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5 STUDENTS IN TOP 10 IN JEE-ADVANCED 2024 OPEN CATEGORY



RAGHAV SHARMA
Ht. No. 242053073*

RHYTHM KEDIA
Ht. No. 247025176*

P KUSHAL KUMAR
Ht. No. 246150349

RAJDEEP MISHRA
Ht. No. 241016176*

DHRUVIN H DOSHI
Ht. No. 241106162

A SIDHVIK SUHAS
Ht. No. 246119101

30 RANKS IN TOP 100 IN ALL-INDIA OPEN CATEGORY

12 RANK RAGHAV SHARMA HT. NO. 242053073*	14 RANK VEDANT SAINI HT. NO. 247004173	16 RANK BISMIT SAHOO HT. NO. 242072080*	28 RANK SHEKHAR JHA HT. NO. 242031290*	31 RANK ISHAAN GUPTA HT. NO. 242014288*	34 RANK N. SIDDHARTH REDDY HT. NO. 246053446	38 RANK AKSHAR ZALA HT. NO. 241019097*
43 RANK KESHAV SINGHAL HT. NO. 242027289*	55 RANK SATIVADA JYOTHIRADITYA HT. NO. 246022079	57 RANK AADITYA KUMAR HT. NO. 242007130*	68 RANK MAYANK JAIN HT. NO. 247004363	71 RANK P. V S D SAI MOHITH HT. NO. 246009172	74 RANK HIMANSHU THALOR HT. NO. 242050438*	77 RANK MOHAMMAD EMAAD ARIF HT. NO. 242054030*
83 RANK AMAAN KHAN HT. NO. 242026030*	85 RANK BIBASWAN BISWAS HT. NO. 245058146*	88 RANK FENIL MAYANK PATEL HT. NO. 241006043*	91 RANK AMAR SINHA HT. NO. 242057008*	93 RANK HARDIK AGGARWAL HT. NO. 242057008*	94 RANK G. N. NIRMAL KUMAR HT. NO. 24110162*	95 RANK UJJWAL SINGH HT. NO. 242050207*
96 RANK ANIKET KUMAR HT. NO. 243035068	97 RANK M.E. VENKATA PARTHIV HT. NO. 246162250	99 RANK TANAY CHETAN KAKLIYA HT. NO. 242057318*	100 RANK TVS SAI NAGA BHUSHAN HT. NO. 246016038	NUMBER OF QUALIFIED RANKS 3728+		

HIGHLIGHTS

BELOW 100
ALL INDIA OPEN
CATEGORY RANKS
30

BELOW 500
ALL INDIA OPEN
CATEGORY RANKS
122

BELOW 1000
ALL INDIA OPEN
CATEGORY RANKS
203

BELOW 100
ALL INDIA ALL
CATEGORY RANKS
146

BELOW 1000
ALL INDIA ALL
CATEGORY RANKS
721



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Sri Chaitanya Seizes 5 Ranks in Top 10 All-India Open Category



TOP RANKS BELOW 10 IN ALL-INDIA ALL CATEGORY

Ms. Sushma Boppana, CEO & Director with JEE-Advanced 2024 All-India Toppers

	1		1		3		3		4		5		7		8		8		9		10
<small>BAGHAV SHARMA HT. NO. 24209194</small>	RANK	<small>BBASWAN BIRWAS HT. NO. 24209144</small>	RANK	<small>SATVADA JYOTIRADITYA HT. NO. 24209209</small>	RANK	<small>SALLURI VIVEK HT. NO. 24209207</small>	RANK	<small>VASANTA SIBIRAJ HT. NO. 24209239</small>	RANK	<small>HIMANSHU THALORI HT. NO. 24209149</small>	RANK	<small>TEJAVATH SRI CHANDRANAGADAN HT. NO. 24209147</small>	RANK	<small>PRAGALLPATI V S D SAI MURTHY HT. NO. 24209172</small>	RANK	<small>G. NIKRISHNA NIRMALKUMAR HT. NO. 24209162</small>	RANK	<small>M. E. VENKATA PARTHY HT. NO. 24209206</small>	RANK	<small>ADITYA ADHANA HT. NO. 24209194</small>	RANK

ALL-INDIA OPEN CATEGORY BELOW 400 RANKS

	106		112		120		122		124		125		135		142		145
<small>ADITYA ADHANA HT. NO. 24209194</small>	RANK	<small>CHELLURI CHAKRADHAR HT. NO. 24209112</small>	RANK	<small>VAIDIK HT. NO. 242018022</small>	RANK	<small>POTTA NISWANTH HT. NO. 242095876</small>	RANK	<small>AYUSH GANGAL HT. NO. 247004085</small>	RANK	<small>MANOJ SOHAN GAJULA HT. NO. 241045213</small>	RANK	<small>ANVESH SUBHAM PRADHAN HT. NO. 242095091</small>	RANK	<small>M. AARYAN SRIRAM HT. NO. 2426130146</small>	RANK	<small>KRISHNA AGRAWAL HT. NO. 242093054</small>	RANK
	149		150		152		154		156		160		164		165		167
<small>VISHARAD SRIVASTAVA HT. NO. 241107102</small>	RANK	<small>AKASH KUMAR HT. NO. 241042436</small>	RANK	<small>ARYAN GUPTA HT. NO. 242025412</small>	RANK	<small>BATCHU ADWAITH HT. NO. 2426159484</small>	RANK	<small>AARUSH HT. NO. 242001104</small>	RANK	<small>ARCHIT RAHUL PATIL HT. NO. 242071012</small>	RANK	<small>ABHINAV V HT. NO. 242610918</small>	RANK	<small>MARADANA SAI SIVA LOCHAN HT. NO. 2426055043</small>	RANK	<small>DORISALA SRINIVASA REDDY HT. NO. 2426123273</small>	RANK
	169		172		175		178		180		181		183		185		192
<small>KASAVAJJALA SAI SHREYAS HT. NO. 242615752</small>	RANK	<small>P. NIKHIL CHANDRA HT. NO. 242608079</small>	RANK	<small>PALAGIRI SATHISH REDDY HT. NO. 242605373</small>	RANK	<small>KRISH JAIN HT. NO. 242016187</small>	RANK	<small>SOHAM DANGE HT. NO. 24112059</small>	RANK	<small>Y. SATYA SRI NEELESH HT. NO. 2426158102</small>	RANK	<small>GADE VSSRK TEJAS REDDY HT. NO. 2426157235</small>	RANK	<small>REDDI ANIL HT. NO. 2426156185</small>	RANK	<small>MAVURU JASWITH HT. NO. 2426160320</small>	RANK
	204		206		207		210		213		214		215		219		223
<small>GUNTAKANTI SAI GOUTHAM HT. NO. 242600827</small>	RANK	<small>INAPAKURTI RAJESH HT. NO. 242602237</small>	RANK	<small>AIKLAVYA VEER SINGH RANA HT. NO. 247003169</small>	RANK	<small>GAUTHAM TATHANDA HT. NO. 241053336</small>	RANK	<small>T SAI DHEERAJ HT. NO. 2426133036</small>	RANK	<small>AKARSH RAJ SAHAY HT. NO. 241054263</small>	RANK	<small>Y. TAGORE RAVINDRA SREE HT. NO. 242601218</small>	RANK	<small>SHREYAS ASTHANA HT. NO. 242094076</small>	RANK	<small>GURRAM HARI CHAITANYA HT. NO. 2426014072</small>	RANK
	224		227		228		233		235		238		242		244		248
<small>ARMAN SINGHAL HT. NO. 242015074</small>	RANK	<small>K. PRABHAKAR REDDY HT. NO. 242613055</small>	RANK	<small>RACHIT AHUJA HT. NO. 247003483</small>	RANK	<small>K. SAI HANEESH REDDY HT. NO. 2426049230</small>	RANK	<small>M. MANIKANTA PRUTHVI RAJ HT. NO. 242605173</small>	RANK	<small>JULAPELLY HANIKAR RAO HT. NO. 2426156296</small>	RANK	<small>AVTANSH GARGYA HT. NO. 247004109</small>	RANK	<small>SIDDU CHANDRA TEJA HT. NO. 2426023025</small>	RANK	<small>INESH AGGARWAL HT. NO. 242073178</small>	RANK
	249		252		253		259		260		264		274		275		283
<small>SALLURI VIVEK HT. NO. 242613127</small>	RANK	<small>GOLLA LEKHA HARSHAA HT. NO. 242602142</small>	RANK	<small>DESU G V N S ARYA CHARAN HT. NO. 2426012217</small>	RANK	<small>PALAKSH GOYAL HT. NO. 242061064</small>	RANK	<small>D. PANKAJ NARKHEDE HT. NO. 241123027</small>	RANK	<small>ARNAV GARG HT. NO. 247004279</small>	RANK	<small>KODALI RAMANA GOPAL HT. NO. 242605072</small>	RANK	<small>SIDDHANT AGRAWAL HT. NO. 247004099</small>	RANK	<small>DHRUV GAUD HT. NO. 247045097</small>	RANK
	297		297		304		308		311		318		326		333		334
<small>SHREYAS BALLATIGI HT. NO. 2426154286</small>	RANK	<small>ADITHYA A HT. NO. 241042055</small>	RANK	<small>SHUBHRADEEP PAUL HT. NO. 2426050176</small>	RANK	<small>KUNTIMADDI HARI HARA TEJA HT. NO. 2426053416</small>	RANK	<small>MD. K. GHOUSE MOHIUDDIN HT. NO. 2426159315</small>	RANK	<small>SRUTARSHI TRIPATHI HT. NO. 2426057005</small>	RANK	<small>DHANUKONDA SRINIDHI HT. NO. 2426016119</small>	RANK	<small>MURARI GANESH SAI HT. NO. 2426022206</small>	RANK	<small>GUNDA GNANESH HT. NO. 2426161598</small>	RANK
	339		353		355		369		379		384		393		395		399
<small>YASH VASHISTH HT. NO. 242025292</small>	RANK	<small>SIKHAKOLLI GURU SAI TEJA HT. NO. 2426059070</small>	RANK	<small>VENNELA NITHEESH KUMAR HT. NO. 2426053304</small>	RANK	<small>YASHDEEP SINGH HT. NO. 242027180</small>	RANK	<small>A. PURNA PRITAM REDDY HT. NO. 2426161812</small>	RANK	<small>TUSHAR HT. NO. 242043211</small>	RANK	<small>POLAMARSETTY KARUNYA HT. NO. 2426161048</small>	RANK	<small>KESHAV NAVANDAR HT. NO. 2426126085</small>	RANK	<small>ANNEPU SATVIK HT. NO. 242609358</small>	RANK

NATIONWIDE BRILLIANCE: SRI CHAITANYA CBSE SCHOOLS LEAD THE STATES IN GRADE 10!

TOP MARKS	496 500	494 500	494 500	493 500	492 500	491 500	491 500	491 500	490 500	489 500	488 500	485 500	470 500
STATE	TAMIL NADU	KARNATAKA	MAHARASHTRA	ANDHRA PRADESH	WEST BENGAL	TELANGANA	HARYANA	PUNJAB	MADHYA PRADESH	RAJASTHAN	UTTARAKHAND	UTTAR PRADESH	ODISHA



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JEE ADV. 2024 RESULTS



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All India Ranks in Top 20



*OBC

MATCHA BALAADITYA*
HT No: 245005057
Narayana Student - Class 9th - 12th

BOTHAMOLLA CHARAN*
HT No: 246161542

BHOGALAPALLI SANDESH
HT No: 246136003
Narayana Student - Class 9th - 12th

RAJDEEP MISHRA (DLP)
HT No: 241016176

MATCHA BALAADITYA
HT No: 245005057
Narayana Student - Class 9th - 12th



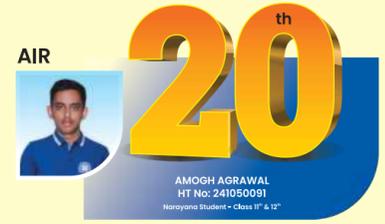
RAGHAV SHARMA (DLP)
HT No: 242053073



BISMIT SAHOO (DLP)
HT No: 242072080



ARYAN PRAKASH
HT No: 241104226
Narayana Student - Class 11th & 12th



AMOGH AGRAWAL
HT No: 241050091
Narayana Student - Class 11th & 12th

All India Open Category Ranks in Top 100

AIR 27 AB JAY JAIN (DLP) HT No: 24202028	AIR 28 SHEKHAR JHA (DLP) HT No: 242037050	AIR 31 BISHAN GUPTA (DLP) HT No: 242092584	AIR 33 SPARSH GUPTA (DLP) HT No: 241919263	AIR 40 ARNAV BISHANWAL (DLP) HT No: 242020279	AIR 45 DHANUSH SANJAY N HT No: 242018188	AIR 49 AVADHI HIMSOCHA (DLP) HT No: 241027073	AIR 51 B CHARAN HT No: 242491542
AIR 54 SRI TEJESH D HT No: 242055017	AIR 59 RISHI VARDHAN MALJI HT No: 242014078	AIR 63 RISHIKESH VISHI HT No: 242193469	AIR 66 BIRSHAW GOEL (DLP) HT No: 242019221	AIR 70 SIB SURESH VARMA DATTA HT No: 242024098	AIR 74 IRISHANSHU THILLOW (DLP) HT No: 242050438	AIR 76 OPPA LAXMI NARASIMHA REDDY HT No: 242054128	AIR 77 MOHAMMAD DILSHAD ANE (DLP) HT No: 242054030
AIR 82 AMBAR GOUDA (DLP) HT No: 242042325	AIR 85 BIRASHWAN BRIVAS (DLP) HT No: 242058148	AIR 87 DEVANSHI GATTANI (DLP) HT No: 242110427	AIR 89 JAYVEER SINGH (DLP) HT No: 242210031	AIR 90 KIRANSHU GOYAL HT No: 242102225	AIR 91 AMAR BHIA (DLP) HT No: 242057008	AIR 94 HIRSHIDHINA NIBHALKUMAR G HT No: 241101012 (DLP)	AIR 99 TANAY KALITA (DLP) HT No: 242027318

Below 20
All India Open
Category Ranks

7
Ranks

Below 100
All India Open
Category Ranks

31
Ranks

Below 1000
All India Open
Category Ranks

179
Ranks

Below 100
All India
Category Ranks

127
Ranks

Below 1000
All India
Category Ranks

873
Ranks

Total
Selections **3816+**

JEE ADV. Repeater Batch starts from 15th June 2024

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Narayana's Super Six in JEE ADV. - 2024

AIR 1st  OBC-NCL MATCHA BALAADITYA* HT No: 245005057	AIR 1st  ST SUMUKH M G* HT.NO: 242059343 (DLP)	AIR 1st  SC RAGHAV SHARMA* HT No: 242053073 (DLP)	AIR 1st  PWD SREE CHARAN.CH* HT No: 246162014 (DLP)	AIR 1st  PWD BIBASWAN BISWAS* HT No: 245058146 (DLP)	AIR 1st  GEN EWS PWD GUNDA JOSHMITHA* HT No: 246046005
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ALL INDIA TOP 100 RANKS IN ALL CATEGORY - JEE ADV. 2024

2nd B CHARAN HT No: 246161542	2nd KANCHE VISHRUTH HT No: 246164016	3rd SANDESH BHOGALAPALLI HT No: 246136003	3rd DHANUSH SANJAY NEDAMANURI HT No: 246010188	3rd VIVEK TEJA SAPAVATH HT No: 246165040	4th RISHVARDHAN MAJJI HT No: 245014078	4th ARADHANA R HT No: 246019225	5th MOHITH JAOANNADHAM HT No: 246157351
5th HIMANSHU THALOR HT No: 242050438	6th RAJDEEP MEHRA HT No: 241016176	6th ADITHYAN VERMA HT No: 241014166	7th GUNDA JOSHMITHA* HT No: 246046005	7th SRI SURYA VARMA DATLA HT No: 246124096	8th NILKISHINA NIRMALKUMAR GAJRE HT No: 241101012		

AIR 11 BALAADITYA M HT No: 245005057	AIR 11 SURAJ SHARMA HT No: 246103009	AIR 12 BULA HANESHA HT No: 246154109				AIR 12 RAGHAV SHARMA HT No: 242053073	AIR 14 SAYANDEEP HALDAR HT No: 246030184	AIR 16 IBSMIT SAHOO HT No: 246072080			
AIR 17 ARIYAN PRAKASH HT No: 245016226	AIR 19 DONTHULA SAM VIVEK HT No: 246158188	AIR 20 AMOGH AGRAWAL HT No: 241015001				AIR 20 Y. KETAN REDDY HT No: 246161576	AIR 24 KUNCHAM SHIVA HT No: 246102222	AIR 25 VIVEK NAGELLI HT No: 246157351			
AIR 27 SADRINSHI VADANA B HT No: 246014058	AIR 27 ARJUN JOSHI HT No: 242030219	AIR 28 SIBHARISH JOSHI HT No: 242031290				AIR 31 RUSHANTH P HT No: 246149332	AIR 31 RISHAB GUPTA HT No: 242014288	AIR 33 SPRASH GUPTA HT No: 247019253			
AIR 34 POORNETT BISHW BALAJI HT No: 246161257	AIR 35 SARVAJITHI KOLANU HT No: 246138129	AIR 36 AARUSHI C HT No: 241050053				AIR 37 RIVANTHESWAR D HT No: 246014025	AIR 40 HARIPREETH P S HT No: 246130195	AIR 40 ARNAV BARANWAL HT No: 242052079	AIR 42 SIDDHARTH VIVEKANAND HT No: 246047026	AIR 44 SHRIJASH KOREPAKA HT No: 246163040	AIR 45 DHANUSH SANJAY N HT No: 246010188
AIR 49 RODDEPALLY ARNAV B HT No: 246166124	AIR 49 AVADH HINDOCHA HT No: 241021073	AIR 50 DEV RAJ DAS HT No: 242103211				AIR 51 B CHARAN HT No: 246161542	AIR 51 RISHI GOUTHAM B HT No: 246153396	AIR 54 SAI TEJESH D HT No: 246056017	AIR 59 RISHVARDHAN MAJJI B HT No: 245014078	AIR 63 HINDEKAR VEETHI HT No: 246163469	AIR 66 MIRZAAK GOEL HT No: 246007021
AIR 69 SATYAM RAKESH SHARMA HT No: 241015239	AIR 69 VARUN SAI POTHULA HT No: 246168603	AIR 70 SRI SURYA VARMA D HT No: 246124096				AIR 72 B VENKATA SAKETH HT No: 246190209	AIR 73 MAHATH REDDY CH HT No: 246049273	AIR 74 BHARATH KUMAR B HT No: 246010023	AIR 74 HIMANSHU THALOR HT No: 242050438	AIR 75 HEMANTH ALLU HT No: 246008033	AIR 76 EPPLA LAXMI NARASIMHA HT No: 246154128
AIR 77 RIVANTH SAI P HT No: 245010574	AIR 77 MO BHAAAD ARIF HT No: 242054030	AIR 78 I SAI SHERVAN HT No: 246120068				AIR 81 SIRIANDAN M HT No: 246192431	AIR 81 SAINAVDEEP K HT No: 246010372	AIR 82 AMAR GOUDA HT No: 242201423	AIR 85 P SAI SINDHUSH HT No: 246121039	AIR 85 BIBASWAN BISWAS HT No: 245058146	AIR 87 MORA ADARSH HT No: 246161028
AIR 87 V V AKASH REDDY HT No: 246053404	AIR 87 DEVANSH GATTANI HT No: 241010347	AIR 88 SATEESH KUMARCHINTU HT No: 246007283	AIR 89 JAYVEER SINGH HT No: 242010131	AIR 90 KISHAY GOYAL HT No: 241012231	AIR 91 AMAR SRINHA HT No: 242017008	AIR 94 NV SRI HARSHA HT No: 246017052	AIR 94 N NIRMALKUMAR HT No: 241010152	AIR 99 TANAY KAKIYA HT No: 242007318			

and many more....

NARAYANA TRIUMPHS IN NEET (UG) 2024

9 students secure AIR 1 with perfect 720/720 score

720 720 Marks AIR 1	720 720 Marks AIR 1	720 720 Marks AIR 1	720 720 Marks AIR 1	720 720 Marks AIR 1	720 720 Marks AIR 1	720 720 Marks AIR 1	720 720 Marks AIR 1	720 720 Marks AIR 1
SAM SHREYAS JOSEPH App No: 24041031044	K SANDEEP CHOWDARY App No: 240410223438	SHASHANK SHARMA App No: 240410226867	ADITYA KUMAR PANDA App No: 240410188525	RISHABH SHAH App No: 240411059956	ISHA KOTHARI App No: 240410220941	PRACHITA App No: 240410131810	DARSH PAGHDAR App No: 240410987668	KRISHNAMURTI P S App No: 2404101272378



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RESULTS OUT
48,248 candidates clear JEE (Advanced)

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NEWS » PAGE 14



INCREDIBLE WIN
India pips Pakistan in humdinger

SPORT » PAGE 17

72-member NDA Ministry takes charge

61 Ministers are from the BJP and 11 are from its alliance partners in the NDA

27 Ministers are from OBCs, 10 from SCs; five each from STs, minority communities

24 States get representation; 43 Ministers are third-term MPs, five are former CMs

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Narendra Modi took the oath of office as Prime Minister for a third successive term on Sunday, along with 71 other members of his Council of Ministers, at a ceremony held at the forecourt of the Rashtrapati Bhavan.

The new Ministry comprises 30 Cabinet Ministers, five Ministers of State with Independent Charge and 36 Ministers of State.

The team appears to be a mix of old and new. Sixty-one Ministers are from the BJP and 11 from its partners in the National Democratic Alliance.

Five leaders of the allies — former Karnataka Chief Minister and Janata Dal(S) leader H.D. Kumaraswamy; former Bihar Chief Minister and Hindustan Awam Morcha leader Jitan Ram Manjhi; Lok Janshakti Party leader Chirag Pas-



Begin again: President Droupadi Murmu with the newly sworn-in Ministers at the Rashtrapati Bhavan on Sunday. R.V. MOORTHY

wan; Ram Mohan Naidu of the Telugu Desam Party (TDP); and Rajeev Ranjan Singh "Lallan" of the Janata Dal(U) — have been given Cabinet berths.

Jayant Chaudhary of the Rashtriya Lok Dal and Pratap Rao Jadhav of the Shiv Sena Shinde faction have been appointed Ministers

of State (Independent charge). Anupriya Patel of the Apna Dal, Ram Nath Thakur of the Janata Dal (U), Chandrashekhar Pemmasani of the TDP and Ram Das Athawale of the Republican Party of India, have been made Ministers of State. The All Jharkhand Students Union did not re-

ceive any representation.

The Ministers are drawn from 24 States, including the BJP's lone and first-ever Lok Sabha member from Kerala, Suresh Gopi. The choices also reflect caste and community representation with 27 Ministers belonging to the Other Backward Classes (OBC),

10 to the Scheduled Castes (SC), five to the Scheduled Tribes (ST) and five to minority communities.

Veterans return

At least 10 Ministers who have been in the government for the past 10 years have made a repeat entry into the government, in-

cluding Rajnath Singh, Nitin Gadkari, Nirmala Sitharaman, Piyush Goyal, Giriraj Singh and Kiren Rijiju. The NDA government appears to be aiming at emphasising continuity and experience, with 43 Ministers being third-term MPs, and 39 having been Union Ministers before.

Former Chief Ministers too found a good representation with Shivraj Singh Chouhan from Madhya Pradesh, Manohar Lal Khattar from Haryana and Sarbananda Sonowal from Assam, apart from Mr. Majhi and Mr. Kumaraswamy, being sworn in.

Community representation and the upcoming Assembly polls in Maharashtra, Haryana and Jharkhand were also kept in mind.

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IN BRIEF



With Nadda in Cabinet, BJP to revamp party

NEW DELHI
BJP chief J.P. Nadda's inclusion in the Council of Ministers of the new National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government on Sunday indicates an overhaul of the party's organisational structure soon, given that his tenure as party chief is ending in June. » PAGE 13

EDUCATION PLUS » PAGE 2

Eight pilgrims killed, 33 injured as bus comes under fire in Jammu

Peerzada Ashiq
SRINAGAR

At least eight pilgrims were killed and 33 injured after their bus came under fire from gunmen in Jammu on Sunday. The bus was fired upon in the Kanda area in Reasi district of Jammu at around 6.10 p.m. Officials said the bodies of the victims, including the bus driver, bore bullet wounds, adding that there were also empty cartridges on the spot. "Initial reports suggest that terrorists fired upon the passenger bus going from Shiv Khori to Katra. The driver lost control of the bus and fell into a



The bus that plunged into a gorge following an attack by suspected terrorists. PTI

gorge. Thirty-three people were injured," said Mohita Sharma, Senior Superintendent of Police in Reasi. The rescue operation was called off by 8 p.m. and the injured were shifted to hospital. Most of the victims

were pilgrims returning to Katra from the Shiv Khori temple.

Condemning the incident, Union Minister Amit Shah said in a post on X, "Deeply pained by the incident of the attack on pilgrims in Reasi, J&K. Spoke to the Lieutenant Governor and the DGP, J&K, and inquired about the incident. The culprits of this dastardly attack will not be spared and will face the wrath of the law."

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi said, "This shameful incident is the true picture of the worrying security situation in Jammu and Kashmir."

Ajit-led NCP rejects offer of MoS post

Shoumojit Banerjee
PUNE

While the Shiv Sena led by Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde was given a ministerial berth in the new Council of Ministers, the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) faction of Deputy CM Ajit Pawar on Sunday declined the BJP's offer of a Minister of State (Independent charge) post.

Earlier, BJP leader and Deputy CM Devendra Fadnavis met Mr. Ajit Pawar and senior NCP leaders Praful Patel and Sunil Tatkare.

Six MPs from Maharashtra, including four from the BJP and one from the Shinde-led Shiv Sena, have been given ministerial

berths.

Mr. Fadnavis told presspersons in Delhi that while the BJP had offered a Minister of State (Independent charge) post, Mr. Ajit's NCP wanted a Cabinet berth for Mr. Patel.

'No Cabinet berth yet'

However, given the compulsions and the calculations that come into play in a coalition, Mr. Fadnavis said, the BJP could not offer a Cabinet berth as yet and that the party was willing to wait till an expansion of the Cabinet.

Speaking to reporters later, Mr. Pawar said: "Praful Patel has already served as a Cabinet Minister at the Centre and we did not feel right in taking the post of

MoS with Independent charge. So, we told the BJP that while we are willing to wait for some time, we want a Cabinet berth."

Mr. Pawar's faction had performed poorly in the Lok Sabha election, winning just one of the four seats it contested, while Mr. Shinde's Shiv Sena had managed to win seven of the 15 seats it fought.

