadied the ship temporarily, but Farooqi returned to deliver further blows and strengthen Afghanistan's grasp on the game.

Farooqi finished with 5/9, while the finishing blows were delivered by skipper Rashid Khan.

Brief scores: Afghanistan 183/5 in 20 over (Ibrahim Zadran (70), Rahmanullah Gurbaz 76); Brian Masaba 2-21 beat Uganda 58 all out in 16 overs (Robinson Obuya 14; Fazalhaq Farooqi 5-9) by 125 runs.

Dravid confirms T20 World Cup as his final assignment

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, 4 MAY

On the eve of India's T20 World Cup campaign opener against Ireland in New York on Wednesday, head coach Rahul Dravid has confirmed that the tournament will be his final assignment with the national team, and he won't be applying for the position again.

Dravid's comments came as expected, but this was the first official confirmation that India will have a new coach come July. His confirmation came when he was asked if this World Cup was going to hold extra importance for him.

"Every tournament is important. Every game that I've coached for India has been very important for me. For me, this is no different just because it is going to be the last one that I'm in charge of. I love doing the job. I've really enjoyed coaching India,

and I think it's a truly special job to do. I've enjoyed working with this team, and it's a great bunch of boys to work with," the former India captain said.

"Unfortunately, just the kind of schedules (that are in place in international cricket) and where I find myself in this stage in my life, I don't think I'll be able to re-apply," he confirmed.

However, Dravid stressed on the importance of carrying on with the same intensity in his final assignment as India aim to end the decade-long ICC title triumph at the 2024 T20 World Cup, co-hosted by the US and the West Indies.

"Having said that, it's no different for me to be very honest. I don't see this anything particularly different or significant. From the first day I took the job, I always felt that every game was important and every game mattered, and

that will not change," Dravid said.

Dravid took over as the head coach in November 2021 and his original contract with the national side was till the end of the 2023 ODI World Cup, but was handed an extension to June 2024 after the team managed to produce a near-perfect campaign until the loss to Australia in the ODI World Cup final.

In April, the BCCI had invited applications for the head coach job following the T20 World Cup. Back then, the BCCI secretary Jay Shah had stated that Dravid can re-apply for the role but the latter on Monday deemed it unlikely. The board has so far received close to 3,000 applications for the role, but former India opener Gautam Gambhir is widely speculated to succeed Dravid, although it is still not confirmed whether the two-time World Cup winner has applied for the position.



Consistency the key
Meanwhile, Dravid also spoke on the importance of being consistent in such big-

ticket tournaments, and praised his team's effort for a blemish-free run in the past two World Cups (T20 WC 2022 and 2023 ODIWC) under

him, even as he expects the side to finally win that crucial knockout in the Americas.

"To be very honest, I think we've actually played really well in these World Cup tournaments. In terms of our consistency, we've been very consistent. Making the semi-final in the first, in the T20 one in Australia (in 2022). The World Test Championship is slightly different in terms of it's not one tournament, but it's a whole cycle, but playing extremely well in the cycle to get to the final there again (in 2023). The 50-over World Cup where we had a great run and went into the final (in 2023). In terms of our consistency, in terms of the quality of cricket that we have played in these big tournaments, I think we've been right up there with some of the best teams," he said.

"We can't say that we've not played good cricket in these tournaments. Yes, we prob-

ably haven't been able to get across the line in that one knockout game. The (2023 ODI) final in Ahmedabad or the (WTC final) game at The Oval and then again at Adelaide in the T20 semi-final. So we just probably haven't been able to execute in that last phase.

"Hopefully we play good cricket to get ourselves into those positions again. Then maybe play good cricket on the day to get across the line. But the important thing when you start these tournaments is not to think about that. It is to actually think about getting into those positions again. I think that's as hard as actually winning those games at times. You have to find yourselves in those positions where you are pushing for glory, and that's all you can do as a group and as a team. Our whole goal will be to try and get ourselves once again into a position where we give our-

selves a chance to be able to, um, win a tournament," he added.

Dravid said the Indian team would need to focus more on their decision-making than expectations to get past the knockouts hurdle.

"To be able to read and understand conditions that will be different in various places. It's our ability to use our experience. It's our ability to execute in the middle. It's our ability to make the right decisions whether with the bat or with the ball at those critical moments, which will be the defining factor."

"We would rather focus on that rather than kind of worry about the expectations. Of course, there are expectations and it's a great thing that people are rating our team highly because that means that we've been playing good cricket and we've got a good squad together," he summarised.