The NCP leader said he had told the BJP leadership that while his faction had one Lok Sabha (Sunil Tatkare) and one Rajya Sabha member (Praful Patel), it was sure of having three members in the Rajya Sabha in the next two or three months (alluding to the upcoming Rajya Sabha elections in the State).

"Given that our total number of MPs in Parliament would rise to four, we had urged the BJP leadership including Amit Shah that we should be given at least one Cabinet seat," Mr. Pawar said.

Meanwhile, Mr. Patel said that he had reservations about taking up the MoS post as he had already been a Cabinet Minister in the past.

'Asked to wait'

"We informed the BJP about our issues. They have told us to wait for a few days and that they would take remedial measures. This does not mean there is any discord between us [BJP and NCP]," he said.

Manipur CM Biren Singh seeks police report on violence in Jiribam

Vijaita Singh
NEW DELHI

As homes and police posts were torched and hundreds displaced in Jiribam district of Manipur over the past few days, Chief Minister N. Biren Singh sought a report from the State police on security measures taken to contain the violence.

Police sources say there is sufficient security in the region, adding that the recent incidents appear to be "motivated and engineered".

The Chief Minister's Office had written letters on January 15, 27 and 31 to the Director-General of Police and the Manipur security adviser, apprising them of the movement of "200 armed Kuki-Zo militants" in areas bordering Jiribam. A State government

source said that this week's violence erupted in the district, which borders Assam, despite the CMO informing the police about the possibility of an attack almost six months ago.

The January 15 note addressed to the DGP, accessed by The Hindu, said, "It has been reported that about 200 Kuki-Zo militants have moved from Churachandpur and reached Phaltoi Village, Old and New Kaiphundal area of Tamenglong district bordering Jiribam district.

In this regard, the DGP is requested to take all necessary security measures to prevent any untoward incident and respond to threats posed by the group, in view of the prevailing situation in the State." Another letter dated Ja-

nuary 31 said, "Reports have been received [regarding the] possibility of an attempt to loot arms and ammunitions of 7 IRB (Indian Reserve Battalions) located in Jiribam. The Police department is requested to take all necessary steps in this regard."

The Unified Headquarters constituted last year, responsible for security-related decisions, is headed by Kuldiep Singh, security adviser to the Manipur government.

He was rushed to Manipur after ethnic violence between the tribal Kuki-Zo and Meitei communities erupted in the State on May 3, 2023.

A police source said Jiribam has an adequate security presence.

CONTINUED ON
» PAGE 12

V.K. Pandian, once a powerful figure in the BJD government in Odisha, retires from active politics

Satyasundar Barik
BHUBANESWAR

V.K. Pandian, close aide of outgoing Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, quit active politics on Sunday, following the Biju Janata Dal's defeat in the Lok Sabha and Assembly elections in Odisha.

Mr. Pandian made the announcement after he was held responsible for the regional party's debacle in the polls. The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) had built its campaign against the BJD on the theme of "Odia asmita (pride)", highlighting the influence of the Tamil Nadu-born former IAS officer, and suggesting that he was poised to succeed Mr. Patnaik. During the campaign, Mr. Pandian had promised to retire from politics if the BJD failed to win.



V.K. Pandian (left), a close aide of outgoing Odisha CM Naveen Patnaik, made the announcement after he was held responsible for the BJD's debacle in the polls. FILE PHOTO

"My intent of joining politics was only to assist Naveen Babu and now consciously I decide to withdraw myself from active politics. I am sorry if I have hurt anyone in this journey. I am sorry if this campaign narrative against me has had a part to play in the BJD's loss," Mr. Pandian said in a post on social media.

"I would like to set straight certain perceptions and narratives," he said. "Perhaps it has been my shortcoming that I have not been able to effectively counter some of the political narratives at the right time. I reiterate I came to politics to help my mentor Naveen Patnaik ahead of gruelling elections and I had no desire whatsoever

for a specific political post or power. That was why I was neither a candidate nor was holding any post in the Biju Janata Dal."

'Apologises to parivar'

"I apologise to the entire Biju parivar (family), including all the cadres for this. My heartfelt gratitude to lakhs and lakhs of Biju parivar members whom I was associated with. I will always keep Odisha in the core of my heart and my guru Naveen Babu in my breath and pray Lord Jagannath for their wellbeing and prosperity," he said.

"From the day I set my foot in the soil of Odisha, I have received immense love and affection from the people of Odisha, from Dharmagarh to Rourkela to Mayurbhanj to Ganjam. I have tried to work very hard for the people," he

continued. "[Mr. Patnaik's] expectation from me was to implement his vision. He successfully crossed many milestones in health, education, poverty reduction, sports, investment, women's empowerment, infrastructure and also in temple and heritage projects," said the bureaucrat-turned-politician.

On the public perception that he has amassed massive amounts of property, he said, "Till today, the only property I have is what I inherited from my grandparents. My property statements when I joined IAS remain the same even today after 24 years."

"The biggest earning in my lifetime has been the love and affection and goodwill of the people of Odisha," he said, ending on an emotional note.

Lawyer driving luxury car hits two persons, leaving 1 dead

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

A 45-year-old rickshaw-puller died while another was injured after being hit by a luxury car near the main gate of Ramjas College in north Delhi on Sunday, the police said.

The owner of the vehicle, Virendra Mehta, has been arrested and sent for medical examination, a senior officer said. He is a lawyer by profession and a resident of Mukherjee Nagar.

Deputy Commissioner of Police (North) M. K. Meena said they received information about the accident at 1.16 p.m.

The probe revealed that the car's driver lost control and hit Govind and Ashok who were sitting on a bench, Mr. Meena said.

The two injured were taken to Hindu Rao Hospital for treatment, from where Govind was referred to the Lok Nayak Hospital, where he died during treatment, the DCP said.

Delhi parched due to Haryana cutting water supply: Atishi; lying is in AAP's DNA, says Saini

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Delhi Water Minister Atishi on Sunday wrote to Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini, saying the Capital was facing a major water crisis and asking him to ensure that 1,050 cusecs of water is released in the Yamuna river through the Munak canal.

The Minister has been blaming the BJP's Haryana government for the water crisis in the city, accusing it of not giving Delhi its due share of water.

Hitting back at Aam Aadmi Party (AAP)'s Delhi government, Mr. Saini said Haryana has been supplying water to Delhi over and above its share and accused AAP of levelling baseless allegations.

"Lying is in the Aam Aadmi Party's DNA. They work only by relying on lies," he said at a press conference. Mr. Saini added that the Delhi government could ask the government



Water Minister Atishi. FILE PHOTO

of Punjab, where AAP is in power, to supply water through the Sutlej-Yamuna Link (SYL) canal so that Haryana's water shortage could also be resolved.

L-G to meet Minister

Ms. Atishi sought time from Lieutenant-Governor V.K. Saxena for an emergency meeting "to apprise him of the inadequate water being released by Haryana from the Munak canal."

Raj Niwas replied saying the L-G will meet the Minister at 11 a.m. on Monday. Meanwhile, it has asked of

officials to ascertain the actual quantity of water released by the governments of Himachal and Haryana, find what measures have been undertaken to check the wastage and leakage of water in Delhi, and ascertain the status of the desilting of the Wazirabad reservoir as directed by the Supreme Court.

The Minister told Mr. Saxena that "the seven water treatment plants in Delhi are dependent on the 1,050 cusecs of water from the Munak canal. However, this has been reduced to 840 cusecs. If the amount of water does not increase today, the water situation across Delhi will worsen in 1-2 days".

Delhi BJP chief Virendra Sachdeva said Ms. Atishi's claims were false. "Data available at the Delhi Jal Board show that Haryana has been releasing more than the required share of water. If there is a shortage, it is not due to Haryana," Mr. Sachdeva said.

First-time MP Harsh Malhotra joins Modi govt. as Union MoS

East Delhi MP picked over three-time North East Delhi Lok Sabha member Manoj Tiwari; makes the cut due to his 'ground connect', 'organisational mindset', 40-year-old association with the party

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

East Delhi Lok Sabha MP Harsh Malhotra was on Sunday sworn-in as a Union Minister of State in the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Mr. Malhotra, 58, a first-time MP, was picked as the BJP candidate from the East Delhi constituency after the party dropped its sitting MP Gautam Gambhir. He defeated Aam Aadmi Party candidate Kuldeep Kumar.

According to BJP sources, the names of West Delhi MP Kamaljeet Sehrawat and North East Delhi MP Manoj Tiwari were also discussed.

A source said Mr. Tiwari's name was dropped as leaders from the Purvanchal region of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar had already



BJP MP Harsh Malhotra greets senior party leader and Union Cabinet Minister Rajnath Singh during the swearing-in ceremony of the new sgoovernment at Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi on Sunday. PTI

been accommodated in the Union Council of Ministers.

The name of Bansuri Swaraj, a first-time MP and the daughter of the late BJP leader Sushma Swaraj, wasn't discussed. Ms. Sehrawat's name was recommended due to her media-friendly image. She had earlier served as the Mayor

of the erstwhile South Delhi Municipal Corporation.

Mr. Malhotra, who had served as the Mayor of the erstwhile East Delhi Municipal Corporation in 2015, was picked because of his "ground connect" and "organisational mindset", a party source said. He is presently the general secretary of the BJP's Delhi

unit. He had joined the BJP youth wing in 1984.

Mr. Malhotra was elected as a councillor from Welcome Colony in 2012. Born to migrant parents from Amritsar and brought up in north-east Delhi's Shahdara, the East Delhi MP is a graduate in botany and holds a law degree from Delhi University.

Case against us false, fabricated: The Caravan journalist

Samridhi Tewari
NEW DELHI

One of the three journalists working with *The Caravan*, who have been asked by the Delhi police to join an investigation against them in a four-year-old case, said the FIR was "false and fabricated" and that the police had not contacted him in the last four years.

Prabhjit Singh, 50, a reporter, had appeared before the police for questioning on June 7.

DCP (North East) Joy Tirkey did not respond to *The Hindu's* queries about the progress of the case while another office said they have reached out to *The Caravan* to share all evidence they have pertaining to the case.

The case against Mr. Singh and his two colleagues - a 25-year-old woman journalist and 28-year-old Shahid Tantray - was registered at the Bhanjapura police station on August 11, 2020, on a complaint by a woman.

The woman alleged that she was sexually harassed by the journalists who also "attacked" her husband

while indulging in "negative reporting" aimed at "promoting enmity between two groups on the ground of religion".

Mr. Singh said they had submitted a complaint to the police on August 11, 2020, regarding the sexual harassment of the woman journalist and an attack by a mob. He said the complaint was converted into

an FIR only on August 14, 2020.

A senior police officer said they are probing both cases and that all accused will be sent notices.

The Caravan's executive editor Hartosh Singh Bal said on Saturday, "The police made no attempts to investigate the assault case registered by our journalists when they were sur-

rounded by a hostile mob in the area."

"We have spoken to the female reporter, who said she has not been contacted by the police yet. All the complainants had shared their phone numbers, home addresses and other details with the police, but they have been contacted after four years. Why?" Mr. Bal said.

Blaze at city gaming zone; none injured

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

A fire broke out in Mystery Rooms, a gaming zone in Connaught Place's Block M, on Sunday evening, a Delhi Fire Services (DFS) official said.

No casualties or injuries were reported in the inci-

dent, he added. DFS chief Atul Garg said they received a call about the incident at 3.22 p.m.

Officials suspect that a short circuit in the gaming zone's mechanic's room led to the incident. However, the police are investigating the incident to determine the exact cause.

THE HINDU

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The big move

With more students looking to study abroad, India needs to take a second look at its academic culture and understand what is needs to offer today's youngsters



Geetha Gopinath
Maneesha N.

Of late, there is a new wave of global movement: that of youngsters in the 18 to 25 age group going abroad for their studies. The allure of foreign universities is being buttressed by powerful campaigning. What are the factors causing this exodus? What is the impact on Indian society and economy?

Factors

One of the reasons for this

thinking and problem-solving and offering equal opportunities for learning in diverse areas, improved teacher training and infrastructure development. But it will take time to implement and to be effective. While India overcomes the challenges of establishing research-based education, students opt to go abroad to find such an ecosystem.

Consequences

The first impact of this is the potential loss of talented manpower. We often see media highlighting achievements of Indians abroad but rarely is the question of why they could not achieve the same heights here asked. We read of students in India developing new technologies but nothing is heard of what happened to these innovations. This loss can hit hard particularly in fields such as healthcare and engineering. Then there is the economic effect. Rarely do students who go abroad for higher studies come back to contribute to the Indian economy. Their life is bound up with the country they reside in.

All this should make us re-look our academic culture and come to new understanding of what we need to offer our students in this fast-changing world.

Geeta Gopinath is Faculty of Education and Maneesha N. is Faculty of Economics at the National Institute of Technology, Kozhikode.

SCHOLARSHIPS

Kotak Junior Scholarship

A CSR initiative by the Kotak Mahindra Group Companies. **Eligibility:** Students who live within the Mumbai Metropolitan Region (MMR) and have got over 85% in the 2024 Class 10 board exam (SSC/CBSE/ICSE) and secured admission in Class 11 in institutions in the MMR; Annual family income must be ₹3.2 lakhs. **Reward:** ₹3,500 a month plus mentorship, academic assistance, career guidance, and exposure visits.

SAVE THE DATE

Admissions and scholarships

Lovely Professional University (LPU) has opened admissions for its B.Tech Biotechnology, B.Tech Food Technology, B.Tech Biomedical Engineering programmes and for its B.Arch programme. For eligibility criteria and other details, visit <https://www.lpu.in/>

The University of Birmingham Dubai invites applications for its MEng Mechanical Engineering programme. Scholarships are available. **Eligibility:** Between 75% and 90% in Class 12 (depending on board of education) with Maths as a subject. <https://tinyurl.com/4txvj5k>

Mohan Babu University, Tirupati, invites applications for its B.Tech in Computer Science and Engineering

Application: Online
Deadline: June 30
www.b4s.in/edge/KJSP2

Esri India Master's Scholarship Programme
An initiative from Esri India. **Eligibility:** Open to Indian citizens who are at least 18 years old and enrolled in the second year of a postgraduate programme in Geoinformatics or related field covering remote sensing, GIS, spatial modelling, spatial analysis, digital image processing for GIS, and similar subjects. **Reward:** ₹1 lakh annually
Application: By email to gis.education@esri.in

(Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning) programme. **Eligibility:** Minimum 60% in Class 12 in the current academic year with Physics, Chemistry and Maths as subjects
Deadline: July 31
<https://www.mbu.asia/>

CMR University, Bengaluru, invites applications for its four-year B.Tech. Programmes from the School of Engineering and Technology. **Eligibility:** Minimum 45% aggregate in Class 12 with English as a subject and valid score in JEE, COMED-K, CET or CMRUAT. <https://www.cmr.edu.in/>
Amazon India has opened registrations for the fourth edition of its Machine Learning (ML) Summer School. **Eligibility:** Engineering students (enrolled in graduate, postgraduate or doctoral programmes) from a recognised institute
Deadline: June 21
<https://tinyurl.com/2urvsux8>

Deadline: July 10
www.b4s.in/edge/GISU4

National Commission for Women Internship

An initiative from the National Commission for Women for students in undergraduate and postgraduate programmes. **Eligibility:** Unpaid internship is open to students in the first year. Paid internship

programme is open only to students must be in the second year or higher and enrolled in specific fields of study: Law (LLB), Sociology, Social Work, or Gender Studies. **Reward:** ₹10,000 monthly
Application: Online
Deadline: Round the year
www.b4s.in/edge/NWCII

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IN BRIEF



New Telangana Cong. chief soon as Revanth's term ends

Telangana Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy will complete his three-year term as the Pradesh Congress Committee (PCC) president on July 7 and the search is on for a new leader to take up the mantle. Moreover, Mr. Reddy assumed office as the Chief Minister and as per the Congress policy he would not have another term. With the change imminent, several leaders have thrown their hat in the ring and the competition seems to be quite high as the party is in power. But given his hard work and desire to have control over the party, Mr. Revanth is likely to press for someone with whom his equations are good.

Illegal mining: policemen run over by tractor in U.P., Bihar

A constable was run over by a tractor allegedly belonging to the 'sand mafia' in Nawabganj of U.P., the police said on Sunday. The incident took place when constable Rohit Kumar went to Nagla Chandan area on a tip-off about illegal sand mining. Kumar was rushed to a hospital but died during treatment. In a similar incident in Bihar's Aurangabad district, a constable was mowed down by a tractor illegally transporting sand, police said. The deceased, identified as Deepak Kumar (29), was on duty to check illegal sand mining when the incident took place at Musepur Khaira village. A manhunt has been launched to apprehend the driver, police said. PTI

Assam Rajya Sabha member a surprise pick in NDA govt.

Rahul Karmakar
GUWAHATI

The return of Assam's Sarbananda Sonowal and Arunachal Pradesh's Kiren Rijiju in the NDA government at the Centre was more or less expected.

Pabitra Margherita, the third face in the Narendra Modi-led government and a Rajya Sabha member from Assam, has been a surprise package.

All are Bharatiya Janata Party parliamentarians. Mr. Sonowal and Mr. Rijiju are among the 13 elected from parliamentary seats across the Northeast com-

prising eight States and 25 Lok Sabha constituencies.

Forty-nine-year-old Mr. Margherita is from Margherita, an industrial town in eastern Assam's Tinsukia district, a part of the Dibrugarh Lok Sabha seat. His birth name is Pabitra Gogoi but he uses the town's name as his surname.

He was a cultural activist specialising in filmmaking before joining the BJP in 2014, a watershed year for the party in Assam.

Elected as a Rajya Sabha member in 2022, Mr. Margherita is also the political secretary to Chief Mi-

nister Himanta Biswa Sarma.

It is believed that Mr. Margherita's induction into the Modi Ministry is the BJP's strategy to counter the impact of the perceived Congress resurgence in eastern Assam after the victory of Gaurav Gogoi from the Jorhat constituency. Eastern Assam largely comprises the Dibrugarh, Jorhat, and Kaziranga Lok Sabha seats.

Like Mr. Gogoi, Mr. Margherita is an Ahom, a politically potent community in eastern Assam, along with the Adivasis or "tea tribes".



College daze: Patna University's Law College, where 22-year-old Harsh Raj was killed; Raj showing off his inked finger after exercising his franchise for the first time. AMARNATH TEWARY/SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

"Had someone had the courage to step in and rescue Harsh instead of just watching, my friend would have been alive today," adds another classmate, Nikhil Kumar.

Political ambitions

Raj was popular among the university's students for his forthcoming and helpful nature. He often distributed leaflets bearing his contact details among the students for "any help" they might need, said his classmates.

One of the leaflets, seen by *The Hindu*, featured a picture of him and his friend Saayan Kunal, who is the husband of Shambhavi Choudhary, one of the youngest candidates who

Ravneet Singh Bittu gets a berth despite losing from Ludhiana seat

The Hindu Bureau
CHANDIGARH

The induction of Ravneet Singh Bittu, who though lost from Ludhiana seat in 2024 Lok Sabha elections, into the Union Cabinet is seen as an attempt by the BJP to carry on its expansion plan in Punjab. Mr. Bittu is a prominent 'Jat Sikh' face and a three-time Lok Sabha member who joined the BJP ahead of the Lok Sabha polls.

He is the grandson of late CM Beant Singh, who was killed in 1995.

With an eye set on the

2027 Assembly elections in Punjab, the BJP appears to be working on two fronts - first, as a part of its expansion plan at the regional level it seems endeavor to make a 'pro-Sikh' image to spread its wings in the hegemonic politics of Punjab, which largely functions surrounding Sikhs, and also it would want to neutralise its 'anti-peasant' image created during the farmers' agitation.

Second, the party looks to have been trying to convey a larger message of not being anti-minority.



ties regarding the alleged murder.

Leader of Opposition in the Assembly and Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) leader Tejashwi Yadav too condemned the incident, and slammed the NDA government in Bihar over the "miserable law and order situation" in the State.

"Our son was nursing political ambitions, and wanted to contest the Patna University Students' Union (PUSU) polls. He later wanted to become an MLA and MP," Ajit recalls. "But I always told him not to harbour such fantasies and to focus on his studies," he says. Raj's friends told *The Hindu* over the phone that the student will be remembered for his "unmatched

PM roadshow, swearing-in ceremony of new govt. in Odisha likely on June 12

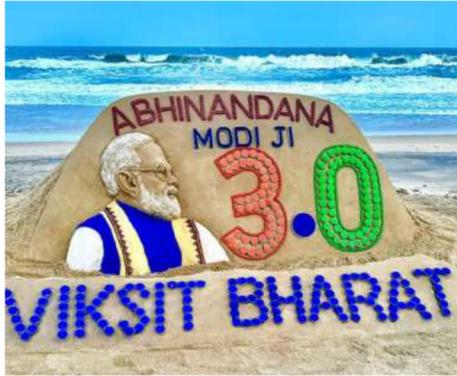
500-metre roadshow, aimed at acknowledging massive support for BJP in the State, to be held on Wednesday, shortly before oath-taking ceremony; party remains tight-lipped over the CM choice

Satvasundar Barik
BHUBANESWAR

Prime Minister Narendra Modi is likely to hold a roadshow in Odisha following the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)'s electoral success in the State. The party won 20 out of 21 Lok Sabha seats. It also secured four more seats than the half-way mark of 74 seats in the 147-member Odisha Assembly, as a result of which the BJP is set to form its first solo government in the State, ending the 24-year-long winning streak of the Biju Janata Dal (BJD).

Mr. Modi is likely to undertake a 500-metre roadshow in Bhubaneswar from Jayadev Square to Janata Maidan, the venue of the swearing-in ceremony, said senior BJP leader Jatini Mohanty.

The roadshow will be followed by the oath-taking ceremony, which was earlier scheduled for Monday. While campaigning, Mr. Modi held similar roadshows in the State capital,



New beginnings: A sculpture by sand artist Sudarsan Pattnaik at Puri beach on Saturday. ANI

seeking support for the party. The Prime Minister has been effusive in his praise for the party's performance in the State. In the first National Democratic Alliance (NDA) meeting after the results, he said the change in the regime in Odisha was the high point of the party's electoral battles this year.

The roadshow is aimed at acknowledging people's overwhelming support for

the party. On June 11, newly elected party leaders are likely to meet in Bhubaneswar to approve the name of the new Chief Minister.

Next Chief Minister

So far, BJP leaders have remained tight-lipped amid speculation over who will be Odisha's next Chief Minister.

Union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan, once the leading contender for the

role, is no longer in the race following his induction into the Union Cabinet.

Some members of the State BJP suggest that a recently elected Member of Parliament might be appointed to head the government.

However, the BJP faces a complex challenge. It has fallen 32 seats short of a majority in the Lok Sabha. This shortfall has made it difficult for the party to assign one of its MPs for the post.

Odisha BJP president Manmohan Samal is reportedly being considered as a potential contender. However, his electoral defeat from the Chandbali Assembly constituency goes against him.

Other potential candidates include former State unit presidents K.V. Singh Deo and Suresh Pujari. MLA-elects Mohan Majhi and Rabi Naik are also seen to have good chances.

The party might place its trust in one of these seasoned tribal leaders.

NEET row: Rahul vows to be students' voice in Parliament

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Sunday hit out at Prime Minister Narendra Modi over the NEET-UG medical entrance row, saying the alleged "irregularities" in the examination have devastated more than 24 lakh students even before he takes oath for a new term in office.

Mr. Gandhi assured students in the country that he will become their voice in Parliament and strongly raise the issues related to their future.

Amid allegations of inflation of marks in the NEET-UG medical entrance exam, the National Testing Agency (NTA) announced on Saturday that the Education Ministry has set up a four-member panel to review the grace marks awarded to more than 1,500 candidates.

Earlier in the day, in a post in Hindi on X, Mr. Gandhi said, "Narendra Modi has not even taken oath yet and the irregularities in the NEET exam has devastated more than 24 lakh students and their families". Six students from a single exam centre topped the exam with maximum marks, while



Cong. leader Rahul Gandhi

many got such marks which are technically not possible, but the government is continuously denying the possibility of paper leak, the former Congress chief said.

'Plan to deal with leaks'

He said the Congress had made a robust plan to deal with the 'paper leak industry' running in connivance with the education mafia and the government machinery.

"We had pledged in our manifesto to give students 'freedom from paper leak' by making a law," he said.

The NTA has denied any irregularities and said the changes made in the NCERT textbooks and grace marks for losing time at the examination centres were some of the reasons behind the students scoring higher marks.

Chouhan, Scindia among five Ministers from Madhya Pradesh

Mehul Malpani
BHOPAL

Former Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan and Guna MP Jyotiraditya Scindia were among the three BJP leaders from the State who were sworn in as Cabinet Ministers in the third National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

The other leader who became a Cabinet Minister is Virendra Kumar, a prominent Dalit face of the BJP in the State and a consecutive eight-term MP.

Apart from the three Cabinet Ministers, the State also saw two tribal leaders - Savitri Thakur and Durga Das Uike - taking oath as Ministers of State, both as first-time Ministers.

BJP bastion

In the recently concluded Lok Sabha election, Madhya Pradesh remained a BJP bastion and turned out to be one of the most successful States for the party as it won all 29 constituencies, up from 28 in 2019 poll.

Mr. Chouhan, the State's longest-serving Chief Minister, returned to the Lok

Sabha, winning from his traditional Vidisha constituency by a margin of more than 8.2 lakh votes.

Mr. Scindia was also retained in the Prime Minister's Cabinet. He regained his family bastion of the Guna Lok Sabha seat as a BJP candidate by over 5.4 lakh votes this time, a seat that he had lost in 2019 when he was with the Congress.

Mr. Scindia had led a rebellion of 22 Congress MLAs in March 2020 and joined the BJP, bringing down the 15-month old State Government led by Kamal Nath at the time.

How a dandiya night scuffle led to a daylight murder of a student on campus in Bihar

SPOTLIGHT

Amarnath Tewary
PATNA

Two days before he was beaten to death on the campus of Patna University's Law College, Harsh Raj, 22, had expressed excitement about casting his vote for the very first time from Vaishali Lok Sabha constituency. Exercising his franchise from his hometown, Majhauri village, Raj was among the first ones to queue up outside the polling booth on the morning of May 25, and had excitedly shown off his inked finger and posed for pictures after.

After coming home from the booth, he had chatted with his grandfather and mother for a while, telling them about his plans to buy a black SUV. "He was close to those two. He and I spoke less," says his father, Ajit Kumar, who works for a local daily. Raj had returned to Patna that same evening on his beloved black motorcycle, saying his goodbyes ahead of his exam the next day.

On May 27, the final-year undergraduate student ap-

peared for his exam at the Law College campus on Ashok Rajpath Road, about 1.5 km away from his own college, the Bihar National College. He was one step closer to finishing his three-year Functional English (Honours) course. But while walking back to his motorcycle along with a friend, Bhanu Kumar, he was met by a group of students, who thrashed him with iron rods, hockey sticks and bricks near the college auditorium. While his friend fled the scene, several others, including some employees of the college and other students, allegedly watched the violence play out, but did not intervene. Eventually, Raj fell unconscious.

After the attackers ran away, some classmates took Raj to the Patna Medical College and Hospital, but the doctors there declared him dead. "When we came out after the exam, a group of people attacked us. I was also hit by bricks but ran away. Harsh also tried to run, but he collided with a tree and fell. The men, who had masked up to hide their identities, had beaten him to death," recalls Bhanu.



contested and won the Lok Sabha election from the reserved Samastipur seat on a Lok Janshakti Party (Ram Vilas) ticket. Raj's Facebook account was flooded with pictures of him campaigning for Ms. Choudhary in the run-up to polling on May 13.

"Harsh Raj always stood firmly with me as a brother during the election campaign, and even before that. The culprits should be identified and arrested as soon as possible," the MP-elect said after the incident. Her father Ashok Choudhary, a Janata Dal (United) Minister in the Bihar Cabinet, also posted a picture of himself and Raj on social media, saying that he was in touch with the authori-



ties regarding the alleged murder.

Leader of Opposition in the Assembly and Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) leader Tejashwi Yadav too condemned the incident, and slammed the NDA government in Bihar over the "miserable law and order situation" in the State.

"Our son was nursing political ambitions, and wanted to contest the Patna University Students' Union (PUSU) polls. He later wanted to become an MLA and MP," Ajit recalls. "But I always told him not to harbour such fantasies and to focus on his studies," he says. Raj's friends told *The Hindu* over the phone that the student will be remembered for his "unmatched



drive for social work". "During the pandemic, he went to his village and provided relief to migrants," says Ravi Ranjan. Other friends add that Raj also ran a social organisation, Lok Nayak Yuva Parishad, and the rising popularity of the outfit is what sparked the jealousy of other students.

Raj was the only son. His younger sister Rosy Kashyap, a student of Class 10, is inconsolable after his death. "She keeps waiting for her brother to come home," the father says. Having completed his school education from Lalganj St. Paul's School in the village, Raj had moved to Patna and was running a hostel, RPS Boys Hostel, in the area to earn some money on the side. Bimal Mahto, the cook at the hostel, remembers him as the "kind and well-mannered" owner who always paid his salary on time. The future of the hostel now hangs in the balance.

Arrests so far

The FIR, filed at Sultanganj police station, was lodged against unknown persons. So far, the police have arrested three students - Aman Patel alias Aman Ku-

mar from Maner, Chandan Yadav from the university hostel, and Prakrit Anand alias Aarush from Begusarai - while another, Ravish Kumar alias Rahul from Gaya, has surrendered, says Bharat Soni, Patna SP (East), adding that they hope to nab two more accused - Mayank from Supaul and Shivam from Madhepura - in the next few days.

According to the police, during interrogation, some of the accused revealed that Raj, along with two or three others, had an altercation with Aman and Ravish at a dandiya (dance) night on Dussehra last year. Aman and Ravish had rounded up some friends and attacked Raj in order to take revenge.

Following Raj's murder, the university gave orders to close down all colleges, and for all students to vacate their hostels by May 31. The university will now likely reopen on June 30, after the summer vacation ends. "The entire administration is shocked that a boy died on campus. I urge the police to identify those responsible and take strong action against them," Vice-Chancellor K.C. Sinha had

said at the time, adding that all ongoing examinations have been cancelled until further notice.

Fading legacy

Several political leaders have graduated from Patna University, including RJD chief and former Bihar Chief Minister Lalu Prasad, current Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, BJP national president J.P. Nadda, and the late State BJP leader Sushil Kumar Modi. But the university, which was once known as the "Oxford of the East", has since seen a deterioration in stature, with frequent incidents of hooliganism dotting the campus. The hostels too have become dens for criminals, and witness frequent police raids.

"Today, most of the meritorious students from Patna migrate to other places to study instead of taking admission at Patna University considering the decline in its academic atmosphere," rues a former student, Hitendra Anupam, adding that the death of a student on campus signifies "the worst ebb possible".

LINK TO FULL STORY
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Eye on Assembly polls, BJP gives two berths to Kerala

The Hindu Bureau
KOZHIKODE



Suresh Gopi

By inducting actor-politician Suresh Gopi and long-time BJP functionary George Kurian as Union Ministers in the Narendra Modi Cabinet, the BJP appears to be strategising to alter the bipolar algorithm for the 2026 Kerala Assembly election.

Despite initial uncertainties, Mr. Gopi, who made history by becoming the BJP's first MP in the Lok Sabha from the State, took oath as a Minister of State on Sunday.

The 66-year-old actor-politician was a nominated member of the Rajya Sabha from 2016 to 2022. Mr. Gopi, belongs to the Nair community.

However, the surprise

choice is Mr. Kurian, who is neither a member of the Lok Sabha nor the Rajya Sabha. The 63-year-old's induction into the Cabinet as a Minister of State may signal the BJP's attempts to fortify its presence in Kerala by engaging with the Christian community. A staunch member of the party since its early days, Mr. Kurian is one of the State general secretaries.

Three MPs from A.P. in Union Ministry

Rammohan Naidu and Pemmasani Chandrashekhara of the TDP and Bhupathiraju Srinivasa Varma of the BJP get the call from PM

The Hindu Bureau
VIJAYAWADA

TDP MPs Kinjarapu Ram Mohan Naidu (Srikakulam) and Pemmasani Chandrashekhara (Guntur) and BJP MP Bhupathiraju Srinivasa Varma (Narsapuram) were sworn in as Union Ministers by President Droupadi Murmu at the Rashtrapati Bhavan on Sunday.

At age 36, Mr. Ram Mohan Naidu became the youngest member of the Cabinet headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. This is his third consecutive victory since 2014.

He is the son of former Union Minister K. Yerranaidu (the youngest Cab-



Ram Mohan Naidu, ANI

net Minister in 1996).

He graduated in Electrical Engineering from Purdue University and has a Master's Degree in Business Administration from Long Island University.

Mr. Ram Mohan Naidu entered politics after his father's death in a road accident in 2012. He first be-

came an MP for Srikakulam in 2014 when he was just 26.

Two debutants

Dr. Chandrashekhara hails from Burrayapalem village in Tenali mandal of Guntur district. He did MBBS from NTRUHS and MD in Internal Medicine at Geisinger Medical Center, Pennsylvania (U.S.). This is his political debut.

Mr. Srinivasa Varma is from Bhimavaram in West Godavari. He is also making his political debut.

Mr. Varma has a Bachelor's degree in law and has MA and M.Li. Sc. degrees and is an established aquaculture and real estate businessman.

Kishan Reddy, Bandi Sanjay join Modi Ministry

The Hindu Bureau
HYDERABAD

Telangana has two Ministers in the Union Cabinet. State BJP chief and Tourism Minister in the outgoing Union Cabinet G. Kishan Reddy will be repeated as the BJP won its highest-ever number of Lok Sabha seats from Telangana under his leadership.

Karimnagar MP and firebrand leader Bandi Sanjay, who catapulted the party into a new league with his aggressive attack on the BRS government and then Chief Minister K. Chandrashekhara Rao, secured the second berth from Telangana. Mr. Kishan Reddy is a second-time MP from Secunderabad and is the soft face of the BJP, unlike the other MPs known for their aggression.

He is a natural choice for the party given his seniority and association right from his college days where he used to stay in the BJP office working full time.

Mr. Bandi Sanjay, the two-time MP from Karimnagar was expected to get the berth if the BJP decided to accommodate two people from Telangana. Mr. Sanjay, known for his fiery speeches, is credited with pushing the party into a new league when the Congress was down.

Both the leaders come from a Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) background while the remaining BJP MPs have joined the BJP after dabbling with the Congress, TDP or the BRS.

Rival fronts' election performance, liquor policy might play out in Kerala Assembly

G. Anand
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

The stark dualities of victory and defeat in the Lok Sabha election will likely loom over the Kerala Assembly when it convenes on Monday for a 28-day session.

A jubilant Congress-led United Democratic Front (UDF) Opposition appears eager to harry the ruling Left Democratic Front (LDF), still reeling from its dismal showing at the hustings.

With two Assembly byelections to the seats left vacant by MPs-elect K. Radhakrishnan of the CPI(M) and Shafi Parambil of the Congress on the horizon, the political import of the current session seems not lost on the rival fronts.

The Opposition must now capture one constituency (Chelakkara) and defend another (Palakkad). The LDF and UDF will likely weaponise the Lok Sabha voting pattern to attack each other in the House over the BJP's stunning gains in the polls.

The UDF's clear lead in 119 Assembly segments will likely give it a rhetorical edge during debates.

Controversial legislation, including the Bill to delimit local body wards, will stoke fiery debates. The UDF will rubbish the government's three-year "progress report" and use the House to portray Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan as an authoritarian far re-



Youth Congress workers who participated in the protest being detained by the police. K.K. MUSTAFAH

moved from the travails of the ordinary person.

Row over liquor policy

The Opposition will attempt to put the government in the dock for tweaking the excise policy to "favour" the liquor lobby, taunt the LDF over Rajya Sabha seat-sharing tugs-of-war, spotlight LDF convener E.P. Jayarajan's tete-a-tete with BJP leader Prakash Javadekar, flag cooperative bank corruption, SFI "violence and alleged police high-handedness".

The LDF will also cast around for sensational grist to attack the Opposition, including the recent frays at a KSU study camp and a Congress district committee office.

The Lok Sabha results have put a spring in the UDF's steps.

But, the LDF seems anything but cowed and appears focused on playing the long game.

Five MPs secure Ministerial berths from Karnataka

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

As many as five MPs, including Janata Dal (Secular) State president and former Chief Minister H.D. Kumaraswamy and the former Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, from Karnataka were sworn in on Sunday as part of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Cabinet as he entered his third term.

Mr. Kumaraswamy, Ms. Sitharaman, and five-time MP for Dharwad Pralhad Joshi were sworn in as Ca-



Pralhad Joshi, left, and V. Somanna, ANI, FILE PHOTO

binet Ministers. Elected from Bengaluru North, Shobha Karandlaje was re-inducted into the Cabinet as a Minister of State along with V. Somanna.



Prominent MPs from Karnataka missing out on the Cabinet berth included former Chief Ministers Basavaraj Bommai and Jagadish Shettar, who were hop-

ing to find berths in the north Karnataka and Lingayat quota and based on seniority.

While Rajya Sabha member from Karnataka Ms. Sitharaman was the sixth person to be sworn in, she was followed by Mr. Kumaraswamy and Mr. Joshi. Mr. Joshi apparently won the confidence of the BJP top leaders during his earlier stint as Union Minister for Parliamentary Affairs. He is being seen as successor to the late BJP leader H.N. Ananth Kumar.

The selection of Mr. So-

manna, veteran Lingayat leader from south Karnataka, for the Ministry indicates that the BJP high command has its own calculations with respect to the dominant community.

Mr. Somanna, who does not enjoy good relations with the party's Lingayat strongman B.S. Yediyurappa, had earlier abided by the party's diktat and contested from two Assembly seats, including Varuna against the then chief ministerial candidate of the Congress, Siddaramaiah, although unsuccessfully.

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LEGAL NOTICE

IN THE COURT OF THE HON'BLE SENIOR CIVIL JUDGE AT T. Narasipura (Original Jurisdiction)

In the Matter of Original Suit in O.S. No. 28 of 2023

Plaintiff: Ms. Charitha, Daughter of Shri. H. Govindalal, Aged about 40years, Residing at No. 1255, 4th Cross Road, Paduvana Road, Kuvempunagara, Mysore - 570023.

Defendant No.2: The Secretary Ministry of Petroleum, Union of India, Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas, Government of India, Shashtri Bhawan, New Delhi - 110001.

Summons To Defendant No. 2 To The Secretary, Ministry of Petroleum, Union of India, Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas, Government of India, Shashtri Bhawan, New Delhi - 110001. Whereas the Plaintiff has instituted a suit against you for Suit for Declaration and Mandatory Injunction and you are hereby summoned to appear in this court in person on the 1st day of July 2024, at 11:00 O'clock, to answer the claim, and you are directed to produce on that day all the documents upon which you intend to rely in support of your defence.

Take Notice that, in default of your appearance on the day before mentioned, the suit will be heard and determined in your absence. Given under my hand and the seal of the court, this 15th day of April, 2024.

/s/ By Order of the Court Chief Ministerial Officer, Senior Civil Judge, At Tirumakudalu Narasipura.

Advocate for the Plaintiff: Shri. Mahadeva Deshak, Advocate, Chamber: Deshak Law Reigns, No. 479, 2nd Floor, Vinaya Marga, Siddhartha Nagar, Mysuru - 570011.

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Timings

DELHI

MONDAY, JUN. 10	RISE	05:23	SET	19:19	
	RISE	08:41	SET	22:53	
TUESDAY, JUN. 11		RISE	05:23	SET	19:20
	RISE	09:41	SET	23:28	
WEDNESDAY, JUN. 12		RISE	05:23	SET	19:20
	RISE	10:37	SET	23:58	

Delhi Weather	max	min
Delhi City	42	27
Safdarjang	42	27
Palam	43	28

Delhi Palam Today
44°C Heat wave to prevail. Morning will be comfortable. The weather will be very hot and uneasy. Night will be slight warm and uneasy.

Delhi Palam Tomorrow
45°C Heat wave to continue. Morning will be slight warm. The day will be very hot and uneasy with strong wind. A dry weather to prevail.

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Heatwave, water scarcity pushing Delhi's night shelter dwellers to edge

Samridhi Tewari
NEW DELHI

Hundreds of people start queuing up outside Fatehpuri night shelter near Old Delhi railway station around 6.30 p.m. every day to collect tokens and get a bed for the night, including Sher Singh Rana.

Mr. Rana, 62-year-old daily wage labourer has been retiring in the temporary structure every night for the past 30 years. He says he has never experienced such a shortage of water at the facility over the past three decades as he is witnessing this summer.

"There is no drinking water here. We are drinking tap water, the same water that is used to clean toilets here," Mr. Rana said.

"Many people who could not buy bottled water or control their thirst have fallen ill after drinking this water and are suffering from stomach ache," he added.

"We requested the caretaker here several times that a water cooler be placed here. But no action has been taken and we don't know where to go now. There are at least 250-



People at a night shelter in Delhi's Fatehpuri. SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

300 eligible voters living in this place but nobody has bothered to check up on us," Mr. Rana said.

When reached for comment, the Delhi government did not respond.

On June 3, Urban Development Minister Saurabh Bharadwaj conducted a surprise inspection of the city's night shelters to check whether people were getting facilities such as water coolers, air coolers, and fans, in view of the heatwave. The Minister asked the DUSIB CEO to inspect all night shelters and address the shortcomings, such as the lack of cold potable water, on a "war footing".

Among the night shelters he inspected was one at Kalkaji, which was well equipped with essentials

like cool potable water. However, those staying at other night shelters in the city feel Kalkaji is an exception, not the norm.

'Unbearable conditions' Rohit Sharma, 32, who has rashes all over his skin caused by heavy sweating, stays in a night shelter at Civil Lines, which runs from a porta cabin. He says several of his fellow inmates have fallen ill over the past few days because there are only four fans and one air cooler for the 18 people who can stay together in the porta cabin at a time.

Given the lack of ventilation and the warm air blowing even at night, Mr. Sharma says, the conditions inside the porta cabin become unbearable.

A.P. Chief Sec. inspects Amaravati clean-up

The Hindu Bureau
VIJAYAWADA

Chief Secretary Neerabh Kumar Prasad inspected the cleaning-up works undertaken by the Andhra

Pradesh Capital Region Development Authority (AP CRDA) in Amaravati on Sunday ahead of the swearing-in of N. Chandrababu Naidu as Chief Minister on June 12.



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Shri Vishnu Deo Sai
Chief minister, Chhattisgarh



सबका साथ-सबका विकास, सबका विश्वास और सबका प्रयास



Recalcitrant jumbo

Anchoring inflation will be the base for long-term growth

The RBI's Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) has for an eighth consecutive meeting chosen to leave the benchmark repo rate unchanged at 6.50% on concern that 'elevated food inflation could derail' its efforts to ensure durable price stability. Governor Shaktikanta Das, who had just two months ago spoken of the 'elephant' of inflation having begun its journey back to the forest after going on a walkabout, flagged the risk that stubborn food price gains pose to the overall disinflation path as justification for the MPC's stand. Food inflation as measured by the Consumer Food Price Index accelerated to a provisional 8.7% in April, from March's 8.52%, and recent indicators such as Crisil's food plate costs suggest that price gains spurred by a surge in tomato, onion and potato prices may have quickened even further in May. The Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE) forecast on June 8, that headline retail inflation likely increased by 31 basis points last month to 5.14%, driven almost entirely by a 40 basis points acceleration in food price gains to 9.1%. The MPC, which voted by a 4-2 majority to "remain focussed on withdrawal of accommodation to ensure that inflation progressively aligns to the target" of 4%, flagged the challenges it faces in achieving this goal as increasing adverse climate events trigger supply shocks that make it very hard to foresee the food price trajectory. The CMIE cited last month's heatwaves as the cause for the rise in the costs of fruits and vegetables.

The MPC is also only too aware that besides the threat from escalating food costs, which remain vulnerable to the precariously low water storage levels at the country's reservoirs as well as the ongoing exceptionally hot summer temperatures, rising prices of industrial metals could undermine the deflationary trend in core inflation. Add to the mix the uncertain outlook for crude oil prices given the tensions in West Asia and the output cuts being implemented by the OPEC+ producer nations, and it is a recipe for heightened uncertainty on the inflation path. The RBI's latest round of surveys underline precisely why price stability is the central concern for policymakers. While households' surveyed in May expect inflation to quicken for all major product groups, both over the three months and one year ahead periods, consumer confidence too moderated from the March round of the survey with an increased majority of almost 80% of respondents expecting price gains to accelerate in one year's time. Governor Das is absolutely justified in maintaining an unwavering focus on anchoring inflation expectations, given that it is, as he put it, "the required foundation for sustained" long-term growth.

A NEET mess

More efforts to prevent egregious violations are needed

In the little over a decade that NEET has been implemented in India, it has gathered as much notoriety as a static stone accumulates moss. In the latest round, the National Testing Agency, which conducts NEET, has been forced to appoint a four-member committee to go into the charges and allegations made about the conduct of the eligibility and entrance test for medicine for 2024. About 1,500 students from six centres complained that they were not given the full time for completing the exam, because of various reasons: distribution of the wrong question paper, torn OMR sheets, technical glitches, and delay in distribution of the OMR sheets. The court allowed granting grace marks to those who were affected. After publication of results, it was noted that some students scored 718/719 out of 720, impossible with the existing evaluation pattern. It was also charged that an unusually high number of students scored full marks. The NTA later clarified that the odd marks were a result of granting grace marks as mandated by the court, and that in general it was an easy paper, so many students had scored full marks. But that was not all; there were reports of the NEET UG question paper being leaked before the exam. Inaccuracies were reportedly found in the NTA NEET UG official answer keys, and there were charges of inconsistent evaluation of the UG papers. Political parties have called for a thorough, competent third-party probe into the charges, and groups of students have also demanded a retest. Every year, there are charges of poorly managed exam centres, and absurd high-handedness over what the candidates are allowed to wear. Cheating scams where candidates have sent in proxies to write the exam in their stead, have been exposed.

Arguably one of the biggest entrance examinations conducted annually, with nearly 23 lakh students taking the test, it is no surprise that NEET has had a chequered past. Experts argue that with an exam of this scale, it is impossible to be completely error-free. But, year after year, news of egregious violations during the exams hits headlines. The NTA must, with the assistance of States, ensure that technical glitches and cheating scams, including premature release of question papers, and using proxies, do not recur. If this can be done by exercising greater rigour, and with a longer, more meticulous preparation routine, then no efforts should be spared to do so. Additionally, it should pay attention to demands that all NEET admissions come under single window counselling only; and a re-evaluation of the zero-percentile benchmark for PG admissions, besides strict regulation of fees in private medical colleges.

The Bareilly case and a flawed criminal justice system

A few weeks ago, the case of a woman who had filed a rape case, was sentenced to imprisonment, and fined by a court in Bareilly, Uttar Pradesh, dominated the headlines. The narrative, echoed by select media users, painted a picture of a woman who had brazenly fabricated rape accusations. This, of course, perpetuated the damaging stereotype that false claims by women are the norm. But, a deeper dive into the trial proceedings reveals a range of systemic shortcomings in our law enforcement machinery and social complexities that demand urgent attention (ST 15/2020 before Additional Sessions Judge (Fast Track Court), Bareilly).

Lackadaisical investigation

In 2019, Pooja's (name changed) mother filed a missing person's complaint stating that her 15-year-old daughter was missing and that she suspected Ramesh (name changed) of having kidnapped her. But Pooja appeared a few days later saying that she had been taken to Delhi by Ramesh and raped by both him and several other men, with the knowledge of his mother and sister. She claimed that she ran away from Delhi to her home. No proof of her age was available, but an external medical examination showed her to be 18, and not 15 years old as she claimed to be. A more thorough examination was crucial for the prosecution's case for any evidence of sexual assault, but she refused to undergo this. Another fact is that she is a married woman.

Her statement to a magistrate was recorded, and Ramesh arrested. In her first statement to the court during the trial, she said that she had been kidnapped and raped. In her cross-examination four months later, she said that she had been made to give a false complaint against Ramesh by her mother as there was personal animosity between the mother and Ramesh.

She also said that a police officer had coerced her to lie. Based on glaring loopholes in the prosecution's case, such as the contradictions in her statements on her abduction and recovery, the lack of medical evidence due to the negligence of the investigating officer and her refusal to undergo a medical examination, Ramesh was acquitted in 2024. A perjury case was registered against Pooja, for which she was convicted and sentenced to imprisonment and a fine (SC No. 215/2024 before Additional District Judge Bareilly) imposed.

This case is a telling example of the lackadaisical approach to police investigation and where the prosecution did not even attempt to patch together a case. At the time of filing the charge sheet, other than Pooja's statement and her family members supporting the fact that she was missing, there was absolutely no evidence against Ramesh. Of course, the statement of a prosecutrix in a sexual assault is crucial, but this was a case where there were claims of her being



Leah Verghese

works at DAKSH, Bengaluru



Ninni Susan Thomas

works at DAKSH, Bengaluru

The case — one of wrongful and protracted imprisonment — spotlights the need for improved police investigation protocols, prosecutorial autonomy, and judicial supervision

taken to another place and where multiple accomplices were allegedly involved. But those angles were not probed. There is no circumstantial evidence placing Ramesh along with Pooja at any point. There is no medical evidence to corroborate the claim of rape. There is a claim of the mother calling Ramesh when Pooja went missing but there is no evidence placed on record to prove this. The alleged crime scene — a room in Delhi — remained unlocated and unexamined, and the clothes worn by Pooja were not even collected for forensic analysis. Even the rented property where Ramesh was living in was not examined. The site map produced as evidence was a map showing the front door to Pooja's house since her mother said she had been abducted from their house. A vegetable market, from where she was taken, as in Pooja's statement to the magistrate, was not examined. Even though it was alleged that Ramesh's mother and sister witnessed the rape, they were neither charged for abetment nor examined as witnesses.

Multiple stakeholders overlooked what has been a notably weak case along the way. Section 173(8) of the CrPC allows a magistrate to direct further investigation in case of a flawed investigation. However, in this case, the magistrate committed the case for trial despite the glaring gaps in the investigation. The magistrate could call for the case diary under Section 172(2) of the CrPC, which may have revealed discrepancies or inadequacies in the investigation. The public prosecutor's endorsement of a patently weak charge sheet shows a lax attitude, and a failure to fulfil their duty, to the court and the public.

Focus on undertrial detention

Arbitrary and prolonged undertrial detention is, unfortunately, pervasive within India's criminal justice system. In this case, where an individual had to undergo over four years of incarceration, other than the judge noting that there were issues in the investigation, there was a startling absence of accountability directed towards the investigating officers or the prosecution. That there were no repercussions for those responsible for wrongful detentions perpetuates a culture of impunity and undermines public confidence in the integrity of judicial processes.

Pooja's version of events in her statement to the magistrate, her initial court statement, and her cross-examination all differed, which suggests coercion.

During the cross-examination, she attributed it to her mother and a police officer. Thereafter, during the sentencing hearing of her perjury case, Pooja's husband claimed that he told her to claim that her mother had coerced her to lie about the kidnapping and the rape so that they would not have to be bothered by the case any more. Even if not a minor, she was clearly a very

young person who had been coerced by various adults. This was not taken into consideration by the court that sentenced her.

This is not to take away from the fact that Ramesh was a victim of the system. His trial dragged on in a fast-track court in Bareilly amidst the disruptive backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic. Fast-track courts were set up to ensure swift justice for victims of sexual crimes and corruption cases.

Although, ideally, these cases are to be finished within a year of filing the charge sheet, this timeframe is rarely adhered to. The trial in this case spanned 1,559 days, in which there were 109 hearings (data from the e-Courts portal). The data also show that most of these hearings just resulted in adjournments, 13 of which were because of the COVID-19 pandemic. The examination of witnesses went on from November 2020 to February 2024. These timelines are shocking because the case itself was not complicated, given that there were only six witnesses and six exhibits. Ramesh remained in jail throughout this time.

The state of fast-track courts

The functioning of fast-track courts has been far from ideal. New courts with the necessary infrastructure and dedicated judges are not set up for fast-track purposes. Instead, existing courts are typically designated as fast-track courts, requiring judges to manage their regular caseloads in addition to these expedited cases. Without looking into these systemic challenges, the centrally sponsored scheme for Fast Track Special Courts (FTSC) has recently been extended till 2026, with a budgetary allocation of around ₹2,000 crore.

This case also raises questions about the issue of bail in India. Ramesh filed a bail application before the sessions court in 2021, but it was rejected because of the serious nature of the offence. His family did not have the economic means to file an appeal, so he remained in jail till his acquittal. Notwithstanding directives from the Supreme Court of India to decongest prisons during the COVID-19 pandemic, Ramesh was not granted bail even during this period. And, despite the constant discourse in policy realms and constitutional courts in favour of a reduction in undertrial detention, the grim reality within trial courts shows how indifference along with poverty prolong such detention.

Ultimately, the notoriety surrounding this case, cited to bolster the stereotype of women lodging false accusations against men, underscores a critical call for reforms within the criminal justice system. Rather than weakening laws safeguarding women, this case highlights the necessity for enhancements in police investigation protocols, prosecutorial autonomy, and judicial supervision to mitigate the risk of wrongful and protracted imprisonments.

The Baltimore ship accident, the high stakes for India

On March 26, 2024, when container ship *Dali* crashed into Francis Scott Key Bridge in Baltimore, United States, leaving at least six persons dead and property worth millions of dollars destroyed, the maritime and logistics world went into a tizzy.

The crash was a spectacular tragedy captured on video clip that went viral on YouTube. That it happened in the U.S. also made it one of the most high-profile maritime accidents after the *Exxon Valdez* tanker accident, in 1989, that led to an unprecedented oil spill off Alaska, in turn triggering extraordinary changes in maritime regulations and industry practices as well as awareness on maritime pollution.

Why the country is an industry player

Unlike in the past, India has emerged as a key player in global shipping as its seafarers man many of the ocean-going ships bringing in vital foreign exchange as remittances. Indian seafarer remittances are typically equivalent to some 15% of all foreign direct investment that comes into the country every year. Though the levers of power in global shipping as well as ship building, owning and financing continue to be outside the domain of India and Indians, India inevitably figures in maritime events as a source of seafarers and as managers of ships. So is the case with *Dali*, whose crew is almost all Indian.

Insurance experts have said that the *Dali* accident will equal or surpass the highest-ever marine insurance payout of \$1.5 billion in the case of the *Costa Concordia* cruise vessel capsizing in 2012. The high expected payout in the *Dali* case is due to the loss to lives, property, and business also due to the shutdown of the busy Baltimore port. Synergy Maritime Group, the Singapore-based manager of *Dali*, is a company



M. Kalyanaraman

is a certified marine engineer and a journalist

The accident could damage India's reputation in the world shipping industry, of being a reliable source for competent seafarers

founded by and run largely by Indians but with a global footprint. With a large operation in Chennai, it employs thousands of Indian seafarers and has been an Indian success story in global shipping, managing more than 650 ships.

Though Synergy and the ship owner will not be handed a bill for \$1.5 billion and the actual payout will be borne by insurers and a club of over 80 re-insurers, there may well be an eventual financial fallout for Synergy especially if it is proven that the managers had neglected in or avoided keeping equipment in proper operating conditions, in turn leading to the collision.

Synergy's rapid rise is attributed to the trust it has earned among ship owners — that it can operate ships smoothly and safely as per regulations at optimum costs. And that trust, which has helped Indian seafarers get lucrative jobs, is in danger of being eroded.

Indian seafarers in global shipping go as Indians — representatives of a nation. And, inevitably, but unfairly, their actions reflect on India as a whole.

Costa Concordia's captain was found to be a disgrace to the profession. His final act of ignominy was to bail out of the ship early whereas merchant shipping convention demands that the captain should be the last to abandon his ship. But, Francesco Schettino has been seen as an individual deviant, not a representative of Italians.

The interim report on the *Dali* accident put out by the investigators made it a point to talk about the causes of two onboard blackouts occurring in Baltimore port just 10 hours before departure. One of the causes was apparently a botched operation by a seafarer. There is a distinct possibility that the final report will seek to pinpoint botched or wrong operations by ship

staff as contributors to, if not the causes of, the two blackouts that led to the loss of steering control and ship motive power, eventually leading to the collision.

This would put a question mark over the competence and certification of Indian seafarers which form the backbone of job worthiness of Indian seafarers. Most seafarers would testify to the rigorous Indian process that ensures only thoroughly trained and knowledgeable people are certified for various shipboard operations.

Swift moves

The Indian government acted quickly in the case of *Dali* to prevent any hasty and ill-founded damage to the reputation of Indian seafarers. It successfully impleaded India as a Substantially Interested State as per the Casualty Investigation Code of the International Maritime Organization.

Indian shipping officials are a part of the investigation on site. Before the final report is released, they will get a chance to see the report, add their comments, and contest any possible unfair damage to Indian seafarer reputation.

The pulls and counterpulls in the *Dali* accident are many. An act of god may not quite ensure a hefty insurance payout. Blame will need to be apportioned for that. But, at the same time, the U.S. government has taken in Indian officials in the investigation.

Soon after the accident, U.S. President Joe Biden lauded *Dali's* Indian seafarers who, after losing control of the ship, promptly alerted the authorities so that they could shut down the bridge. Though it was found, eventually, that the *Dali's* navigators were acting as per the instructions of the American pilot onboard, Mr. Biden's intent was clear. He wanted to tamp down anti-Indian sentiments.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The first stage is over

The scintillating and sober swearing-in ceremony of Narendra Modi as the Prime Minister, followed by some of his colleagues, who included a few new faces, brings to an end the suspense over which party is to rule the country. The popularity graph of the Bharatiya Janata Party slid mainly because it never cared for the sufferings of the common man. Mr. Modi

should also interact with the Fourth Estate periodically to feel the pulse of the nation. The ruling party should keep its ears to the ground.

Mani Natarajan,

Chennai

Go back to the voter

There are no two opinions that a proper use of the 'right to vote' serves as the backbone of democracy. In the just concluded Lok

Sabha polls, there was also a fairly significant percentage of the electorate, close to 35%, that chose not to vote. Many feel that the 'voting percentage' is a subject that deserves more attention and consideration. Visibly, the issue has only a short life every time at the end of voting processes.

The Election Commission of India (ECI) should give high priority to institute a voter

study. It should collect first-hand information on why each voter did not vote. The reasons should be classified. There might be health issues and/or voter inability to be in the constituency or place of polling for individuals. But some people find it difficult to make a proper choice about the contestants in the absence of full information and the existence of fake news. Another sad truth is

that many, out of experience, are fed up with the 'corrupt and criminalised' politics of the times. The ECI, as an independent constitutional entity, must take the trouble to present a clearer picture and suggest or direct solutions to each problem. Simultaneously, the ECI should analyse those who actually voted and the voting patterns. It should learn the rationale

with which each voter made the choice. It should also review the use of pages listing criminal cases against candidates. Has any voter made use of this at any time? Many voters vote half-heartedly. This should change.

P.R.V. Raja,

Pandalam, Kerala

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

Settling trade disputes through 'litigotiation'

Much of international diplomacy involves walking on eggshells. Major differences, especially on trade and commerce, are often allowed to hibernate while countries focus on the big picture of bilateral ties. Bold leaps of statecraft are sometimes needed to help industry on both sides to settle such trade frictions. Quite remarkably, India and the U.S. have managed to do exactly that in just under a year, burying differences in the seven-long outstanding trade disputes at the World Trade Organization (WTO).

In late March this year, the two countries settled their last lingering trade dispute on poultry products at the WTO. India and the U.S. notified the WTO of reaching a mutually agreed solution in the poultry dispute, withdrawing their respective pending WTO cases in the matter, following the settlement reached between the two countries last September. This comes on the heels of the settlement of six other WTO disputes between the two countries, following Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to the U.S. Yet the poultry dispute stands out for several reasons.



James Nedumpara
is Professor and Head at the Centre for Trade and Investment Law, New Delhi. Views are personal



Shailja Singh
is Legal Consultant (Associate Professor) at the Centre for Trade and Investment Law, New Delhi. Views are personal

phytosanitary (SPS) measures' initiated by a developing WTO member was brought before a WTO panel. The U.S.'s primary contention was that India, in deviating from internationally recognised standards set by the World Organization for Animal Health (formerly the OIE), failed to provide scientific justifications for its poultry measures, as mandated by the WTO's SPS Agreement.

Both the panel and the WTO Appellate Body ruled in favour of the U.S. Subsequently, India was given a year to modify or withdraw its inconsistent measures. The U.S. later alleged that India had still failed to meet its obligations, and filed a retaliation claim at the WTO. In response, India filed its own counter-dispute to establish that its revised measures conformed with WTO rules. Over the past decade, both these disputes have largely been kept in abeyance by the parties as they attempted to settle the matter mutually.

Now, with the fresh impetus and persistent efforts from both sides, India has dodged a yearly \$450 million claim, as part of the larger settlement of pending disputes between the two countries. In exchange, India has agreed to reduce tariffs on select products such as cranberries, blueberries, frozen turkey, and premium frozen duck meat destined for luxury hotels. This is a fair trade-off, given the overall balance of interests and the long pendency of the dispute.

While this dispute may not rank as the most economically significant for India, particularly when contrasted with some of the other WTO disputes settled with the U.S. involving challenges to various Indian foreign trade policy schemes such as special economic zones and export-oriented unit schemes, its resolution represents a significant diplomatic breakthrough. The uphill task for negotiators from both sides in resolving this dispute is evident from the fact that it could not be settled alongside the six other

pending disputes by mid-2023.

Collectively, the resolution of these seven disputes has achieved something unprecedented in international trade dispute settlement. It has demonstrated that despite complicated domestic compulsions, major trading partners can still rely on the advantages of diplomatic channels to effectively resolve sensitive trade matters. Along with India's participation in the U.S.-led Indo-Pacific Economic Framework, this puts wind in the sails of the India-U.S. partnership.

Takeaways from the outcome

Admittedly, settling disputes by arriving at a bilateral solution is not uncommon at the WTO. For example, the U.S. and the European Union's disputes over aircraft subsidies to Boeing and Airbus ultimately required a diplomatic resolution, despite several iterations of challenges before the WTO panels and the Appellate Body. In fact, WTO rules encourage countries to resolve disputes amicably, with litigation only to be pursued as a last resort. However, the significance of this settlement package lies in both the total number of disputes settled and the diversity and complexity of their subject matter – ranging from different types of subsidies to countervailing duties to SPS measures. In the absence of a functional Appellate Body (it became defunct in 2019), resolution of long-standing trade conflicts requires out-of-the-box solutions. It also points to a greater emphasis and thrust on using bilateral diplomatic channels to resolve such issues.

This outcome demonstrates that paralysis within a multilateral body need not prevent large trading partners from resolving differences through focused bilateral negotiations within the framework of litigation. This bodes well for newer attempts at fostering a more stable international trade environment where trade disputes are not allowed to simmer.

The artful settlement of complex disputes during litigation, or broadly 'litigotiation', was key to solving the long pending India-U.S. poultry dispute

The dispute

To begin with, this dispute was filed more than a decade ago, relating to certain import restrictions taken by India against the imports of poultry products from the U.S. on grounds of avian influenza or bird flu. This is an unusually long time for a WTO dispute to remain unresolved, making it the oldest of the seven disputes between the two countries. Initiated by the U.S. in 2012, the dispute challenged India's import restrictions on poultry products on account of avian influenza which could potentially transmit to humans. This dispute marked one of the earliest instances where animal, and human health and safety-related measures, broadly referred to as 'sanitary and

The stakes are high for Kerala Congress (M)

The party has lost the Kottayam seat and its Rajya Sabha seat is set to expire

STATE OF PLAY

Hiran Unnikrishnan
hiran.u@thehindu.co.in



The Kerala Congress (Joseph) has won the Kottayam Lok Sabha seat. The victory comes as a lifeline for the party which has been dealing with internal strife and defections by high-profile leaders, and fighting fiercely to reclaim its influence in Central Travancore.

The party's candidate, K. Francis George, secured a comfortable lead of over 87,000 votes. This win not only fortifies the Kerala Congress (Joseph)'s base in Kottayam but also gives it the official status of a State party – a recognition it has been chasing since its split from Kerala Congress (Mani). The party head, P.J. Joseph, is now hoping to reclaim the iconic symbol of the bicycle, which was frozen amid past disputes. Resolving these legal tangles is crucial for the party to revive its identity.

A big loss

Meanwhile, as Kerala Congress (M) reels from its defeat in the Kottayam Lok Sabha seat, speculations are rife about its future within the Left Democratic Front (LDF). Retaining Kottayam was not just a matter of pride but essential for its political clout. Since its abrupt switch to the LDF four years ago, the party has been a cornerstone in the Left's strategy to infiltrate the United Democratic Front (UDF)'s strongholds of Central Travancore.

This time, the inherent anti-Left character of the region and the anti-incumbency wave proved enough for the Congress-led coalition to notch up impressive victories in three seats in the region: Kottayam, Pathanamthitta,

and Idukki.

Although the LDF has claimed to have retained its core vote base in the constituency, the fact that it could ensure a lead margin in just one of the seven Assembly segments in Kottayam has come as a shock. The emphasis on the plight of rubber growers – the core political agenda of Kerala Congress (M) – has failed to disturb the character of the constituency even slightly, including in pockets where the regional party traditionally wielded some command.

The loss has ignited fierce debates in the party about the Kerala Congress (M)'s future within the LDF, especially amid the perceived anti-incumbency sentiment among its Catholic base. Consequently, some people in the party believe that continuing in the LDF may not bode well for their future and view the defeat as an opportunity to consider leaving the coalition.

An opportunity

The UDF, on its part, has sensed this vulnerability and sees an opportunity to reclaim a crucial ally and strengthen its position in Central Travancore. However, uncertain about the UDF's capacity to challenge the LDF in the upcoming 2026 Assembly elections, Kerala Congress (M) appears to be in a dilemma. If it considers returning to the UDF fold, the party will still find asserting its 'natural

claim' over the Kottayam Lok Sabha seat a daunting task. However, party chairman Jose K. Mani has refuted the idea of switching sides.

Talks within the LDF about Raja Sabha have hit a road-block. The seat held by Kerala Congress (M) is set to expire on July 1. As the Communist Party of India (Marxist) and Communist Party of India are fighting to keep their seats, negotiations have intensified to placate Kerala Congress (M) with alternative positions, such as the chairman post of the administrative reforms commission. But the regional party remains unyielding. Its defeat in Kottayam, the lone seat it contested, has made the Raja Sabha seat vital for its political survival in Central Travancore. This seat is also significant for the party since it is held by Jose K. Mani. Losing it could destabilise internal party dynamics, whereas its allocation to the CPI could enhance its status as the coalition's second-largest party.

For the LDF, this unexpected defeat casts doubts on its strategy to sway Catholic and rubber-growing regions leftward through the Kerala Congress (M). The coalition insists that the loss is part of a broader political wave and not a sign of internal weakness. However, how far this reasoning has percolated down to the party cadre remains to be seen.

As they navigate the rubber heartlands' complex landscape, Kerala Congress (M) and Kerala Congress (Joseph) face mounting challenges. Agricultural distress, wildlife attacks, and the growing influence of political Islam fuel the discontent of the Catholic Church, prompting direct intervention. With the Sangh Parivar ready to exploit these fractures, the stakes have never been higher for them.

In LWE affected seats and in Bihar, NOTA still matters

In 2024, less than 1% of voters in India chose the NOTA option, the lowest share since it was first used in the 2014 Lok Sabha polls

DATA POINT

Nitika Francis
Vignesh Radhakrishnan

While the share of voters who pressed the None of the Above (NOTA) button has continued to decline in the Lok Sabha elections, the option is still relevant in some seats. In 2014 and 2019, a significant share of voters in some select seats, particularly those impacted by Left-Wing Extremism (LWE), and many constituencies in Bihar exercised this option. This trend continued in 2024 as well.

In the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, an unusually high share of votes (14%) were polled for NOTA in the Indore seat. The Congress urged the voters to choose the option after its candidate, Akshay Kanti Bam, withdrew his nomination and joined the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in the last minute. In November 2022, in the Andheri East Assembly by-poll in Maharashtra, the Shiv Sena (Uddhav Balasaheb Thackeray) candidate, Rutuja Ramesh Latke, won comfortably after the BJP candidate withdrew from the contest. NOTA received the second highest share of votes (4.8%).

The remarkable results in Indore in 2024 and the Maharashtra by-poll in 2022 show that NOTA continues to serve a purpose. A significant share of voters use it from time to time to reject all the candidates in the fray. However, in the following analysis, we have treated the Indore result as an outlier and excluded it in Charts 2 and 3.

As shown in **Chart 1**, the NOTA vote share across India dropped below the 1% mark in 2024 for the first time since 2014 (when NOTA was introduced for the Lok Sabha polls). In the 2024 Lok Sabha polls, 0.99% of voters opted for NOTA.

That said, a constituency-level analysis of NOTA vote share shows an interesting pattern. **Chart 2**

shows the share of voters in each seat who chose the option in the 2014, 2019, and 2024 Lok Sabha polls. Each circle corresponds to a parliamentary seat. Only those seats in which the NOTA vote share crossed the 3% mark have been depicted.

The Bastar constituency in Chhattisgarh, and Koraput and Nabarangpur, which are both in Odisha, featured in all the three years. Aruku in Andhra Pradesh featured in 2019 and 2024. The common thread linking these seats is that they are all impacted by LWE. This trend of the NOTA share being high in LWE-affected districts has been recorded in several Assembly elections as well.

Another trend that can be observed is that there is a relatively high number of seats in Bihar in which the NOTA vote share crossed the 3% mark both in 2019 and 2024. In 2019, the NOTA vote share was more than 3% in 11 seats in Bihar, while in 2024, this was the case in four seats. While some of this can be explained as an impact of LWE, many seats in the State which are not affected by extremism also feature on the list. Close to 4% of the voters in 2024 and 5% in 2019 chose NOTA in the Gopalganj seat in Bihar.

Dahod in Gujarat, where more than 3% of the voters chose NOTA in the 2014, 2019, and 2024 Lok Sabha elections, is the only seat outside Bihar to have consistently recorded such a high share. It is also not part of the districts affected by LWE.

Chart 3 shows the seat-wise NOTA vote share recorded in 2024 (in %) and the change from 2019 (% points). All the seats in Bihar have been highlighted. Clearly, most of the seats in Bihar stand out. Notably, while there was a significant decline in the NOTA vote share in seats such as Paschim Champaran, Saran, Nawada, and Jahanabad in Bihar in 2024 compared with 2019, in other seats in the State such as Banka and Jhanjharpur, the NOTA vote share increased significantly.

Taking note of NOTA

The data for the charts were sourced from the Election Commission of India and Ashoka University's Lok Dhaba

Chart 1: The chart shows the share of voters who chose the NOTA option across three Lok Sabha polls. In the 2024 Lok Sabha polls, 0.99% of voters opted for NOTA

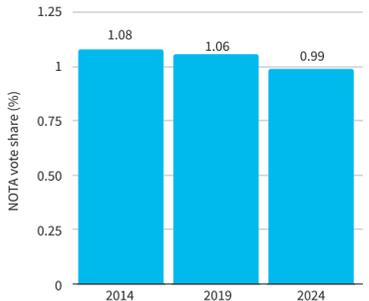
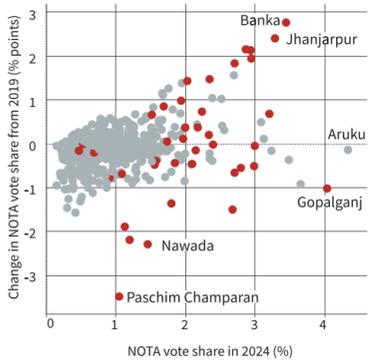


Chart 3: The chart shows the seat-wise NOTA vote share recorded in 2024 (in %) and the change from 2019 (% points). All the seats in Bihar have been highlighted.



Text & Context

THE HINDU

NEWS IN NUMBERS

The number of Palestinians killed in recent Israeli raid

274 Gaza's Health Ministry claimed that close to 300 Palestinians were killed in the Israeli raid that rescued four hostages held by Hamas. About 36,700 Palestinians have been killed since Hamas attacked Israel on October 7, 2023. AP

The rise in passenger vehicle exports in the last four years

2.68 in lakh units. Passenger vehicle exports from India rose in the last four financial years with Maruti Suzuki India accounting for nearly 70% of the incremental shipments during the period. PTI

Amount withdrawn by FPIs from equities in the month of June

14,800 in ₹ crore. Foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) withdrew the amount from domestic stocks in the first week, influenced by election results and attractive valuations of Chinese stocks. PTI

The number of infra projects hit by cost overrun in April

448 projects. These projects, each entailing an investment of ₹150 crore or above, were hit by a cost overrun of more than ₹5.55 lakh crore in April 2024, as per the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation. PTI

Increase in defective number plates booked in 2024 in Delhi

286 in per cent. The Delhi Traffic Police has booked 16,859 people for defective number plates between January 1 and June 5, 2024. The figure was at 4,363 in the year-ago period. PTI

COMPILED BY THE HINDU DATA TEAM

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Is it time for proportional representation?

Which are the countries which follow proportional representation in their electoral democracies? Will it work in a large and diverse country like India? What is mixed member proportional representation?

EXPLAINER

Rangarajan R.

The story so far:

The results of the Lok Sabha elections were declared last week. The ruling National Democratic Alliance (NDA) has won 293 seats with a 43.3% vote share while the Opposition bloc INDIA (including Trinamool Congress) has secured 234 seats with a 41.6% vote share. Other regional parties and independents polled around 15% but ended up with only 16 seats in total.

What is first past the post system?

We follow the First Past the Post System (FPTP) in our elections to the Lok Sabha and Legislative Assemblies. Under this system, the candidate who polls more than any other in a constituency is declared elected. This is the system that is followed for elections in democracies like the U.S., the U.K. and Canada. The primary advantage of the FPTP system is that it is simple and the most feasible method in a large country like India. Secondly, FPTP provides greater stability to the executive in our parliamentary democracy because the ruling party/coalition can enjoy a majority in the Lok Sabha/Legislative assembly without obtaining majority of the votes (more than 50%) across constituencies.

The issue with FPTP is that it may result in over or under representation of political parties when compared to their vote share. In the first three elections after independence, the Congress party won close to 75% of seats in the then Lok Sabha with a 45-47% vote share. Table 1, depicts a sample of this scenario after the general elections of 2014 and 2019.

What is proportional representation?

The Proportional Representation (PR) system ensures representation of all parties based on their vote share. The most commonly used PR system is the 'party list PR' where voters vote for the party (and not individual candidates) and then the parties get seats in proportion to their vote share. There is usually a minimum threshold of 3-5% vote share for a party to be eligible for a seat. India is a federal country and this principle if implemented should ideally be carried out at each State/Union Territory (UT) level. The scenario as it would have played out after the 2024 election results based on applying the PR system at each State/UT level is summarised in Table 2.

As can be seen, the PR system would have resulted in representation of parties according to their vote share. For example, in Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh, totalling 66 seats, the NDA won 64 seats with a vote share of 62%, 60% and 53% respectively. Under the PR system, the INDIA bloc would have secured 23 seats in these States. The Biju Janata Dal (classified in 'Others') with a 42% vote share in Odisha would have secured nine seats as against no representation at present under the FPTP system. Similarly, the NDA and the All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (classified in 'Others') would have had representation in Tamil Nadu where the INDIA bloc secured all 39 seats with a 47% vote share under the FPTP system.

The main criticism against the PR system is that it could potentially result in instability as no party/coalition may obtain a majority to form the government in our parliamentary democracy. Further, it may result in the proliferation of political parties based on regional, caste, religious and linguistic considerations that

An alternative seat-sharing mechanism

A Proportional Representation (PR) system ensures representation of all parties based on their vote share. The most commonly used PR system is the 'party list PR' where voters vote for the party, and the parties get seats in proportion to their vote share

Table 1 : The results of the 2014 and 2019 general elections

Political party (predominant State)	2014		2019	
	% of votes	No. of seats	% of votes	No. of seats
Bharatiya Janata Party (All India)	31%	282	37.3%	303
Indian National Congress (All India)	19.3%	44	19.5%	52
Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) (Uttar Pradesh)	4.1%	0	3.6%	10
Samajwadi Party (Uttar Pradesh)	3.4%	5	2.6%	5
Trinamool Congress (West Bengal)	3.8%	34	4.1%	22
All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam [AIADMK] (Tamil Nadu)	3.3%	37	1.4%	1
Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam [DMK] (Tamil Nadu)	1.7%	0	2.3%	24
Telugu Desam Party (Andhra Pradesh)	2.6%	16	2%	3
YSR Congress Party (Andhra Pradesh)	2.6%	9	2.5%	22
Shiv Sena (Maharashtra)	1.9%	18	2.1%	18
Biju Janata Dal [BJD] (Odisha)	1.7%	20	1.7%	12
All other parties/independents	24.6%	78	20.9%	71
Total	100%	543	100%	543

Note: The conversion of vote share to seats is calculated at each State/UT level and aggregated. It is an overall calculation without the exclusion of smaller parties based on any threshold. *SKM has been added to the NDA.



Election fervour: Supporters of the Samajwadi party celebrate after the counting of votes for the Lok Sabha elections, in Lucknow on June 4. GETTY IMAGES

Table 2: If the PR system is applied for the 2024 election

Political formation	% of votes	Actual number of seats	Seats as per PR
National Democratic Alliance (NDA)	43.3%	293*	243
INDIA bloc	41.6%	234	225
Others/independents	15.1%	16	75
Total	100%	543	543



Complete sweep: TDP supporters celebrate in Hyderabad on June 4; a Trinamool Congress supporter celebrates in Kolkata on June 4. NAGARA GOPAL, ANI



may promote casteist or communal voting patterns. However, the second criticism is not well founded since the present FPTP system has also not inhibited the formation of parties based on caste or communal considerations. This issue can be addressed by specifying minimum threshold for votes polled in order to make a party eligible for seats in legislative houses.

In order to maintain balance between stability and proportionate representation, the system of Mixed Member Proportional Representation (MMPR) can be considered. Under this system, there is one candidate who is elected through the FPTP system from each territorial constituency. There are also additional seats that are filled based on various parties' percentage of votes.

What are international practices?

Presidential democracies like Brazil and Argentina have the party list PR system. So do parliamentary democracies like South Africa, the Netherlands, Belgium and Spain. In Germany, that follows the MMPR system, out of the 598 seats in the Bundestag (their equivalent of our Lok Sabha), 299 seats (50%) are filled from

constituencies under the FPTP system. The voters also provide their preference for a party in the ballots. The balance 299 seats (50%) are filled by apportioning them amongst parties, that secure at least 5% votes, based on their percentage of votes. Similarly, in New Zealand, out of the total 120 seats in the House of Representatives, 72 seats (60%) are filled through the FPTP system from territorial constituencies. The balance 48 seats (40%) are allotted to various parties, that secure at least 5% votes, based on their vote share.

This system is likely to provide the required stability in a parliamentary democracy like India while also ensuring representation for all parties based on their vote share.

What can be the way forward?

The law commission in its 170th report, 'Reform of the electoral laws' (1999), had recommended the introduction of the MMPR system on an experimental basis. It had suggested that 25% of seats may be filled through a PR system by increasing the strength of the Lok Sabha. While it had recommended to consider the entire nation as one unit for PR based on vote

share, the appropriate approach would be to consider it at every State/UT level considering our federal polity. It is also pertinent to note that the delimitation exercise for increasing the number of seats is due based on the first Census to be conducted after 2026. The population explosion that happened in our country during the last five decades has been uneven among various regions.

Determining the number of seats in Lok Sabha solely in proportion to population may go against the federal principles of our country and may lead to a feeling of disenchantment in the States that stand to lose through such representation.

However, in the event of increasing the seats during the delimitation exercise, the MMPR system may be considered for incremental seats or at least 25% of the total seats to be filled from each State/UT. This could assuage the apprehension of southern, northeastern and smaller States in the northern region by limiting the domination of larger States with increased seats solely through the FPTP system.

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

THE GIST

The First Past the Post System (FPTP) is followed in our elections to the Lok Sabha and Legislative Assemblies. Under this system, the candidate who polls more than any other in a constituency is declared elected.

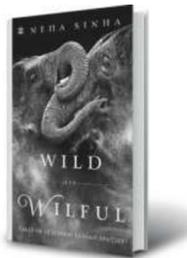
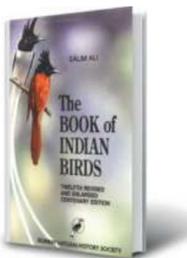
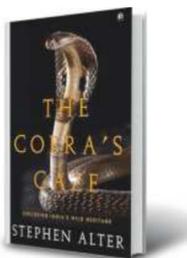
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The law commission in its 170th report, 'Reform of the electoral laws' (1999), had recommended the introduction of the MMPR system on an experimental basis.

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Murky reflections: Painted storks in search of food at a pond near Gannvaram of the Krishna District in Andhra Pradesh, on April 20. RAO G.N.



KNOW YOUR ENGLISH

I am an alumnus of this college

The management has been given licence to expel students who have not attended classes

S. Upendran

What is the difference between 'stink' and 'smell'? (K. Nalini, Hyderabad)

Of the two words, 'smell' is a neutral term; a smell can be either pleasant or unpleasant. For example, one can talk about the smell of someone's dirty socks; it is also possible to talk about the delicious smell of sambar. 'Stink', on the other hand, carries with it a negative connotation. It is mostly used to suggest that the smell is very offensive or foul. In the case of a 'stink', the smell is so strong that you end up holding your nose.

I couldn't sit in his house for long. It was stinking of rotten eggs.

The pleasant smell of agarbathi reminded him of home.

There was a smell of rain in the air.

Is it okay to say 'issue a licence'? (Kumaresan, Coimbatore)

Yes, it is. If you were to visit any RTO (Regional Transport Office) website, you will find sentences like, 'a duplicate licence will be issued', 'RTO issues licence in India', etc. Native speakers of English use this expression as well. In addition to 'issue', another word which is frequently used when it comes to licences is 'grant'. Governments grant licences to individuals and companies.

The word 'licence' is often spelled or spelt in two different ways – the manner in which it is spelled/spelt, often depends on which side of the Atlantic you are from. The British spell the word 'licence' when they wish to use it as a noun, and 'license' when they use it as a verb. It is like the pairs 'advice/advise' and 'device/devise'. The Americans, on the other hand, spell it only one way, 'license' – for both the noun and the verb.

James Bond, better known as 007, has licence to kill.

My company has been licensed to sell some new products.

How is the word 'alumni' pronounced? (R. Jayaraman, Mysore)

This word of Latin origin consists of three syllables. The vowel in the first sounds like the 'a' in 'china', while the second syllable rhymes with 'sum', 'chum' and 'hum'. The final 'i' sounds like the 'y' in 'by', 'my' and 'try'. The word is pronounced 'e-LUM-nigh' with the stress on the second syllable. It comes from the Latin 'alumnus', meaning 'foster son' or 'ward'. Nowadays, 'alumnus' is mostly used to refer to an individual who went to a particular school, college or university. Although the word was originally used to refer to a male student, nowadays, 'alumnus' is used to refer to students of both sexes. The plural of 'alumnus' is 'alumni'. When you talk about the 'alumni' of a university, you are referring to all those who graduated from there.

Twenty alumni from IIT Madras are planning to meet in New York today.
upendrankye@gmail.com

Why books on nature is essential art in the time of global warming

Flora, fauna, urban, rural — a host of writers from Salim Ali to Neha Sinha, Stephen Alter to Bulbul Sharma to Ruskin Bond, chronicle India's diversity in their quest for 'ecological truths', especially when 'nature', as we know it, is at risk

K.C. Vijaya Kumar

Look back at childhood and one memory would be common to most. Drawing mountains, a sun rising past those tall sentinels, a river snaking around, throw in some coconut trees and may be a thatched hut too. This is all about nature leaving a deep imprint. Some would have drawn well, others may have struggled but irrespective of the outcome, parents would have gushed as if Vincent Van Gogh himself was in town. Now recall the first poem learnt when we were a crying mess. Yes, it was 'Jack and Jill', and what did they do? They went up the hill.

That perhaps remains every generation's maiden exposure to writing about nature, even if it was just one word 'hill' but it made many imagine. There are all manners of putting pen to paper, or fingertips cruising on laptops, and the result could be formal prose, lines invested with poetry's allure, words bristling with satire or coated with angst's moisture, and in all this, writing about nature remains a magical skill.

Call of the wild

Be it fiction or non-fiction, nature has a distinctive role to play. It sets the mood, makes the reader curious, raises awareness, especially in this age of global warming. If bees turn extinct, we will die — this may sound morbid, but it is true. Literature centred around nature is

essential art. It reveals the threads that bind humanity with the flora and fauna around. Stephen Alter's latest book, *The Cobra's Gaze*, delves into nature's myriad hues. "Every naturalist is a pilgrim in search of ecological truths," Alter writes while registering his impressions from the rainforests in Agumbe, the hills of Kumaon and the valleys of Chambal.

The author explores the aura of the wild and its inherent vulnerabilities, while India hurtles towards rapid development and trees get axed. This has been a good season for nature-writing in India even while across the world, the genre is well evolved.

You could stumble upon a memoir like Peter Kerr's *Snowball Oranges* and chance upon this passage: "An ancient well, the source of all the water on which our fruit trees depended, stood in the corner of our *torrente* field, almost hidden behind a particularly lush mandarin orange tree whose branches were laden with ripe, juicy fruit. I didn't know why, but it was certainly the healthiest-looking tree on the whole farm."

The description has a languid air, and if you want a touch of lyricism then lean on Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things*, the 1997 Booker Prize winner, and savour these lines: "May in Ayemenem is a hot, brooding month. The days are long and humid. The river shrinks and black crows gorge on bright mangoes in still, dustgreen trees. Red bananas ripen. Jackfruits burst. Dissolute bluebottles

hum vacuously in the fruity air. Then they stun themselves against clear windowpanes and die, fatly baffled in the sun."

In urban spaces

To know about nature, long distances need not be traversed, because even in urban landscapes there will be slivers of verdant green supporting an ecosystem we tend to overlook. Neha Sinha's *Wild and Wilful*, one of the finest expositions of nature writing by an Indian in recent times, takes the reader up close with monkeys and crows in the cities and the falcons hovering far away. "The wildness of the Leopard is a sheath, an armour and a curse," Neha writes. These are words that make us understand nuance and ponder. Janaki Lenin too does a similar act in her collated book of columns, *My Husband and other Animals*.

You do have the primers too like Salim Ali's expansive *The Book of Indian Birds* or Vivek Menon's *A Field Guide to Indian Mammals*. These help in identifying the rich diversity around us. There is Peter Wohlleben's *The Hidden Life of Trees*, that broadens perspective because often in nature-writing we obsess over living beings that move and tend to overlook our static friends offering shade, fruit and respite.

In this vast array of books, we get nuggets like Bulbul Sharma's *Grey Hornbills at Dusk* that highlights nature's delights around Delhi. Fancy the

monsoon? Then dig into Alexander Frater's *Chasing a Monsoon*. Closer home, sample Allan Sealy's ode to the heavens opening up in his *The Everest Hotel* or Binoo K. John's evocative book on Cherrapunji titled *Under a Cloud*. These are books that offer knowledge and some delightful lines.

Of forests and dragonflies

Yearning for an old town's rustic vibe? Then look no further than R.K. Narayan's observations about his fictional town Malgudi. Nature-writing isn't entirely about forests, it could be just about a dragonfly traipsing under a sodium-vapour lamp in an old locality. The key is to look around. Like how Ruskin Bond does in his vast offering of prose, fiction and poems, and presciently lets a lone fox to dance in the jungle while he seeks an alternate path.

The most pithy components of nature writing offer enough food for thought, be it Khushwant Singh's *The Mark of Vishnu*, that defines the gaps between faith and science, or *Rikki Tikki Tavi* by Rudyard Kipling.

Next time you leaf through books, remember this, nature could be lurking inside, perhaps through the entire tome or in parts, and that should make you forget the WhatsApp blue-tick and look out of the window. There is a larger world out there and the finest of nature writing reiterates this point and helps empathy seep into us.

THE DAILY QUIZ

The 2024 ICC Men's T20 World Cup is co-hosted by the U.S. and the West Indies. A quiz on the tournament which happens once in every two years

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

Soorya Prakash. N

QUESTION 1
Who is the only bowler from a non-test playing nation to have picked up a hat-trick?

QUESTION 2
Who is the only player to have won the player of the final award twice?

QUESTION 3
Who is the only player to have won the player of the final award and the player of the tournament award in the same edition?

QUESTION 4
Who is the only player to have ended up scoring the most

runs in a single tournament twice, won most player of the match awards and also won the player of the tournament award twice consecutively?

QUESTION 5
Who is the only bowler to have picked up six wickets in an innings?

QUESTION 6
Who is the only Indian player to have scored a hundred in T20 World Cup history?

QUESTION 7
Who has stood as on-field umpire in three finals, most by any umpire?



Visual question: Identify the players and the feat that connects them. AFP

Questions and Answers to the June 4 edition of the daily quiz: 1. This centre of learning awards the annual prizes for outstanding public service and achievement in American journalism. **Ans: Columbia University**
2. The number of categories for which Pulitzer prizes are awarded. **Ans: There are 23 Pulitzer categories and the winner in the Public Service category gets a gold medal**
3. The first Indian to win the award "for their coverage of science at the tercentenary of Harvard University". **Ans: Gobind Behari Lal**
4. The awardee for the 1957 Pulitzer Prize Winner in Biography. **Ans: John F. Kennedy; he is the only U.S. president to be awarded a Pulitzer Prize**
5. This individual is featured on the Pulitzer Prize Gold Medal. **Ans: Benjamin Franklin**
6. Name the poet who holds the record for most prizes won with four to his name. **Ans: Robert Frost**
Visual: Name this India-born poet. **Ans: Vijay Seshadri**
Early Birds: Rajmohan. V| Sadhan Kumar Panda| Jyot Prakash Gulati

Word of the day

Moxie: fortitude and determination

Synonyms: backbone, grit, gumption, guts

Usage: He proved his moxie by refusing to give up.

Pronunciation: bit.ly/moxiepro

International Phonetic Alphabet: /ˈmɒksi/

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From Page One

72-member NDA
Ministry takes charge

In Haryana, the inclusion of Mr. Khattar, considered a close associate of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, six-time Lok Sabha member Rao Inderjit Singh and senior Gurjar leader Krishan Pal Gurjar, who won from Faridabad for the third time is connected to the BJP's focus to retain its grip over southern Haryana and non-Jat vote bank in the agrarian State ahead of the Assembly election later this year. The BJP won five out of the 10 Lok Sabha seats in Haryana in the Lok Sabha polls.

In Maharashtra, veteran leader Nitin Gadkari (Nagpur in Vidarbha region) and Piyush Goyal (Mumbai) were both re-inducted in the new Union Cabinet also giving representation to the Vidarbha and Konkan region, while Raksha Khadse, a three-term MP from Raver in Jalgaon, and Murlidhar Mohol, first-time MP from Pune, were given a chance at being first-time Central Ministers.

The Eknath Shinde-led Shiv Sena leader Prataprao Jadhav, a Maratha leader who won the Buldhana seat in Vidarbha for the fourth time, was selected by Mr. Shinde to represent his faction in the Council of Ministers. No senior OBC leader (the BJP's core vote base in the State) from Maharashtra features in the Ministry, Mr. Gadkari being a Brahmin, Mr. Goyal, a Marwari, Mr. Jadhav, a Maratha and Ms. Khadse hailing from the Telugu community. The loss in the polls of Pankaja Munde from Beed and Rao Saheb Danve seems to have affected that representation.

The other State going to polls later this year is Jharkhand, with Annpurna Devi, an OBC leader from Koderma, and Sanjay Seth of the trading community from Ranchi being included, both important segments for the BJP to appeal to in the contest ahead.

Another big lesson of the mandate was drawn from the BJP's disappointing performance in the crucial State of Uttar Pradesh. Here, with nine inclusions, including Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the focus was on continuity and getting the caste equation right to make up for the losses. Apart from Rajnath Singh, S.P.S. Baghel, Pankaj Chaudhary, B.L. Verma and Anupriya Patel of ally Apna Dal (Sonewal) have held on to their berths.

The four new faces are Jitin Prasad, the Pilibhit MP who was a Minister in the State government, four-time MP Kamlesh Paswan, and three-time MP Kirti Vardhan Singh. Caste-wise, therefore there are two Rajputs, four non-Yadav OBCs (one Jat, two Kurmis, one Lodh), two non-Jatav Scheduled Castes, and one Brahmin in the mix.

CM seeks police report
on violence in Jiribam

The source noted that the area has not witnessed any major incident since violence erupted in other parts of the State.

Another police source said that the area, with a diverse population of Kuki-Zo, Meitei, and Naga people, was low on the violence radar, adding that the recent disturbances appeared to be "motivated and engineered".

"The number of security personnel in Jiribam is commensurate with the security audit. The letters were sent by the CMO in January, adequate steps were taken and in the past six months no incident took place in Jiribam. Even now, the situation is tense but under control. People have been evacuated to safe places as a precautionary measure," the police source said.

The source noted that the Central security forces withdrawn for the general election were on their way back, and will be deployed soon. The area has a Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) battalion headquarters and an Assam Rifles unit is also posted there, the source said.

The Manipur Police said on Saturday that several houses belonging to both Meitei and Kuki communities were burnt by unknown miscreants in Jiribam in the disturbances which broke out following the murder of a 59-year-old farmer Soibam Sarat Singh on June 6.

Chidambaram's record of
winning 7 LS polls from
T.N. equalled by Baalu

N. Sai Charan
CHENNAI

By winning from the Sriperumbudur constituency in the 2024 Lok Sabha election, DMK treasurer T.R. Baalu has become the second MP to enter the Lower House of Parliament for the seventh time from Tamil Nadu.

Mr. Baalu first entered the Lok Sabha by winning in the Chennai South constituency in 1996, after an unsuccessful attempt in the 1991 election while contesting from the same seat. He won in this constituency in the 1998, 1999, and 2004 elections. However, after the delimitation of constituencies in 2008, he

switched to the Sriperumbudur constituency in 2009 and registered his fifth electoral success in the general election that year.

Hailing from Mannargudi (present-day Tiruvarur district), Mr. Baalu contested from the Thanjavur constituency in 2014 and lost (all DMK candidates lost in 2014). However, in 2019, he entered the Lok Sabha again by winning in the Sriperumbudur constituency. He has also served as a Rajya Sabha member between 1986 and 1992. Congress veteran P. Chidambaram was the first person to have entered the Lok Sabha seven times from Tamil Nadu.

Accused in Bangladesh MP
murder extradited to India

Anar was declared dead on May 22; West Bengal CID recover human remains from a canal in South Paraganas district of Bengal; police to conduct autopsy and DNA profiling, say officials

Moyurie Som
KOLKATA

The West Bengal Crime Investigation Department (CID) began questioning Siam Hussain on Sunday, who was arrested by the Nepal Police and extradited to India, as part of the investigation into the gruesome murder of 56-year-old Bangladesh MP Anwarul Azim Anar in Kolkata in May.

The West Bengal Police have recovered human remains from the south-eastern bank of the Bagjola canal in South 24 Parganas.

A senior official of the West Bengal CID told *The Hindu* that based on the information shared by the second accused, Mr. Hussain, on Sunday, the police conducted a search and found the remains.

"Now we will do the post-mortem examination and DNA profiling," the official added.

"The search was going



A file photo of officials preparing to conduct a search for the body parts of Bangladesh MP Anwarul Azim Anar in the Bagjola canal at Bhangar. DEBASISH BHADURI

on from the day we arrested the first accused in this case. But he was telling only the half truth," the CID official said, referring to Jihad Hawladar, 24. "We were able to get more details after the arrest of the second accused, Siam Hussain."

According to the police reports, Anar, a three-time Awami League MP from

Jhenaidah-4 in Bangladesh's Khulna district, went missing on May 13 after arriving in Kolkata on May 12 for medical treatment.

Anar was officially declared dead by the Bangladesh government on May 22.

Initial investigation showed that Anar was smothered to death on

May 13 at a flat in Kolkata's New Town by a group of illegal immigrants from Bangladesh, who were allegedly hired by a U.S.-based Bangladeshi-origin businessman, Akhtaruzzaman Shahin.

The accused allegedly disposed of body parts at different spots in New Town and Bhangar in South 24 Parganas.

NIA makes
first arrest in
Jan. killing of
4 in Manipur

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) on Saturday arrested an accused, currently lodged in a Guwahati jail in another case, for his alleged role in the killing of four civilians in Manipur's Bishnupur in January.

Lunminsei Kipgen is a resident of Manipur. The agency has booked him under provisions of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, and the Arms Act. "He is the first accused to be arrested for the gruesome killings that had taken place on January 18 when armed miscreants had brutally murdered four civilians near the water treatment plant located in Ningthoukhong Kha Khunou, Bishnupur," the agency said.

During the investigation, it purportedly found that Kipgen was actively involved in the attack, which was part of the "ongoing ethnic unrest and violence in the State". Previously, a cadre of a Kuki militant outfit, he joined another Kuki militant organisation, United Kuki National Army, and indulged in the killings, as alleged.

In Jiribam, some flee attacks for
second time since the conflict began

Abhinav Lakshman
NEW DELHI

As the ethnic conflict in Manipur continues with fresh tensions erupting in Jiribam district, survivors from the latest round of attacks on Meitei and Kuki-Zo villages told *The Hindu* that while some of them had to flee their homes for the second time since the conflict began on May 3 last year, others maintained that they were being systematically removed from their homes.

Tension gripped residents of Jiribam district last week when violence broke out as the local people discovering the body of a 59-year-old Meitei farmer, Soibam Sarat Kumar Singh, who had gone missing weeks ago. Soon after, the people gathered around the Jiribam police station and started demanding that they be allowed to arm themselves for their own protection. The Jiribam District Magistrate imposed a district-wide curfew immediately.

However, with suspicions flying around about the perpetrators of Mr. Singh's murder, Kuki-Zo people in Uchathol Hmar Veng, Vengnuam Paite Veng, and Songkovev vil-



Kuki-Zo civil society organisations said nearly 45 homes of Kuki-Zo and Hmar people were burnt down. FILE PHOTO

lages started reporting attacks on them. Around Vengnuam, a church was reported to be burnt down along with the houses of several civilians.

"Around 5 p.m. or 6 p.m. on Thursday, my parents saw the attackers come to their village near Vengnuam. There were 15-20 people staying there, including my siblings. They all ran away into the bushes and waited as the attackers vandalised their homes and a church. The Assam Rifles personnel rescued my parents," said Tracy, 31, whose family is from Jiribam district.

"This is the second attack on our homes. The first one was on May 4, the day after the violence broke out and then too our family members had to flee. Now, they have man-

aged to reach safety in Nagaland," added Ms. Tracy, who lives in Delhi and is in touch with her family in Nagaland right now.

Kuki-Zo civil society organisations said nearly 45 homes of Kuki-Zo and Hmar people were burnt down and that a 40-year-old resident of Vengnuam, L. Lallianmuang, was allegedly abducted by people suspected to be from the armed radical outfit Arambai Tenggol.

On the evening of June 6 around the same time, several Meitei villages such as Lamtai Khunou and Morbung started getting messages that they were being surrounded by militants.

"Around sunset, we were told that Kuki militants were surrounding our village Lamtai Khunou and so we panicked. We

Jarange-Patil warns
Shinde govt. of defeat
in Assembly election

Shoumojit Banerjee
PUNE

Continuing his indefinite hunger strike for the second day on Sunday, Maratha quota activist Manoj Jarange-Patil warned that any political leader opposing the interests of the Maratha community would be defeated in the upcoming Assembly election in Maharashtra.

He said his good wishes would be with Prime Minister Narendra Modi only if he stopped working for the rich and focused on the needs of the poor.

In the Lok Sabha election, the "Jarange factor" had hurt candidates of the ruling *Mahayuti* alliance in the Marathwada region, resulting in the defeats of BJP leaders like Raosaheb Danve (Jalna), Pankaja Munde (Beed), and Prataprao Chikhalkar (Nanded).

With the *Mahayuti* still reeling from the shock, Mr. Jarange-Patil has given further cause for worry after he warned that he would field candidates in



Manoj Jarange-Patil

all 288 seats in the Assembly election.

"I am urging this government [Eknath Shinde-led *Mahayuti*] to resolve all our demands pertaining to reservation. We do not want to enter politics... However, if the government keeps on ignoring us, I will have no alternative but to field candidates in all 288 Assembly seats," Mr. Jarange-Patil said at Antarwadi-Sarathi village in Jalna district.

This is the activist's fourth hunger strike since September last year. Mr. Jarange-Patil urged Home Minister Devendra Fadnis to take action against those who allegedly attacked members of the Maratha community for not voting for Ms. Munde.

Stalin seeks
support for
his NEET
campaign

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin on Sunday reiterated his appeal for support to his campaign against the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (NEET). "As the nationwide Opposition to the NEET grows due to the recent large-scale discrepancies, we are sharing the report of Justice A.K. Rajan Committee in English and all major Indian languages for everyone to understand the ill-effects of the test [held for admissions to medical courses]," he posted on social media.

He said that the Bill adopted by the Tamil Nadu Assembly seeking an exemption from the test for the State was pending with President Droupadi Murmu. Recalling the steps being taken by Tamil Nadu against the exam, the Chief Minister said: "It [the Bill] is now awaiting Presidential assent after an inordinate delay from the Tamil Nadu Governor's end." He further said that his party, the DMK, was the first to foresee the "hazards of NEET" and undertook a large-scale campaign against it.

Lawyer seeks
urgent listing
of petition
on NEET

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

A lawyer representing 10 candidates who appeared in the National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (NEET) 2024 has written to the Supreme Court Registry seeking an urgent listing of their writ petition for an investigation into the "question paper leak".

In his letter to the Secretary-General, Supreme Court, advocate Mathews J. Nedumpara informed the Registry that the petition has sought a "re-consideration of the results of NEET 2024, stay of counselling and other reliefs".

Police question people with history of cow
vigilantism in Chhattisgarh 'lynching' case

Shubhomoy Sikdar
RAIPUR

Nearly 10 persons, some with a history of cow vigilantism, have been questioned till Sunday in connection with the alleged mob lynching at Arang in Chhattisgarh that left two cattle transporters dead and one injured, say officials.

"They include people who had chased the victims' vehicle and those who reached later after receiving phone calls. None admitted to having attacked the trio but we are questioning them separately to corroborate their versions and also checking



Two Uttar Pradesh residents were found dead on Friday while a third sustained injuries in the Arang area. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

phone records. We might call more people for questioning," said a police source.

In the early hours of Friday, two Uttar Pradesh re-

sidents - Guddu Khan and Chand Miya Khan - were found dead while a third, Saddam Qureshi, sustained injuries in the Arang area. According to a com-

mon relative of Chand and Mr. Saddam, the three were attacked by a mob.

The police have so far not established what happened on the night of the incident and have registered a case of culpable homicide not amounting to murder and attempt to murder.

Kirtan Rathore, Additional Superintendent of Police, said the post-mortem reports of the duo had thus far not established the cause of death or if there were any ante-mortem injuries.

"The initial reports did not establish either. We sent it for another scrutiny but that has not provided

much additional information either. Forensic teams on Sunday conducted an analysis of the crime spot and the vehicle in which the victims were travelling and their reports, as well as the report of call details, are awaited which we need to piece together the sequence," said Mr. Rathore.

Meanwhile, Mr. Saddam's testimony, an integral element of the investigation, is awaited as he is still not in a condition to provide his statement. A police team that went to the private hospital where he is receiving treatment on Sunday learnt that he is on ventilator support, said police sources.

With Nadda in Cabinet, BJP to revamp party structure

Anurag Thakur is believed to have been excluded from the Ministry as he too belongs to Himachal Pradesh as the present party president and may be tipped for an organisational role

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) president J.P. Nadda's inclusion in the Council of Ministers of the new National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government on Sunday has indicated an overhaul of the party's organisational structure soon, given that his tenure as party chief is ending in June.

Mr. Nadda's term has been extended by six months from January to allow him to oversee the party's Lok Sabha election campaign.

On Sunday, he took oath as a member of the Narendra Modi Cabinet. It is understood that with Mr. Nadda in the Ministry, Hamirpur MP Anurag Singh Thakur had to be excluded as he too comes from Himachal Pradesh.

Mr. Thakur, a five-time MP, handled the Information and Broadcasting and Sports portfolios in the second Narendra Modi government.

It is being speculated that he is likely to be accommodated within the party's organisational structure.



New innings: J.P. Nadda takes oath as a Cabinet Minister at the Rashtrapati Bhavan on Sunday. ANI

Speaking to presspersons on Sunday, the former Union Minister said he would keep striving as a party worker to fulfil the goal of Mr. Modi to make India a developed nation.

'Great honour'

Stating that it was a great honour for him to have been elected to the Lok Sabha for the fifth time, Mr. Thakur said he was a party worker first and that there could not be a bigger opportunity for him than the responsibility to contest the Lok Sabha election

five times that the party had given him. He would continue to make efforts as a party leader to take the country on the path of progress.

Mr. Thakur exuded confidence that under Mr. Modi's leadership, India would scale new heights, become the third largest economy, and eventually a developed country.

Smriti Irani excluded

Among the outgoing Ministers is Smriti Irani, who held the Women and Child Development portfolio. In

the 2019 election, she defeated Congress leader Rahul Gandhi in Amethi. However, in the 2024 election, she lost to Congress candidate Kishori Lal Sharma in the Lok Sabha constituency in Uttar Pradesh by more than 1.6 lakh votes.

BJP leader Rajeev Chandrasekhar, who lost to Congress leader Shashi Tharoor in a close contest in Thiruvananthapuram, took to the microblogging site X to say that he would continue to work as a BJP *karyakarta* as relentlessly as before to take India forward.

He had held the post of Minister of State in the Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, Electronics and Information Technology, and Jal Shakti Ministries in the second Modi Ministry

"Today marks the end of my 18 years long stint as an MP and my three years as Minister of State in the Council of Ministers under Hon'ble Prime Minister Narendra Modi Ji ... my work and commitment to taking India forward and Thiruvananthapuram, as a *karyakarta* of BJP, remains as relentless as before," he said.

Seven leaders from India's neighbourhood watch swearing-in event together

Suhasini Haidar
NEW DELHI

Leaders of seven neighbouring countries attended the swearing-in of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Cabinet at the Rashtrapati Bhavan forecourt in Delhi on Sunday.

After the ceremony, Sri Lankan President Ranil Wickremesinghe, Maldives President Mohamed Muizzu, Seychelles Vice-President Ahmed Afif, Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, Mauritius PM Pravind Jugnauth, Nepal PM Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda', and Bhutan PM Tshering Tobgay attended the ceremonial banquet hosted by President Droupadi Murmu, and met Mr. Modi.

"I am grateful to all the foreign dignitaries who joined the swearing-in ceremony. India will always work closely with our valued partners in pursuit of human progress," Mr. Modi wrote on social media platform X after the ceremony. A press release by the Ministry of External Affairs said that during his discussion with the leaders, Mr. Modi had called for "deeper people-to-people ties and connectivity in the region", and added that In-



Sheikh Hasina, Mohamed Muizzu and other special invitees attend the swearing-in ceremony at the Rashtrapati Bhavan on Sunday. ANI

dia would continue to amplify the "voice of the Global South in the international arena".

Braving nearly 40 degrees Celsius evening temperatures, the leaders were seated side by side in the front row of the forecourt for the entire ceremony that went on for more than two-and-a-half hours. This is the first visit to India by Mr. Muizzu and Ms. Hasina after they were elected in November 2023 and January 2024, respectively.

The inclusion of Mr. Muizzu, who met Mr. Modi in December last year, was significant as ties between Delhi and Male have been strained over Mr. Muizzu's insistence on the withdrawal of Indian troops stationed in the southern atolls. Mr. Muizzu's accep-

tance of the invitation indicates a reset in ties.

Bilateral talks

Mr. Tobgay attended the swearing-in for the second time after 2014. Ms. Hasina attended Mr. Modi's swearing-in for the first time although she was invited in the past. Both Ms. Hasina and Mr. Tobgay also held bilateral talks on Sunday afternoon, discussing Bangladesh's desire to import hydropower from Bhutan.

Given that Delhi does not formally recognise the Taliban regime in Afghanistan, or the military regime in Myanmar, nor does it maintain any high-level engagement with the government in Pakistan, the grouping does not represent the entire neighbourhood, but the countries in India's "comfort zone".

First-time MP Tokhan Sahu gets MoS berth

Press Trust of India
RAIPUR

Tokhan Sahu, a first-time MP, was the sole representative among the 10 newly-elected BJP parliamentarians from Chhattisgarh to be inducted into Prime Minister Narendra Modi's council of ministers on Sunday.

This move reflects a similar level of representation seen in the previous BJP-led Central government.

Mr. Sahu, who won the Bilaspur Lok Sabha seat in the recent election, took oath as the Union Minister of State.

Since Chhattisgarh's formation in 2000, the ruling BJP has consistently performed well in general elections, winning 10 out of 11 seats in the 2004, 2009, and 2014 Lok Sabha polls. In 2019, the party won 9 out of 11 seats, improving its tally to 10 in the 2024 elections.

Amid speculation that one MP from the state would be chosen as Union Minister of State, names of senior leaders like Brijmohan Agrawal, Vijay Baghel, and Santosh Pandey were discussed in political circles.

Chhattisgarh CM Vishnu Deo Sai congratulated Mr. Sahu for his new position.

Sukanta in Modi Ministry, Bengal BJP to get new chief

The Hindu Bureau
KOLKATA

BJP leaders Sukanta Majumdar and Shantanu Thakur from West Bengal were inducted into the Union Ministry on Sunday.

Mr. Thakur, Bongaon MP and Matua leader, had been a Minister of State in the previous Modi government. Mr. Majumdar, Balurghat MP and West Bengal BJP chief, has been inducted for the first time.

The inclusion of Mr. Majumdar indicates that there will be a change in the West Bengal BJP leadership. He was appointed State BJP president in 2021 after the party failed to defeat the Trinamool Congress in the Assembly election.

In the Lok Sabha polls this year, too, the BJP fell short of the Trinamool despite a high-pitched campaign. The saffron party registered a 38.73% vote share, whereas the Trinamool's share was 45.76%. Mr. Majumdar acknowledged that the new responsibility meant he would have to relinquish his party post.

After the setback in the Lok Sabha polls, questions have been raised in the Bengal BJP leadership about changing key constituencies of sitting MPs, including Dilip Ghosh. Mr. Ghosh had publicly said that he lost the polls due to "backbiting in the party".

Before Mr. Majumdar, Mr. Ghosh had held the post of BJP State chief for six years. In the 2019 Lok Sabha election, the BJP under Mr. Ghosh's leadership won 18 seats.

Since the Assembly polls in West Bengal are scheduled for 2026, a change in the party leadership means the new team will have only two years for the upcoming challenge.

Leader of the Opposition Suvendu Adhikari could be the frontrunner for the post of West Bengal BJP president.

Mallikarjun Kharge attends swearing-in

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge, as Leader of the Opposition in the Rajya Sabha, attended the oath-taking ceremony of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Council of Ministers on Sunday but prominent Opposition leaders of the INDIA bloc gave it a miss.

A senior Opposition leader told *The Hindu* that the decision was a well-coordinated one after senior leaders spoke to each

other. They reasoned that while the Opposition needed a token representation, it should convey its disapproval. Mr. Kharge, holding a constitutional position as the LoP, represented the Opposition as a whole.

Another source said former Congress chiefs Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi were not invited.

The party continued to target the PM, especially over the presence of Mukesh Ambani and Gautam Adani at the oath-taking event.

On the draw



MIKA AZIZI

After Lok Sabha poll debacle, U.P. CM reaches out to youth

Mayank Kumar
LUCKNOW

After the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) registered its biggest loss of the Lok Sabha tally from Uttar Pradesh since 2014, the State government's apparatus is in full swing in rectifying what it believes led to some sections voting against the ruling party. The poll verdict from Uttar Pradesh was a major dent to the ruling BJP-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA), which managed to win only 36 seats, with the BJP winning 33, while its allies Rashtriya Lok Dal (RLD) winning two seats and the Apna Dal (Sonelal) securing one. The BJP's own seat share was down

by 29 seats compared to 2019, when it won 62 seats from the State.

The focus of the State government seems to be on youth, with Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath holding meetings on Saturday with chairpersons of State recruitment commissions and announcing implementation of a new law soon to completely stop paper leaks, among other measures. In an outreach to youth, strict directions

were issued to speed up the appointment process for vacant posts across departments and send immediate requisitions to commissions where posts are vacant.

"The State government is dedicated to safeguarding the interests of the youth, valuing their hard work, merit, and talent. Anarchic activities such as paper leaks or solver gangs are utterly unacceptable. It is imperative to enact strict laws to address such criminal activities promptly. Therefore, necessary measures should be taken expeditiously," instructed Mr. Adityanath, chairing a special meeting with the chairpersons of various selection commissions.

Two Jharkhand BJP MPs join Cabinet

The Hindu Bureau
PATNA

Koderma MP Annapurna Devi and Ranchi MP Sanjay Seth of the BJP from the tribal-dominated State of Jharkhand were inducted into the Cabinet of Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday. Both Ms. Devi and Mr. Seth have retained their respective seats this election.

Ms. Devi, of the Yadav caste, served as Minister of State for Education in the previous Modi government. In the Assembly election in Jharkhand later this year, the Yadav community – the third biggest OBC block – may help the BJP retain its ground.

Once a member of the

Rashtriya Janata Dal, Ms. Devi quit the party months before the 2019 Lok Sabha polls and moved to the BJP. In the 2024 election, she won by the biggest margin – of 3,77,014 votes – among all winning candidates in Jharkhand. She defeated the Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist) candidate and three-time MLA from Bagodar Assembly seat, Vinod Singh, with a margin of 3,77,014 votes. The BJP has also ensured to keep its core voters happy by inducting Mr. Seth, a member of the Baniya caste. He has defeated Yashaswini Sahay, daughter of veteran Congress leader Subodh Kant Sahay, in Ranchi, the seat he won for the second consecutive term.

BJP balances caste aspirations and performance in U.P.

Anuj Kumar
GHAZIABAD

In its choices from Uttar Pradesh where the party lost the plot in the Lok Sabha election, the BJP has woven continuity into the aspirations of different caste groups to make up for the losses. Apart from Prime Minister Narendra Modi, nine Ministers from the State were sworn in. Rajnath Singh is the lone Cabinet Minister from the State if one does not count Hardeep Singh Puri who hails from Punjab but represents U.P. in the Rajya Sabha.

Rashtriya Lok Dal (RLD) chief Chaudhary Jayant Singh debuted in the Council of Ministers as a Minister of State with Independent Charge. A sworn rival for almost a decade, the RLD joined the NDA just before the election after the BJP government conferred the Bharat Ratna on Chaudhary Charan Singh and the party won both the seats it contested.

The new faces include Jitin Prasada, the Pilibhit MP who was a Minister in the State government and had also served in the Manmohan Singh government when he was with the Congress. Four-time MP Kamlesh Paswan from Bansaon (reserved seat) is emerging as the party's Dalit face and three-time Gonda MP Kirti Vardhan Singh has been waiting in the wings for a while.

Apart from Mr. Rajnath Singh, S.P.S. Baghel, Pan-

The focus is on promoting non-Jatav Dalits and non-Yadav Other Backward Class caste groups

kaj Chaudhary, B.L. Verma and Anupriya Patel of ally Apna Dal (Sonewal) held on to their berths. Sources say the Ministers have been rewarded for performing without seeking undue limelight.

The focus is on promoting non-Jatav Dalits and non-Yadav Other Backward Class (OBC) caste groups where the INDIA alliance made a dent this time. By roping in the RLD, the PM is addressing the Jats and farmers in west and central U.P.

Ms. Patel and Mr. Pankaj Chaudhary hail from the Kurmi community that is present in large numbers in Purvanchal.

Mr. Verma, a Rajya Sabha member, represents the Lodhi segment that populates west and central U.P. After the demise of Kalyan Singh, the community is looking for political patronage. Two-time Agra MP Mr. Baghel and Mr. Paswan come from the shepherd and Pasi communities respectively which were under the SP's radar this time.

Among the upper castes, apart from Mr. Rajnath Singh, Mr. Kirti Vardhan has been brought in to pacify the Rajputs whose discontent posed problems for the ruling party.

U.P. Cong. wants Priyanka at helm

The Hindu Bureau
LUCKNOW

After the Congress's improved performance in Uttar Pradesh in the Lok Sabha polls, party leaders here on Sunday demanded that former Uttar Pradesh in-charge Priyanka Gandhi Vadra take up the

responsibility again and lead the grand old party's revival in the State. Speaking to *The Hindu*, party leaders said that the organisation rebuilt by Ms. Vadra during the 2022 Assembly polls helped them in the 2024 election. Her focus on OBC and Dalit communities gave rich dividends, they said.

TAMIL NADU POWER GENERATION CORPORATION LIMITED (Erstwhile TANGEDCO Ltd.)

E-tenders through e-procurement platform at <https://ntenders.gov.in/nicgep/app> as per the instructions in the tender specifications Coal (Ship) - 158, Dated: 05.06.2024

Sl No.	Specification No.	Description of Work / Materials	Due date & time for submission of e-tender
1	Coal (Ship) - 158 Dated: 05.06.2024	SERVICES FOR ENGAGING CHARTERERS (TNPGL) AGENTS FOR CHARTERED VESSELS OF TANGEDCO FOR AGENCY WORKS AND FOR ENGAGING SURVEYORS AT GOPALPUR PORT AND DHAMRA PORT FOR A PERIOD OF 18 MONTHS.	15.06.2024 Upto 14:30 Hours.

Submission of E-Tender: THROUGH THIS HYPERLINK: <https://ntenders.gov.in/nicgep/app>
Date & Time of commencement of download of Tender Specification Coal (Ship) - 158, Dated: 05.06.2024, From: 14:30 Hrs. on 10.06.2024.
Soft copy of Tender Specifications: The tender specifications can be downloaded from TANGEDCO website www.tangedco.gov.in and from National Informatics Center website <https://ntenders.gov.in/nicgep/app> free of cost. Tenders will be opened: Through the NIC portal <https://ntenders.gov.in/nicgep/app>
DIPR/1784/Tender/2024 Sd/xxxxx CHIEF ENGINEER/MECH/COAL TNPGL/CHENNAI-2

CHENNAI METROPOLITAN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER
CIRCLE-II, CONSTRUCTION WING, 'A' BLOCK, 'E' ROAD, KOYAMBEDU, CHENNAI - 600 107.

SHORT e-TENDER NOTICE Dated: 07.06.2024

e-Tenders are invited from the Government registered and experienced contractors by the Superintending Engineer, Circle-II, Construction Wing, Chennai - 600107, under Two Cover System for the works of 1. Redevelopment of Dobbikhana at Conran Smith Road, Purasawalkam, Chennai and 2. Beautification of underneath space in Velachery flyover.

Short Tender Notice No.	01/2024-25 dt. 07.06.2024
Last date & Time of receipt of E-tenders	24.06.2024 upto 3.00 pm
Downloading the tender document by free of cost	10.06.2024 to 24.06.2024 upto 3.00 pm
For further details visit website	http://ntenders.gov.in

Superintending Engineer
Circle-II, C.W, CMDA, Chennai - 600107.
DIPR / 1786 / Tender / 2024

IN BRIEF



Monsoon reaches Mumbai two days earlier than usual

The southwest monsoon reached Mumbai on Sunday, two days earlier than usual after making an early onset over Kerala and the northeastern region on May 30, according to the India Meteorological Department (IMD). Last year, the primary rain-bearing system reached Delhi and Mumbai together on June 25, first time since June 21, 1961. Normally, the monsoon reaches Kerala by June 1, Mumbai by June 11, and the national capital by June 27. Retaining its April forecast, the IMD, in a press conference in May-end, said the country could see above-normal rainfall in the four-month monsoon season (June to September) with cumulative rainfall estimated at 106% of the long-period average of 87 cm. PTI

Kangana slap row: farmers march in support of accused

Several farmer outfits, including the Samyukta Kisan Morcha (Non-Political) and the Kisan Mazdoor Morcha, on Sunday took out a march in Mohali in support of the accused CISF woman constable, Kulwinder Kaur, who allegedly slapped actor and BJP MP-elect Kangana Ranaut. Farmer leaders demanded that a fair investigation be conducted into the matter while asserting that there should not be any injustice against Kaur. Adequate security personnel were deployed in the wake of the march, which began from Gurdwara Amb Sahib in Mohali. Farmer leaders also lashed out at Ms. Ranaut for allegedly making provocative statements against the people of Punjab. PTI

Ex-PM Rajiv Gandhi's statue found vandalised in Tripura

A statue of former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi was found vandalised in Tripura's Unakoti district, a Congress MLA said on Sunday. Congress legislator Birajit Sinha alleged that BJP-backed goons were behind the vandalism of the three-foot statue of the late Congress leader which was laid on a concrete structure in Tripura's Kailashahar sub-division in 2009 as a mark to pay respect to the former PM. Mr. Sinha demanded the arrest of those involved in the vandalism of the statue. A statue of Himadri Deb, a renowned cultural activist, was damaged by miscreants on Friday in Kagirgaon under the Kailashahar Police Station limits. PTI

2 planes land, take off within one minute on same runway

Aviation regulator DGCA is probing an incident of an IndiGo plane landing and an Air India plane taking off from the same runway in less than a minute at the Mumbai airport, officials said on Sunday. The watchdog has derostered the Air Traffic Controller (ATC) who was on duty at the time of the incident on Saturday. IndiGo has initiated a probe into the matter, they added. A purported video of the incident has been shared on social media. "We are conducting a probe and have already de-rostered the ATCO involved in the incident," the DGCA official said. Air Traffic Controllers' Guild in a statement said there was "no airprox (aircraft proximity)" situation in the incident. PTI

'No review, we will look at any new project in Amaravati with a fresh pair of eyes'

Investments by Singapore in India will continue to grow because of the prospects a growing Indian economy presents, and the demographic dividend, says the Foreign Minister of the city-state; he stresses that it is important for long-term projects, collaborations to have bipartisan support

INTERVIEW
Vivian Balakrishnan

Suhasini Haidar

With a new government in place, Singapore hopes to schedule the Ministerial Roundtable with India shortly, says Singapore Foreign Minister Vivian Balakrishnan. He speaks about the impact of the elections on ties, the "missed opportunity" of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), and the new buzz around Andhra Pradesh's capital Amaravati. Edited excerpts:

The Indian election has thrown up some surprises. How do you think results will impact India's Singapore ties?

I don't think it's going to affect our relations, which are deep, enduring, and bipartisan. India is a democracy, and speaking as a practising politician who has to win votes at every election, you can never be sure until polling is closed, the boxes are sealed, and then counted. Prime Minis-

ter Narendra Modi is the first since Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru to get a third term... in a robust democracy that's already an incredible achievement. Unless you are on the ground, you don't quite know what is the complex compendium of reasons that make people ultimately choose one way or the other. So I think we should all be humbled. All politicians should be humble, and that includes the commentariat as well.

Since 2018, Singapore has been the highest FDI source for India. But over the last year, investment levels dropped more than 30%. How do you see the two countries trying to improve that?

Investments [in India] are going to continue to grow simply because of the prospects. It's got a demographic dividend. If, and this is a big if, [India] can match jobs with the skills and education of the young people. And then, given what is happening on the geostrategic stage, the contest between the United States and China, the next five to 10 years are an enormous opportunity for India. On digitalisation, the digital ID, digital finance,



India is way ahead. The next trend is infrastructure. If you travel to India, the railways, aviation, roads... there's no doubt that has improved significantly. The third dimension is manufacturing. And the fourth change is on governance and policy frameworks, making processes more transparent, a level playing field, even tax reform which allows the Indian economy to function as a continental-size whole, which is what China has been doing for decades. I would expect these things to continue almost regardless of which party or which coalition happens to be in power.

And where do you see the bottlenecks, or is India easy to invest in?

Doing business in India has never been easy for any businessman, Indian busi-

nessmen as well as Singaporean businessmen. But take a 10- or 20-year look-back and clearly it has opened up, become easier and more predictable. In the case of Singapore, we have a free trade agreement. We still think it was a missed opportunity [for India to withdraw from] the RCEP between ASEAN and its Dialogue partners.

Andhra Pradesh has re-elected Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu, who was responsible for the Amaravati capital city project involving Singapore. How badly did shelving that project in 2019 affect India-Singapore ties and do you see the possibility of a review given the change in government?

I don't want to get into

Ved Lahoti from IIT, Delhi zone tops JEE (Advanced); over 48,000 qualify

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Of the 1.8 lakh candidates who appeared for the Joint Entrance Exam (Advanced) in May, 48,248 cleared the test, show the results announced by the organising chairperson of the Indian Institute of Technology, Madras on Sunday.

Ved Lahoti from the IIT, Delhi zone topped the exam, obtaining 355 out of 360 marks. It was the 17-year-old's first attempt at the entrance exam. Mr. Lahoti, who wants to pursue a degree in computer science at the IIT, Bombay, is interested in artificial intelligence research.

The second rank was bagged by Aditya Kumar



Students leave after appearing for the JEE exam in Patna. PTI

from the Delhi zone and the third by Bhogalpalli Sandesh from the Madras zone.

Dwijia Dharmeshkumar Patel from the IIT, Bombay zone was the topper among women candidates. She obtained 332 marks

and her all-India rank is seven.

A total of 7,964 women candidates and 594 persons with disabilities cleared the examination. While 14,083 successful candidates were from the general category; 9,281 belonged to the Other Backward Classes (OBC); 5,423 to the Economically Weaker Sections; 13,794 to the Scheduled Castes, and 5,073 to the Scheduled Tribes.

A resident of Indore in Madhya Pradesh, Mr. Lahoti was enrolled in one of the coaching centres in Rajasthan's Kota.

"I devoted three to four hours for self-study every day and scored 332-340 in routine tests regularly. So, I was confident. Since the

paper was a bit easy as compared with the test papers, I succeeded in securing 355 out of 360 marks," he said.

Mr. Aditya Kumar, who came second scoring 346, told the *The Hindu*, "I started preparing for JEE (Advanced) since Class 9 in order to build a solid foundation, so that I could grasp advanced concepts. Regular test and doubt clearing sessions at my coaching classes helped me learn from my mistakes."

He wishes to pursue a degree in computer science at the IIT, Bombay and, in future, aspires to take up quantum physics research in the defence sector.

With PTI inputs



Sub-Lieutenant Anamika B. Rajeev receives the 'Golden Wings' from Vice-Admiral Rajesh Pendharkar. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Anamika Rajeev is Navy's first woman chopper pilot

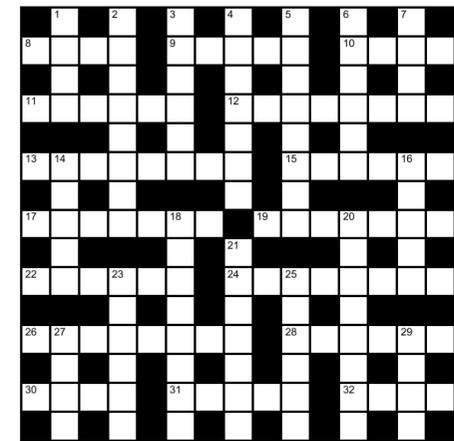
The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

Sub-Lieutenant Anamika B. Rajeev became the Indian Navy's first woman helicopter pilot during a passing-out parade held at the naval air station INS Rajali at Arakkonam in Tamil Nadu last week.

A total of 21 officers were awarded the prestigious 'Golden Wings' by Vice-Admiral Rajesh Pendharkar, Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Eastern Naval Command. A passing-out parade was held on June 7 to mark the graduation of the 102nd Helicopter Conversion Course.

THE CROSSWORD 14197
(set by Incognito)

To solve this puzzle online, get access to our crossword site. @ <https://arggo.page.link/jjpTn>



- 15 See? Copper on street gets pest... (6)
- 17 Oozed predigested compound after drip was removed (7)
- 19 Kind of person who can solve this clue without looking at it or at the grid, perhaps when cooking spicy Chinese... (7)
- 22 Slaughtering dog nor bird (6)
- 24 Wrongly sell gong and fly (4-4)
- 26 In absence of sweetheart, gaze at a chop being minced for soup (8)
- 28 Direction by European king for festival (6)
- 30 Setter, accompanied by Albert, gets some food (4)
- 31 List letters for a short time (5)
- 32 Aluminium, sulphur and oxygen too (4)
- DOWN
- 1 Bill magistrate? (4)
- 2 Allocates professional taxes (8)
- 3 Travelling bachelors giving up ale to get soup (6)
- 4 Steed trotting, carrying soldier, is most tense (7)
- 5 Having Greek fruits, engages in unarmed combat (8)
- 6 Scrape around unit used by astronomers (6)
- 7 Animal caught by Bengali onlooker (4)
- 14 Bet what a happy dog does endlessly when with queen (5)
- 16 Smart saint gets gin manufactured (5)
- 18 Other ranks' covered by duty to remove spirits (8)
- 20 Big waste in fossil fuel (8)
- 21 In case of deluge, sappers get baffled (7)
- 23 North American tree produces highly flammable sticky jelly (6)
- 25 Require the French sewing implement (6)
- 27 Final word of prayer found in testament (4)
- 29 Bearing brewed teas (4)

- ACROSS
- 8 That lady has right German address (4)
- 9 Returning Engineers follow second in command adopting retired doctor's bidding (5)
- 10 A police department gets drug (4)
- 11 Dresses and travels around (6)
- 12 I am sitting before a portrait painter. It's awesome (8)
- 13 Sorceresses chasing model get jerky, convulsive movements (8)

SUDOKU

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

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

Solution to previous puzzle

T	K	S	B	M	S			
H	O	R	N	A	V	A	L	A
L	O	G	T	A	N	C	H	E
C	L	U	T	C	H	T	H	I
G	E	E	T	E				
R	A	D	I	A	T	O	R	
T	D	Y	B	H				
R	E	P	A	T	R	S		
F	A	C	E	O	F	F		
S	A	L	O	O	N	E	E	D
S	T	E	R	I	N	G		
S	T	E	R	I	N	G		
F	A	N	M	E	N			
D	A	S	H	B	A	R	D	
T	I	S	S	W	R			

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

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

MADGALDEEP Try Our New Sandal With Sandalwood Oil

FAITH
Nine ways to reach God

There are nine simple ways by which one can reach God. In Srimad Bhagavatam, Prahlada brilliantly discourses to his father Hiranyakasipu expanding on the categories. These are Sharanam, Kirtanam, Smaranam, Padhasevanam, Archanam, Vandanam, Dasyam, Sakhyam and Atmanivedhanam, said Dhamaal Perundevis in a discourse. Sharanam denotes the willingness to listen to God's history with complete attention, like King Parikshit, who listened to Suka's discourse on Bhagavatam with unwavering mind for seven days. Suka himself is an example of Kirtanam. He was always on the move and stayed on for seven days to discourse to Parikshit. Smaranam, which is total, unflinching faith held in one's heart, regardless of challenges to the same is best exemplified by Prahlada, whose devotion saw the Lord take avatar as Nrisimha, in order to uphold his devotee's faith. Mahalkashmi shows us the path of Padhasevanam as She is ever at the Lord's feet in Srivaikuntam. Archanam, making offerings to the Lord is simple. When Akroora arrived at Brindavan, he noticed the footprints of Krishna on the Yamuna river bank, and unwilling to sully the holy ground with his feet, he chose to lie down and roll all the way to Brindavanam. This exemplifies Vandanam.



To play an interactive version of this crossword online, scan the QR code

MONEYWISE



IRDAI takes more steps for health

COVERNOTE

A slew of measures from the regulator are aimed at easing woes related to claims and hospitalisation coverage

K. Nitya Kalyani

When you don't pay your renewal premium ahead of the date, coverage ends. You cannot renew, but have to approach it as a fresh policy. Your 30-day waiting period for making claims starts all over again and your (now) three-year waiting period for pre-existing conditions also resets. You may have to do some medical tests for underwriting and you may also be denied coverage.

There is some mercy though. You have a one-month window, a grace period, when you can still just pay the renewal premium and not lose all the above. What you would NOT get is claims for any hospitalisation in the interim period when there is no coverage.

However, that and a few more significant terms and conditions were changed by the insurance regulator last month. Any claims during the grace period for renewal will also be payable even if the premium is yet to be paid. This is good because being covered one day and vulnerable the next is not a good feeling. It looks like a lottery that faults your memory or efficiency despite the fact that you may have had coverage for long years.

There are other significant benefits that the insureds get now and we will see some of them here. For accident or medical emergency admissions, the new mandate is that cashless authorisations have to be done by the insurer within one hour. The golden hour, as we know, can mean the difference between life and death for accident and other medical emergencies and this should not be frittered away chasing insurance approval.

Deposit requirement

Even though approvals are pursued by the hospital itself, the sad reality is that no actual work starts on the patient without the money materialising. A fat deposit would be the least requirement and this defeats the purpose of having a cashless policy. The time of discharge would be the next anxiety-prone period for any patient and his family, not the least because of payment of bills and the insurance claims process.

The regulator has now said that cashless claim authorisation should be given within three hours of receiving discharge notice from a hospital. The purpose is to expedite the discharge process and avoid unnecessary delays. Further, if there are additional hospital costs due to delay in cashless approval, the insurer has to bear them! Should the insured pass away during hospitalisation, insurers have been tasked with facilitating the immediate release of the deceased remains. By the sound of it this not only means they approve or make cashless payments expeditiously but also help with other formalities to help the bereaved family of the insured. Thoughtful measures and high time too.

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



ILLUSTRATION: SOUMYADIP SINHA

Watch out for these common errors while investing

Common errors that can derail investors' financial goals, regardless of their experience, include selecting an inappropriate stock and incurring losses, and missing out on a lucrative opportunity

CAUTIONARY NOTE

Anand Srinivasan
Sashwath Swaminathan

Investing in the stock market is an endeavour that promises potential rewards, but is also fraught with risks. Every investor, regardless of their investment experience, can fall prey to common errors that can derail their financial goals. Broadly, these errors can be categorised into two types: Type 1 errors, where an investor selects an inappropriate stock and incur financial losses, and Type 2 errors, where an investor misses out on a lucrative opportunity.

Poor stock choices

Selecting the wrong stock can have dire financial consequences. This error often occurs when investors are swayed by a company's brand image, market noise or emotional biases rather than focusing on fundamental analysis.

A prominent example of this is the downfall of Kingfisher Airlines. Founded by Vijay Mallya in 2005, Kingfisher Airlines quickly gained popularity for its premium service and its stock prices skyrocketed due to market noise, thereby neglecting due diligence. However, aggressive expansion and mounting debt soon led to financial disaster and by 2011, the airline was struggling with massive debts and operational issues,



To mitigate risks, investors should diversify their portfolios rather than betting large capital on a single stock

leading to the suspension of its license in 2012. The company ultimately declared bankruptcy, and Mallya fled to the U.K. to evade legal charges in India. Punj Lloyd, a construction and engineering firm, faced a similar fate. The company accumulated substantial debt due to project delays, cost overruns, and payment issues with clients. Unable to service its debt, Punj Lloyd entered insolvency proceedings in 2018 under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC). These cases underscore the critical importance of thorough research into a company's financial health, as neglecting this can result in Type 1 errors, where investors select inappropriate stocks and incur financial losses.

Missed opportunities

While missing out on a good stock does not directly impact an investor's finances, it represents a lost opportunity for potential gains.

However, this is quite acceptable as the investor remains in the investment race, having not lost any capital. During the pandemic, the stock market experienced significant vo-

latility, presenting both risks and opportunities for investors.

One notable example is Tata Motors, whose stock price plummeted to as low as ₹75 in the early days of the pandemic. Investors who recognised the company's potential and invested at that time have seen substantial returns, as the stock has since soared to a 52-week high of ₹1,065, making it a multibagger investment. Similarly, ITC's stock was trading at ₹165 during the same period of market uncertainty. Investors who seized this opportunity and invested in ITC have been rewarded handsomely, with the stock reaching a record high of ₹499.70.

While investors who did not invest in Tata Motors or ITC during the pandemic may regret the missed potential for substantial profits, their capital remains intact.

Even the most experienced investors, including Warren Buffett, have made these errors. Buffett has been vocal about the risks associated with airline stocks for over 25 years. In his 1992 shareholder letter, Buffett stated, "Investors have poured money into a bottomless pit, attracted by growth when they should have been repelled by it."

Despite Buffett's typical negative stance on airline stocks, Berkshire Hathaway, acquired significant stakes in Delta Air Lines, United Airlines, American Airlines, and Southwest Airlines, spending around

\$7-8 billion. However, when the pandemic hit and airline stocks plummeted, Buffett quickly exited these positions, incurring losses.

Buffett has also admitted for missing opportunities in the tech sector. At Berkshire Hathaway's annual meeting in 2017, he acknowledged his mistake for not recognising Google's potential despite being a customer of its ad business. Historically, Buffett avoided tech stocks as he considered them beyond his circle of competence. He also admitted to underestimating Amazon's Jeff Bezos and the company's success, acknowledging Bezos as "one of the most remarkable business persons of our age."

These examples serve as a reminder that even the most successful investors can make mistakes. Therefore, it is very crucial to heed George Soros' advice: "It's not whether you're right or wrong that's important, but how much money you make when you're right and how much you lose when you're wrong."

To mitigate these risks, investors should diversify their portfolios rather than betting large capital on a single stock. To make this very simple, we need to just follow Buffett's two basic rules for investment. Rule 1 - Never Lose Capital, Rule 2 - Never forget Rule 1.

(Anand Srinivasan is a Consultant, Sashwath Swaminathan is Research Assistant at Aionion Investment Services)

Bank Fixed Deposit Rates

Bank Name	Interest Rates (%)			
	Highest Slab	1-year Tenure	3-year Tenure	5-year Tenure
Small Finance Banks				
AU Small Finance Bank	8.00	6.50	7.50	7.25
Equitas Small Finance Bank	8.50	8.20	8.00	7.25
ESAF Small Finance Bank	8.25	6.00	6.75	6.25
Jana Small Finance Bank	8.50	8.50	7.25	7.25
NorthEast Small Finance Bank	9.00	8.75	9.00	6.25
Suryoday Small Finance Bank	8.65	6.85	8.60	8.25
Ujjivan Small Finance Bank	8.50	8.25	7.20	7.20
Unity Small Finance Bank	9.00	7.85	8.15	8.15
Utkarsh Small Finance Bank	8.50	8.00	8.50	7.75
Private Sector Banks				
Axis Bank	7.20	7.20	7.20	7.20
Bandhan Bank	7.85	7.85	7.85	7.85
City Union Bank	7.25	7.25	7.25	7.25
CSB Bank	7.75	7.75	7.75	7.75
DBS Bank	7.50	7.50	7.50	7.50
DCB Bank	8.05	8.05	8.05	8.05
Federal Bank	7.40	7.40	7.40	7.40
HDFC Bank	7.25	7.25	7.25	7.25
ICICI Bank	7.20	7.20	7.20	7.20
IDFC First Bank	7.90	7.90	7.90	7.90
Indusind Bank	7.99	7.99	7.99	7.99

Bank Name	Interest Rates (%)			
	Highest Slab	1-year Tenure	3-year Tenure	5-year Tenure
Jammu & Kashmir Bank	7.05	7.05	7.05	7.05
Karur Vysya Bank	7.50	7.50	7.50	7.50
Karnataka Bank	7.40	7.40	7.40	7.40
Kotak Mahindra Bank	7.40	7.40	7.40	7.40
RBL Bank	8.00	8.00	8.00	8.00
SBM Bank India	8.25	8.25	8.25	8.25
South Indian Bank	7.25	7.25	7.25	7.25
Tamilnad Mercantile Bank	7.50	7.50	7.50	7.50
YES Bank	8.00	8.00	8.00	8.00
Public Sector Banks				
Bank of Baroda	7.25	7.25	7.25	7.25
Bank of India	7.30	7.30	7.30	7.30
Bank of Maharashtra	7.10	7.10	7.10	7.10
Canara Bank	7.25	7.25	7.25	7.25
Central Bank of India	7.25	7.25	7.25	7.25
Indian Bank	7.25	7.25	7.25	7.25
Indian Overseas Bank	7.30	7.30	7.30	7.30
Punjab National Bank	7.25	7.25	7.25	7.25
Punjab & Sind Bank	7.25	7.25	7.25	7.25
State Bank of India	7.10	7.10	7.10	7.10
Union Bank of India	7.25	7.25	7.25	7.25

Home Loan Interest Rates

Name of Lender	Loan Amount (Rs.)		
	Upto 30 lakh	Above 30 lakh & upto 75 lakh	Above 75 lakh
Public Sector Banks			
State Bank of India	8.50-9.85	8.50-9.85	8.50-9.85
Bank of Baroda	8.40-10.65	8.40-10.65	8.40-10.90
Bank of India	8.40-10.85	8.40-10.85	8.40-10.85
Bank of Maharashtra	8.35-11.15	8.35-11.15	8.35-11.15
Bank of Punjab	8.40-10.15	8.40-10.15	8.40-10.15
Bank of Rajasthan	8.40-10.85	8.40-10.85	8.40-10.85
Bank of Tamil Nadu	8.40-10.85	8.40-10.85	8.40-10.85
Bank of Uttar Pradesh	8.40-10.85	8.40-10.85	8.40-10.85
Bank of West Bengal	8.40-10.85	8.40-10.85	8.40-10.85
Central Bank of India	8.45-9.80	8.45-9.80	8.45-9.80
Private Sector Banks			
Kotak Mahindra Bank	8.70*	8.70*	8.70*
ICICI Bank	8.75*	8.75*	8.75*
Axis Bank	8.75-13.30	8.75-13.30	8.75-9.65
HSBC Bank	8.50*	8.50*	8.50*
South Indian Bank	8.70-11.70	8.70-11.70	8.70-11.70
Karur Vysya Bank	9.00-11.05	9.00-11.05	9.00-11.05

Name of Lender	Loan Amount (Rs.)		
	Upto 30 lakh	Above 30 lakh & upto 75 lakh	Above 75 lakh
Public Sector Banks			
Karnataka Bank	8.50-10.62	8.50-10.62	8.50-10.62
Federal Bank	8.80*	8.80*	8.80*
Dhanlaxmi Bank	9.35-10.50	9.35-10.50	9.35-10.50
Tamilnad Mercantile Bank	8.60-9.95	8.60-9.95	8.60-9.95
Bandhan Bank	9.16-15.00	9.16-13.33	9.16-13.33
RBL Bank	8.90*	8.90*	8.90*
CSB Bank	10.73-12.58	10.73-12.58	10.73-12.58
HDFC Bank Ltd.	8.75*	8.75*	8.75*
City Union Bank	8.25-9.50	8.50-10.00	8.75-10.50
Housing Finance Companies (HFCs)			
LIC Housing Finance	8.50-10.35	8.50-10.55	8.50-10.75
Bajaj Housing Finance	8.50*	8.50*	8.50*
Tata Capital	8.75*	8.75*	8.75*
PNB Housing Finance	8.50-14.50	8.50-14.50	8.50-11.45
GIC Housing Finance	8.80*	8.80*	8.80*
SMFG India Home Finance	10.00*	10.00*	10.00*
Aditya Birla Capital	8.60*	8.60*	8.60*
ICICI Home Finance	9.20*	9.20*	9.20*
Godrej Housing Finance	8.55*	8.55*	8.55*

*Onwards Rates as on June 5 Source: Paisabazaar.com

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

SEOUL

South Korea resumes loudspeaker propaganda against Pyongyang



South Korea resumed on Sunday a loudspeaker propaganda campaign against the North as Pyongyang sent a fresh barrage of trash-filled balloons across the border. Relations between the two Koreas are at one of their lowest points. In recent weeks, the two have engaged in a tit-for-tat campaign of balloon launches. AFP

GAZA STRIP

Revised toll shows Israeli attack on Gaza refugee camp killed 274



Hamas officials said 274 people were killed and hundreds wounded during Israeli Army's daytime raid on central Gaza's crowded Nuseirat refugee camp on Saturday. Officials said 274 people were killed in what it labelled the "Nuseirat massacre", updating an earlier toll of 210. They added that 698 people were wounded. AFP

ATHENS

Missing U.K. journalist Mosley found dead on Greek island



British diet guru and TV personality Michael Mosley was found dead on Sunday on the Greek island of Symi where he went missing, the police said. The 67-year-old was last seen alive on Wednesday as he was vacationing on the island. His wife alerted police that evening when he failed to return from a coastal walk on his own. AFP

DUBAI

Ahmadinejad barred, but six others to run for Iran President



Iran's Guardian Council on Sunday approved the country's hard-line parliament speaker and five others to run in the country's June 28 presidential election. The council again barred former President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, a firebrand populist known for the crackdown after his disputed 2009 re-election, from running. AP

In EU Parliament vote, far right eyes gains

Twenty-one of the bloc's 27 countries voted on the final day of the four-day election exercise to elect members of EU's parliament; while centrist parties are predicted to keep most of the 720 seats, they will be weakened by a stronger far right pushing the bloc towards ultraconservatism

Agence France-Presse
BRUSSELS

Tens of millions of voters from Vilnius to Madrid were casting ballots on Sunday on the final day of elections for the EU's Parliament, with far right parties eyeing gains at a pivotal time for the bloc.

Twenty-one of the bloc's 27 countries, including heavy hitters France and Germany, were voting on the election's biggest day to help shape the European Union's direction over the next five years.

"In the current world situation, where everyone is trying to isolate each other, it's important to keep standing up for peace and democracy," said one voter in Berlin, Tanja Reith, 52.



Detrimental vote: A woman leaves a voting booth in a polling station in Mara in Romania's Maramures on Sunday. AFP

The election comes as the continent is confronted with Russia's war in Ukraine, global trade tensions marked by U.S.-China rivalry, a climate emergency and a West that may soon have to adapt to a new Donald Trump presidency.

"Right now we are living in a scenario of uncertainty," Jaime Bajo, a sports centre operator, said as he cast his vote in Madrid.

More than 360 million people were eligible to vote in the four-day election, although turnout in

EU polls is historically low. The bloc's next parliament will help decide who runs the powerful European Commission, with German conservative Ursula von der Leyen — who cast her vote in her home country — vying for a second term.

France and Germany

While centrist parties are predicted to keep most of the legislature's 720 seats, polls suggest they will be weakened by a stronger far right pushing the bloc towards ultraconservatism.

Preliminary results are expected late on Sunday. France will be the EU's high-profile battleground for competing ideologies.

Projected results from France put Marine Le Pen's National Rally around 33%,

with 31 seats in the European Parliament — more than double the score of President Emmanuel Macron's liberals back on 15%.

In Germany, the election could also deal a blow to Chancellor Olaf Scholz, who voted accompanied by his wife and stopped to pose for a picture with a young couple and a baby.

Leading the polls in Europe's biggest economy are the opposition centre-right Christian Democrats, with a projected 29.5% of votes.

The Alternative for Germany party shrugged off a string of pre-election scandals to rise to second place — coming ahead of Chancellor Olaf Scholz's Social Democrats and its two ruling coalition partners.

The far-right Alternative for Germany (AfD), on 16-

16.5%, was seen either neck-and-neck or ahead of all three parties in Mr. Scholz's ruling coalition: the SPD, the Greens and the liberal FDP.

In Italy, holding its second day of voting, the far-right ruling Brothers of Italy party of Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni was expected to come out on top. She is being courted both by Ms. von der Leyen — who needs her backing for a second mandate — as well as Ms. Le Pen and Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban, who are eyeing the formation of a far-right parliament supergroup.

Unlike Ms. Le Pen, however, Ms. Meloni aligns with the EU consensus on maintaining military and financial assistance to Ukraine.

Pakistan and IMF disagree over new income tax rates

Press Trust of India
ISLAMABAD

Talks between Pakistan and the IMF have ended inconclusively due to a disagreement over new income tax rates for salaried and non-salaried persons and the imposition of a standard 18% sales tax on agriculture and health sector goods.

On Friday, Pakistan and the IMF discussed the outstanding issues related to taxation and the energy sector. Citing sources, the Express Tribune newspaper

reported that both sides could not resolve their differences on the income tax threshold, the merger of salaried and non-salaried rates and the maximum income tax rate for individuals.

Discussions are revolving around whether to charge a new backbreaking 45% income tax from salaried and non-salaried individuals on a monthly income of just over Pakistani Rs 4,67,000. At present, the maximum rate of 35% applies to a monthly income of over Rs 5,00,000.

Imran Khan major hurdle in political reconciliation in Pakistan, says Nawaz

Press Trust of India
ISLAMABAD

Pakistan's former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif has said his successor Imran Khan was the main hurdle in political reconciliation in the country and underscored the ruling PML-N party's commitment to dialogue and not indulging in vengeance, according to media reports.

Callous nature

Mr. Sharif's remarks came during a meeting with party senators on Friday evening, where the issue of negotiations with Mr. Khan's



Nawaz Sharif

Pakistan Tehreek e Insaf (PTI) party was extensively discussed.

Mr. Sharif, the president of the ruling Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) party, said that Mr. Khan, also a former Prime Minis-

ter, himself was not displaying seriousness in the negotiation process, which posed a significant challenge to fruitful discussions.

He questioned the feasibility of negotiations when one party involved was not committed to the process.

"How can one negotiate when he is not serious?" Mr. Nawaz responded to the party lawmakers.

Past instances

Mr. Sharif, 74, referenced past instances where Mr. Khan had rejected offers of friendship, indicating a pattern of reluctance to en-

gage in constructive dialogue.

"I travelled to Bani Gala (Imran Khan's house) myself. Our sincerity is considered our weakness," the former premier stressed.

To underscore the importance of dialogue despite political differences, Mr. Nawaz cited the example of his meeting with the late premier Benazir Bhutto, despite facing staunch opposition.

Since he did not believe in political vengeance, he and former premier Benazir Bhutto had signed the Charter of Democracy, the PML-N president added.

Sport

Divya held by Mkrtychyan but continues to lead

WORLD JUNIOR CHESS

P.K. Ajith Kumar
GANDHINAGAR

Mariam Mkrtychyan had to wait a bit for her rival to arrive on Sunday afternoon. It proved well worth the wait for the Armenian, as she held Divya Deshmukh to a draw in the seventh round of the World junior girls' chess championship at the Gift City Club.

Mkrtychyan is seeded second alright, but she is rated some 156 points below the Nagpur girl. Their Semi-Slav Defence game lasted just 25 moves.

Divya, however, maintained her sole lead, with six points, as the second-board game between Russian Ksenia Norman and



Even-stevens: Mkrtychyan and Divya split the point in the seventh round. P.K. AJITH KUMAR

Narmin Abdinova of Azerbaijan also ended in a draw. They, along with Mkrtychyan, Ayalum Kaladorva and Rakshitta Ravi are joint second with 5.5 points.

In the Open championship, Kazakhstan's Kazy-

bek Nogerbek took the sole lead after beating L.M.S.T. De Silva of Sri Lanka. He is on six points, half-a-point ahead of eight players, including second-seeded Russian Aleksey Grebnev and third seed Pranav Anand.

Important results (seventh round): Open: Rudik Makarian (FIDE) 5.5 drew with Jose Gabriel Cardoso (Col) 5.5; Kazybek Nogerbek (Kaz) 6 bt L.M.S.T. De Silva (SL) 5; Marius Fromm (Ger) 4.5 lost to Aleksey Grebnev (FIDE) 5.5; Pranav Anand 5.5 bt A.R. Ilamparthi 4.5; Daniel Quizon (Phi) 5.5 bt Gleb Dudin (Hun) 4.5;

Emin Ohanyan (Arm) 5.5 bt Pham Tran Gia Phuc (Vie) 4.5; V.S. Nandish 4.5 lost to Mamikon Gharibyan (Arm) 5.5; Luka Budisavljevic (Srb) 5.5 bt Vuppala Praneeth 4.5; Siddharth Jagadeesh (Sgp) 4.5 drew with Artiom Stribuk 4.5; Sambit Panda 5 bt Shawn Rodrigue-Lemieux 4.

Girls: Mariam Mkrtychyan (Arm) 5.5 drew with Divya Deshmukh 6; Ksenia Norman (FIDE) 5.5 drew with Narmin Abdinova (Aze) 5.5; Ayalum Kaladorva (Kaz) 5.5 bt Mariam Mkrtychyan (Arm) 4.5; Rakshitta Ravi 5.5 bt Ayan Allahverdiyeva (Aze) 4.5; Sachi Jain 5 drew with Xeniya Balabayeva (Kaz) 5; Sofia Hryzlova (Sui) 5 drew with Anna Zhurova (FIDE) 5; Kasthuri Bhai 4.5 lost to Beloslava Krasteva (Bul) 5; Anastasia Grozdanovic (Srb) 4 lost to Meryem Agajanova (Tkm) 5.

Sneha Halder 5 bt Mrittika Mallick 4; Swara Lakshmi Nair 5 bbt Bhagyashree Patil 4.

Indian men's and women's teams suffer reverses

FIH PRO LEAGUE

Press Trust of India
LONDON

Veteran goalkeeper P.R. Sreejesh pulled off a stunning save from penalty spot but that was not enough as India lost 2-3 to Great Britain in the men's FIH Pro League hockey match here on Sunday.

The side had a similar loss against Germany in the third match of the London leg on Saturday.

The Craig Fulton-coached Indian team ended its campaign with a loss to the host.

The Indian side was stung by a Phil Roper

strike right at the start of the game but regained its composure and came close to scoring on a couple of occasions only to be thwarted by the Great Britain defence in the first quarter.

However, the visitor found the equaliser through Sukhjeet Singh's (19) excellent strike four minutes into the second quarter.

If the home team looked better in the first quarter, the Indians controlled the game in the second quarter as the two teams went into half time with the score locked at 1-1.

Having got a penalty stroke, India skipper Harmanpreet Singh led by ex-

ample as he made no mistake and firmly slotted the ball past the English goalkeeper.

Jack Waller restored parity almost immediately as he produced a fine goal after an aerial ball was received by Nurse on the right.

Meanwhile, Mandeep Singh missed an easy chance. That miss hurt the team as Alan Forsyth scored what proved to be the winner for Britain in the 50th minute.

Run of losses

The Indian women's hockey team went down 2-3 to Great Britain on Sunday, extending its run of losses to eight matches.

CELEBRATION

India and Pakistan fans bring festive mood to the Big Apple



K.R. DEEPAK

India and Pakistan cricket fans gathered in New York in thousands on Sunday for the T20 World Cup clash. The 34,000-seat temporary Nassau County Cricket Stadium was a sell out with fans travelling from far and wide for the game. "This is simply one of the biggest events in sports," said Kumar Mathuria from New York.

TOUGH GOING

New York pitch is really fresh and just needs a bit of traffic: Markram



GETTY IMAGES

South Africa skipper Aiden Markram admitted that batting on the Nassau County pitch has been tough. "It's still really fresh and just needs a bit of traffic. It's not your usual boundaries with the ball flying everywhere. The pitch has been quite slow. That makes it even tougher to get it through the ring," Markram.

ON FIRE

Both Nortje and Baartman have been fantastic, says Markram



PTI

South Africa skipper Aiden Markram lauded pacers Anrich Nortje and Othniel Baartman for their superb performances in the T20 World Cup so far. "Both of them have been fantastic. It's great to have Nortje firing and full of confidence. Baartman is really clear about what he does and keeps things simple. He's got a good skillset," said Markram.

PLAN

Bowlers have to stay one step ahead of batters: WI's Hosein



AP

West Indies' Akeal Hosein talked about the work he put in behind bowling with the new ball. "I needed this. It's a lot of hard work, especially when you start getting success. The way the game is moving the bowlers have to come up with different plans. You have to stay one step ahead of the batters every time," Hosein said.

Bumrah-inspired India stuns Pakistan in NY thriller

The pacer's three-wicket burst helps the Men in Blue defend a modest 119 on a tricky pitch; Pant's fearless approach and his exploits with the big gloves prove crucial; Naseem and Rauf's efforts in vain

T20 WORLD CUP

Ashwin Achal
NEW YORK

The Group-A ICC Men's T20 World Cup clash between India and Pakistan turned out to be a battle of attribution. On that count, India lasted the distance to notch up a six-run victory.

The Nassau County International Cricket Stadium did not afford fours and sixes. Runs came at a premium, so much so that India's total of 119 – inadequate in most T20s – proved to be insurmountable.

At 80 for three, Pakistan was on course for a first win of the tournament. Mohammed Rizwan was going well, and the required rate was a shade over six an over.

Poor decision

Rizwan (31, 44b, 1x4, 1x6), who had batted with grit up to this point, chose to take on India's premier bowler Jasprit Bumrah. It was a poor choice which cost Pakistan dear. A dead straight missile cleaned up Rizwan, who wildly swung across the line.

With the settled man gone, Pakistan stuttered and fell flat. Imad Wasim



Swing factors: Bumrah turned the tide India's way with the crucial wicket of Rizwan after Pant had bailed the team out with a 31-ball 42. K.R. DEEPAK

(15, 23b, 1x4) could not get it off the square, and the Indians piled on the pressure.

Pakistan wilted, handing India a second consecutive win. Pakistan's campaign, meanwhile, is in the doldrums after a second loss. The high-profile game kept the full house of

34,028 spectators on the edge of their seats.

The start of the match was delayed due to rain. Babar Azam called it right at the toss, allowing Pakistan to make first use of a sticky pitch.

Poor fielding and wayward lines, however, prevented Pakistan's progress.

Rishabh Pant received three lives, courtesy two dropped catches by Usman Khan and one by Iftikhar Ahmed. This was destined to be Pant's day, who went on to score a crucial 31-ball 42.

The surface expectedly helped the pacers in the early overs. Virat Kohli (4)

threw his hands outside off to Naseem Shah, but failed to time it. The half-hearted cut spooned to Usman Khan at cover point.

Kohli goes cheaply

This was a second successive failure for Kohli, who had gotten off the mark with a textbook drive.

Rohit Sharma played the flick with elan, sending left-arm fast bowler Shaheen Afridi over deep mid-wicket for six. But when he tried to repeat the shot, he could only lob it to Haris Rauf at deep square leg.

In a surprise move, Axar Patel was promoted to four. Batting alongside

SCOREBOARD

INDIA
Rohit Sharma c Rauf b Afridi 13 (12b, 1x4, 1x6), Virat Kohli c Usman b Naseem 4 (3b, 1x4), Rishabh Pant c Babar b Amir 42 (31b, 6x4), Axar Patel b Naseem 20 (18b, 2x4, 1x6), Suryakumar Yadav c Amir b Rauf 7 (8b, 1x4), Shivam Dube c & b Naseem 3 (9b), Hardik Pandya c Iftikhar b Rauf 7 (12b, 1x4), Ravindra Jadeja c Imad b Amir 0 (1b), Arshdeep Singh run out 9 (13b, 1x4), Jasprit Bumrah c Imad b Rauf 0 (1b), Mohammed Siraj (not out) 7 (7b); Extras (lb-1, nb-1, w-5); Total (in 19 overs): 119.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-12 (Kohli, 1.3 overs), 2-19 (Rohit, 2.4), 3-58 (Axar, 7.4), 4-89 (Suryakumar, 11.2), 5-95 (Dube, 13.2), 6-96 (Pant, 14.1), 7-96 (Jadeja, 14.2), 8-112 (Hardik, 17.4), 9-112 (Bumrah, 17.5).

PAKISTAN BOWLING
Afridi 4-0-29-1, Naseem 4-0-21-3, Amir 3-0-23-2, Iftikhar 1-0-7-0, Imad 3-0-17-0, Rauf 3-0-21-3.

PAKISTAN
Mohammed Rizwan b Bumrah 31 (44b, 1x4, 1x6), Babar Azam c Suryakumar b Bumrah 13 (10b, 2x4), Usman Khan lbw b Axar 13 (15b, 1x4), Fakhar Zaman c Pant b Hardik 13 (8b, 1x4, 1x6), Imad Wasim c Pant b Arshdeep 15 (23b, 1x4), Shadab Khan c Pant b Hardik 4 (7b), Iftikhar Ahmed c Arshdeep b Bumrah 5 (9b), Shaheen Afridi (not out) 0 (1b), Naseem Shah (not out) 10 (4b, 2x4); Extras (lb-4, w-4, nb-1): 9; Total (for seven wks. in 20 overs): 113.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-26 (Babar, 4.4), 2-57 (Usman, 10.1), 3-73 (Fakhar, 12.2), 4-80 (Rizwan, 14.1), 5-88 (Shadab, 16.3), 6-102 (Iftikhar, 18.6), 7-102 (Imad, 19.1).

INDIA BOWLING
Arshdeep 4-0-31-1, Siraj 4-0-19-0, Bumrah 4-0-14-3, Hardik 4-0-24-2, Jadeja 2-0-10-0, Axar 2-0-11-1.

Toss: Pakistan.
PoM: Bumrah.
India won by six runs.

another southpaw in Pant, Axar (20, 18b, 2x4, 1x6) used timing and placement to accumulate the runs.

Spate of wickets

Axar's cameo took India to a comfortable 81 for three in 10 overs, before a spate of wickets left the side in trouble.

India lost four batters for seven runs, shifting the

momentum to Pakistan. Iftikhar took a good catch in the deep to send last hope Hardik Pandya back.

Last pair Arshdeep (9) and Mohammed Siraj (7 n.o.) frustrated Pakistan with shrewd running. Despite their best efforts, India could not play out its full quota of overs but it didn't matter in the end.

Hosein strikes as Uganda batters fall like nine pins

Press Trust of India
PROVIDENCE (GUYANA)

Left-arm spinner Akeal Hosein worked his inimitable sorcery with a five-for as host West Indies hammered Uganda by 134 runs in the T20 World Cup.

Hosein knocked the wind out of the Uganda batting unit with career-best figures of five for 11, helping WI out Uganda for 39 in 12 overs, the joint-lowest team total in the Men's T20 WC.

Final push

This was after Johnson Charles (44) and Andre Russell (30 not out) provided the final push to help the host post a challenging 173 for five.

The win boosted WI's Net Run Rate to a healthy 3.574.

Uganda's top-order fell like ninepins with half the side back in the dugout inside the PowerPlay.

Opening the bowling, Hosein picked up three wickets in as many overs. He struck off the second ball of the innings with Roger Mukasa becoming his first victim.

The Ugandan batters couldn't read Hosein as the spinner picked two more wickets in his last over to



Cock-a-hoop: Pooran is a bundle of joy after the co-hosts produced a superlative performance. AP

register his maiden five-wicket haul and also the best figures by a West Indian at the T20 WC.

Earlier, Brandon King (13) and Charles, who was dropped on 23 in the fourth over, scored at a quick pace to give WI a solid start after skipper Rovman Powell decided to bat first.

Maximums
Charles and Pooran continued to hit maximums every over before Uganda skipper Brian Masaba (two for 31) cut short the latter's stay by completing a caught and bowled.

A historic first for Alcaraz at Roland Garros

FRENCH OPEN

Associated Press
PARIS

Carlos Alcaraz came back to defeat Alexander Zverev 6-3, 2-6, 5-7, 6-1, 6-2 on Sunday and win the French Open for his third Grand Slam title.

Alcaraz is a 21-year-old from Spain who grew up watching countryman Rafael Nadal win trophy after trophy at Roland Garros – a record 14 in all – and now has eclipsed Nadal as the youngest man to collect Major championships on three surfaces. Nadal was about a year and a half older when he did it.

Sunday's victory – in which he trailed two sets to one, just as he had in the semifinals against Jannik Sinner on Friday – allowed Alcaraz to add the clay-court championship at Roland Garros to his triumphs on hard courts at the U.S. Open in 2022 and on grass at Wimbledon in 2023.

Alcaraz is now 3-0 in Grand Slam finals. Zverev dropped to 0-2 in Major title matches. The 27-year-old from Germany was the runner-up at the 2020 U.S. Open after blowing a two-set lead against Dominic Thiem.

This time, Zverev lost after surging in front by reel-

The new king of clay



1 Alcaraz is the first man in the Open era to win his first three Majors on three different surfaces (US Open 2022 on hard court, Wimbledon 2023 on grass and French Open 2024 on clay)

2 Since 2000, the 21-year-old is only the second man to win the French Open title before turning 22. Rafael Nadal did it from 2005 to 07

3 Alcaraz won his third straight Grand Slam final and extended his record to 3-0

5 He is the fifth active male player with three or more Slam titles after Novak Djokovic (24), Nadal (22), Andy Murray (3) and Stan Wawrinka (3)

7 Alcaraz is the seventh man to win a Grand Slam on all three surfaces after Nadal, Mats Wilander, Jimmy Connors, Roger Federer, Djokovic and Andre Agassi

7 The Spaniard is the seventh man in the Open era to win his first three Major finals after Gustavo Kuerten, Stefan Edberg, Bjorn Borg, Federer, Connors and Wawrinka

8 Alcaraz is the eighth Spanish man to win at Roland Garros after Nadal, Manuel Santana (pre-Open era), Andres Gimeno, Sergi Bruguera, Carlos Moya, Albert Costa, Juan Carlos Ferrero (Alcaraz's current coach who won the title in 2003, a month after Alcaraz was born)

8 Alcaraz ended French Open's eight-year wait for a first-time men's champion

21 Alcaraz is the youngest man to win Grand Slam titles on all three surfaces at the age of 21

21 Alcaraz is also the youngest man to win three different Slams at the age of 21, eclipsing Connors' record (22 years 7 days)

COMPILED BY NIHIT SACHDEVA

ing off the last five games of the third set. Alcaraz's level dipped during that stretch and he seemed distracted by a complaint over the condition of the clay at Court Philippe Chatrier, telling chair umpire Renaud Lichtenstein it was "unbelievable."

But Alcaraz reset himself and surged to the finish, taking 12 of the last 15 games while being treated by a trainer at changeovers

for an issue with his left leg.

No. 3 Alcaraz and No. 4 Zverev were making their first appearance in a French Open final. Indeed, this was the first men's title match at Roland Garros since 2004 without Nadal, Novak Djokovic or Roger Federer.

Nadal lost to Zverev in the first round two weeks ago; Djokovic, a three-time champion, withdrew be-

fore the quarterfinals with a knee injury that required surgery; Federer is retired.

There were some jitters at the outset. Zverev started the proceedings with a pair of double-faults – walking to the sideline to change rackets after the second, as though the equipment was the culprit – and eventually got broken. Alcaraz lost serve immediately, too, framing a forehand that sent the ball into the

stands – which he would do on a handful of occasions – and double-faulting, trying a so-so drop shot that led to an easy winner for Zverev, then missing a backhand.

Let's just say they won't be putting those initial 10 minutes in the Louvre. A lot of the 4-hour, 19-minute match was patchy, littered with unforced errors.

Alcaraz managed to come out strong in the fourth set, grabbing 16 of the first 21 points to move out to a 4-0 edge, including one brilliant, sliding, down-the-line forehand passing winner that he celebrated by thrusting his right index finger overhead in a "No. 1" sign, then throwing an uppercut while screaming, "Vamos!"

No, he is not ranked No. 1 at the moment – Sinner makes his debut at the top spot on Monday – but he has been before and, although a "2" will be beside Alcaraz's name next week, there is little doubt that he is as good as it gets in men's tennis right now.

INBRIEF



Shi and Chen take the honours at Indonesia Open

World No. 2 Shi Yu Qi clinched his first Indonesia Open badminton singles title, after triumphing over Danish shuttler Anders Antonsen 21-9, 12-21, 21-14 in a 71-minute final at Jakarta on Sunday. In the women's singles final, Olympic champion and World No. 2 Chen Yu Fei of China toppled South Korea's An Se-young, the World No. 1, 21-14, 14-21, 21-18 in 82 minutes.

Czech Republic's Sadilek injures leg, to miss Euro

Czech Republic midfielder Michal Sadilek will miss the European Championship after sustaining a leg injury while riding a bicycle, the Czech team said on Sunday. The accident took place at the team's training camp in Schlading, Austria. Coach Ivan Hašek called the injury of the Twente player a serious blow.



Olympic champ Jacobs retains European 100m crown

Italy's Olympic champion Marcell Jacobs timed 10.02 seconds to retain his European 100m crown in Rome on Saturday. There was a record-extending seventh women's discus title for Croatia's Sandra Elkasevic and third successive European golds for Norway's Jakob Ingebrigtsen in the men's 5,000m, Belgium's Nafi Thiam in the heptathlon and Greek Miltiadis Tentoglou in the men's long jump.



Rahm withdraws from LIV Golf Houston

Jon Rahm withdrew from LIV Golf Houston after six holes on Saturday because of an infection in his left foot. There were no immediate details on the nature of the injury. He was seen wincing after one shot during the opening round. Rahm, a two-time Major champion and former world No. 1, opened with a 69. He had six pars on another day of low scoring before deciding to stop.

LIVE TELECAST

T20 World Cup: Star Sports 1 (SD & HD) & Hotstar, 8 p.m.

All-round Australia blows England away

The result is a setback to the defending champion, batters take advantage of the shorter boundary to take Marsh's men past 200; Zampa, Cummins star with the ball in commanding win

T20 WORLD CUP

Ayan Acharya
BRIDGETOWN (BARBADOS)

England's T20 World Cup defence was in disarray after a deflating 36-run defeat to Australia in a Group-B match at the Kensington Oval in Bridgetown, Barbados, on Saturday.

Despite a brisk start from openers Phil Salt and Jos Buttler, England was stifled in the 202-run chase by leg-spinner Adam Zampa. Zampa took two crucial wickets and bowled bravely on a challenging ground, where a boundary under 60 meters on one side and strong crosswinds tested bowlers throughout the day.

Interestingly, while England opted for off-spin from both ends at the start, Australia stuck with pace during the PowerPlay, introducing Zampa only in the eighth over.

The decision to use part-time off-spinner Will Jacks with the new ball is likely to be scrutinised, especially after Travis Head and David Warner plundered 22 runs from his over.

However, the choice to bowl off-spin against two left-handers is a common strategy in T20 cricket, in-



Sound of timber: Zampa casting Salt triggered a slide. AP

creasingly influenced by data and match-ups.

England's use of Moeen Ali early against the left-handed openers was expected, but deploying Jacks alongside him marked the first instance of England opening a T20 innings with spin from both ends.

The wisdom of a bowling change is generally evaluated in hindsight, a luxury Buttler didn't have.

This wasn't the only department where England was challenged. The lengths bowled by their pacers, especially Mark

Wood, in the PowerPlay were also subpar.

He bowled a leg-stump line to Warner to cramp the left-hander, but the innocuous lengths meant the Aussie opener was able to hit the ball comfortably.

Struggle

England struggled throughout against an Australia team that started strong and never relented. Concerns are mounting about the team's ageing line-up, particularly the middle order, which failed to keep pace with the game.

Jonny Bairstow's sedate seven off 13 balls raises questions about the decision to bat him ahead of Harry Brook. During the run chase, Bairstow kept trying to break the shackles against Zampa but came up empty-handed each time. Frustration was writ large across his face. Time is running out for Bairstow and his team.

The scores: Australia 201/7 in 20 overs (Head 34, Warner 39, Marsh 35, Maxwell 28, Stoinis 30, Jordan 2/44) bt England 165/6 in 20 overs (Salt 37, Buttler 42, Moeen 25, Cummins 2/23, Zampa 2/28); **Toss:** England; **PoM:** Zampa.



Priorities: Zampa said he could spend time with his family by skipping the IPL. PTI

Pulling out of IPL the best thing: Zampa

Press Trust of India
BRIDGETOWN

Australia spinner Adam Zampa said that pulling out of IPL 2024 was the "best thing" to do coming into the T20 World Cup, adding that skipping the league also allowed him to spend time with family and tend to injuries.

Pivotal role

Zampa played a pivotal role in Australia's win against England at the Kensington Oval with the leg-spinner getting rid of both the openers, Phil Salt and Jos Buttler, in quick succession. "Yeah, obviously made that decision a little while ago to pull out of the IPL and I thought it was the best thing for me moving forward into this World Cup," Zampa said at the post-match press conference. "I was tired, I had some niggles and I'm a family

man as well. Trying to put them first over work sometimes is pretty important.

"I actually am a bit of a slow starter. My body feels great and I just did that bit of extra work. Maybe a bit more bowling than I usually would before a tournament like this. And then the practice games and everything just feels nice at the moment," he added.

Cricket pundits have started drawing comparisons between Zampa and the legendary Shane Warne, following the former's crucial role in Australia's title-winning run at the 2021 T20 World Cup.

"Never really thought of it that way, to be honest. Like I had to fight for my position in the team for a long time.

"And then I was lucky enough to have captains that backed me, (Aaron) Finch really backed me in. And it's the same with (Pat) Cummins and (Mitchell) Marsh as well.

Gold for Sanjivani, silver for Sable

ATHLETICS

Sports Bureau

Asian Games champion Avinash Sable opened his season in the 3000m steeplechase with a silver in the Portland Track Festival, a World Athletics Continental Tour bronze event, in Oregon on Saturday. He clocked 8:21.85s.

Asian champion Parul Chaudhary took the bronze in the women's 3000m steeplechase in a season-best 9:31.38s.

Former Asian bronze medalist Sanjivani Jadhav struck gold in the women's 10,000m in 32:22.77s, a time which was a second off her personal best, while Seema was sixth in 32:55.91s.

In the men's 10,000m, Asian Games silver medalist Mohammad Afzal was sixth in the men's 800m (race A) in 1:49.11s.



Sanjivani. PTI

fourth (28:14.67s) while Abhishek Pal was 26th (29:41.74).

In France, Annu Rani - the Asian Games gold medalist with 62.92m last year - took the women's javelin throw silver with 57.48m at the Strasbourg National meet.

In Britain's BMC Watford GP, Asian Games silver medalist Mohammad Afzal was sixth in the men's 800m (race A) in 1:49.11s.

Akshat clinches Senior Max title in National karting

MOTORSPORTS

Sports Bureau
BENGALURU

Akshat Misra from Crest Motorsports cruised to a commanding victory in the Senior Max final in the first round of the MECO-FMCSI National karting championship Rotax Max 2024 at the Kartopia track here on Sunday.

The other winners were Nikhilesh Raju (Peregrine Racing) in the Junior Max category, and Rivaan Dev Preetham (MSPORT), who topped the Micro Max class.

The event attracted 57 entries, including participants from abroad.

The results (provisional): Senior Max - Final (16 laps): 1. Akshat Misra (Crest Motorsports, 14:59.597); 2. Ruhaan Alva



Victorious: Nikhilesh (Junior Max), Rivaan (Micro Max), and Akshat (Senior Max) claimed the honours. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

(MSPORT, 15:02.073); 3. Varun Hari Praveen (Peregrine Racing, 15:05.202). **Pre-final (14 laps):** 1. Akshat Misra (13:18.023); 2. Ruhaan Alva (13:19.292); 3. Ishaan Madesh (Peregrine Racing, 13:19.826).

Junior Max - Final (14 laps): 1. Nikhilesh Raju (Peregrine Racing, 13:19.767); 2. Eknath Vengatesan (MSPORT, 13:23.763); 3. Aarav Dewan (Leapfrog Racing, 13:24.377). **Pre-final (12 laps):** 1. Arafath Sheikh (Crest

Motorsport, 11:30.445); 2. Aahil Mecklai (Rayo Racing, 11:31.159); 3. Eshanth Vengatesan (11:31.555).

Micro Max - Final (12 laps): 1. Rivaan Dev Preetham (MSPORT, 12:16.790); 2. Rehan Khan (MSPORT, 12:19.920); 3. Atiqa Asif Mir (MSPORT, 12:21.397).

Pre-final (10 laps): 1. Yatharth Gaur (10:42.721); 2. Rivaan Dev Preetham (10:45.092); 3. Rishik Rohit Reddy (Peregrine Racing, 10:49.071).

Russell edges Verstappen on tie-breaker to take pole

CANADIAN GP

Associated Press
MONTREAL

George Russell edged Formula 1 points leader Max Verstappen on a tie-breaker for the pole position in the Canadian Grand Prix on Saturday.

Russell and Red Bull's Verstappen had identical laps of 1 minute 12.000 seconds at Circuit Gilles Villeneuve, with the Mercedes driver getting the top spot by setting the time first.

It was the second time F1 qualifying had ended in a tie since the start of three-decimal timing. McLaren's Lando Norris was third at 1:12.02. Both Ferraris failed to reach the third qualifying session for the first time since 2021.

de Jong back in training for the Dutch ahead of Euro 2024

FOOTBALL

Reuters
AMSTERDAM

Frenkie de Jong has returned to the training field, in a boost for the Netherlands one week before its opening game at the European Championship, coach Ronald Koeman said on Sunday.

The playmaking midfielder is seen as key to the Dutch hopes at the tournament in Germany, and he joined the rest of the squad on the pitch for the first time on Sunday after individual training over the last week. de Jong has struggled with ankle injuries this season and not played



Playmaker: Frenkie de Jong is seen as the key to the Dutch hopes at the Euro. AFP

a match since April. "He was part of the training but we kept him away from any contact," Koeman told a press conference, ahead of Monday's final preparatory friendly

against Iceland in Rotterdam. "It is possible that Frenkie will not make it to the first match," Koeman said. "But we can wait until the second or third game. That's a possibility.

Sumit Nagal clinches the Helibronn Challenger title

TENNIS

Sports Bureau

Sumit Nagal defeated Alexander Ritschard of Switzerland 6-1, 6-7(5), 6-3 in the final of the €120,950 Challenger tennis tournament at Helibronn, Germany, on Sunday. It was the second Challenger title of the season for the 26-year-old Nagal, following the one in Chennai.

It was his sixth career crown in Challengers, and 15th singles title in the professional circuit.

The champion collected €16,550 and 100 ATP points.

The runner-up got €9,705 and 50 points.

The 95th ranked Sumit, is expected to jump up in rankings and build a strong base for breaking into the top-50.

The results: €120,950 Challenger, Helibronn, Germany: Final: Sumit Nagal bt Alexander Ritschard (Sui) 6-1, 6-7(5), 6-3; **Semifinals:** Nagal bt Luca Van Assche (Fra) 6-2, 7-6(5). **\$15,000 ITF women, Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic: Quarterfinals:** Darja Vidmanova (Cze) bt Riya Bhatia 6-3, 6-2; **Doubles (semifinals):** Jessica Gomez (Mex) & Noelia Melgar (Bol) bt Sharmada Balu & Riya Bhatia 7-6(7), 6-4; **Quarterfinals:** Sharmada & Riya bt Maria Hernandez (Mex) & Kelly Williford (Dom) 3-6, 6-2, [10-4].

THE HINDU
POWERPLAY
T20 TRIVIA QUIZ

- Who was the highest wicket taker for India in their victorious 2007 T20 World cup campaign?
- Who is the only cricketer to win the 'Player of the Match' award in the final of two different T20 World Cups?
- MS Dhoni has led the most matches as captain in T20 World Cup history (33). Who is in second place, having led in 18 matches at the start of this edition of the World Cup?

Scan the code, to participate in the quiz and win exciting gift vouchers

Answer to yesterday's quiz:

- 2021
- Virat Kohli
- Mohammed Asif

‘The Rhinos’ making a charge on the game’s grandest stage

Sport is a treasure trove of inspiration with stories of grit, defiance and self-belief emerging from every single discipline in the spectrum, and the Nepal cricket team is a testament to it



GETTY IMAGES

Tarun Shastry

Nestled in the Himalayas with the magnificent Mount Everest – the world’s highest peak – among the stunning landscapes within its peripheries, Nepal is a country that’s familiar with the art of conquering the most arduous of peaks.

Nepal’s last appearance in the ICC T20 World Cup was a decade ago. It was a different world back then: M. S. Dhoni was still India captain, Virat Kohli was on the path to becoming the run-machine he is today, and Nepal’s own leg-spinner Sandeep Lamichhane was a non-controversial 14-year-old kid.

In that 2014 edition in Bangladesh, the Nepal men’s cricket team – nicknamed The Rhinos – embarked on a magical journey that captured the hearts of fans at home and around the globe.

Their performances helped display the side’s perseverance, determination and an unbreakable spirit which ultimately helped this bunch of 15 representing a small nation make a splash on the sport’s biggest stage.

Stuff of dreams

That 2014 team was a legendary outfit that spurred thousands of dreams, including those of many who are part of the current Nepal squad.

Skipper Paras Khadka led a side with immense talent in Bangladesh. His own career has been through a roller-coaster ride as he shifted from wanting to migrate to Australia at one point to leading his country in an ICC event and now contributing as an administrator.

Gyanendra Malla was known for his solidity with the bat. Sharad Vesawkar’s allround dependability helped Nepal in several games. Spinner Shakti Gauchan’s wily spell helped Nepal seal a historic win against Hong Kong. Subash Khakurel made it to the record books after scoring Nepal’s first half-century in an ICC event. Youngsters like Sompal Kami added exuberance and spunk to the outfit.

Nepal achieved two stunning victories. The first one came against Hong Kong (a resounding 80-run triumph made possible first by Khadka and Malla’s 80-run stand and Gauchan’s brilliance with the ball), and the second was achieved against a well-established Afghanistan team which saw Nepal successfully defend 141 in Chattogram.

The victories birthed new heroes for this nation - Khakurel with his fifty, Vesawkar’s assuring cameo, Kami and Gauchan for their strikes with the ball. But the Afghanistan triumph was orchestrated by Jitendra Mukhiya (*in pic*) with a miserly spell of 4-0-18-3 ultimately sealing one of the nation’s most famous cricketing victories.

It wasn’t just the opponent to be defeated, it was also circumstance. Infighting among administrators, limited infrastructure, coaches walking in and out of the job - all this and more hindered the development of the players. Nepal’s showing despite the system and not because of it, was a statement.

Sport is a treasure trove of inspiration with stories of grit, defiance and self-belief emerging from every single discipline in the spectrum.

Take the legendary ‘Miracle on Ice’ for example. It refers to the remarkable and unexpected triumph of the United States men’s ice hockey team over the formidable Soviet Union during the 1980 Winter Olympics in Lake Placid, New York - a triumph regarded as one of the most iconic tales of a fightback in sport.

That Soviet outfit was considered unbeatable, having dominated international ice hockey since 1954, while the U.S. team comprised amateur and college athletes.

Defying expectations

Coached by the legendary Herb Brooks, the American team defied expectations by advancing to the medal round. The game against the Soviets began with the US managing to stay tight, ending the first period tied at 2-2.

In a dramatic third period, US captain

Mike Eruzione’s decisive goal put the US ahead 4-3, while goaltender Jim Craig’s heroic saves during those ten gut-wrenching minutes helped the US maintain the lead.

As the final seconds ticked away, commentator Al Michaels screamed arguably the most famous line in US sport, ‘Do you believe in miracles? Yes!’.

Two days later, the US achieved an incredible victory by winning the gold medal after defeating Finland. The ‘Miracle’ was complete.

The stunning victory stands as a testament to the determination, remarkable teamwork, and indomitable underdog spirit that captured the hearts of a nation united in support of their team’s success.

On the day of the game against the Soviets, Brooks jotted down the phrase ‘You were meant to be here’ and tucked it into his coat pocket. He later revealed it to the team when they achieved the impossible.

For Nepal, its ‘you were meant to be here’ moment came in 2023.

The nation needed multiple miracles to stand a chance to qualify for the ODI World Cup. Players lost to criminal proceedings, financial instability facing the sport, injuries - name it and the obstacle was there for new coach Monty Desai to break his head over.

Against all odds

When Desai joined the team at the start of 2023, Nepal found itself languishing at the bottom of the table, facing a monumental task if they had to make the Qualifiers. They needed 11 wins out of 12 games to go through, a feat that for all practical purposes seemed impossible.

Strife tests character and boy, did Nepal shine.

Each of those 12 games was intense. Against Namibia, opening batter Kushal Bhurtel demonstrated incredible resilience by scoring an incredible 115 of just 113 deliveries while chasing a target of 286, all while dealing with the pain of his mother struggling with burns after being involved in a fire accident.

In the matches that followed, leg-spinner Mousom Dhakal suffered a shoulder injury, a huge setback for the outfit.

With limited time and resources, the team urgently needed to submit a comprehensive report, including medical scans, to the ICC committee to facilitate the selection of a replacement player.

Just when things began falling into place for the side, Lamichhane, who was charged with rape, was embroiled in legal difficulties. He was not allowed to travel outside the country. But the Supreme Court granted relief with a bond of two million Nepali rupees.

“In our very first meeting, Sandeep

said, “If anyone feels uncomfortable, you don’t need to bring me in.” I asked him, “What do you want to do?” And he said “I want to contribute to the team. This is where he got his identity from. I asked the captain and senior players what they felt. All of them said if he’s cleared to play, he should be welcomed. So it was a collective call,” coach Desai was quoted by *Espnricinfo* about the controversy surrounding Lamichhane’s inclusion.

With distractions aplenty from the outside world and the pressure of the occasion and task at hand rising with each passing day, it was crucial for the coaching staff to ensure a secure environment in the dressing room.

Desai is a seasoned campaigner, having worked with Rajasthan Royals (first as a talent scout and then as a coach), the Andhra Ranji team and then the Afghanistan side. He knew the importance of fostering trust in the outfit and prioritised the same.

Never say never

His players repaid the faith he had in them, doing the improbable in the final game against UAE. Chasing a mammoth 311 for victory, Nepal was reeling at 6/2 in the second over.

With light fading rapidly and not many batters in the dugout. The dream to qualify began looking more and more distant with each passing minute. The nervous energy at the Tribhuvan University Ground in Kirtipur, Nepal was at the zenith. Aarif Sheikh and Gulsan Jha then decided to put on a show to remember, playing the innings of their life till the 44th over until the umpires decided to suspend play for bad light. Nepal was nine runs ahead on the DLS method.

It was a miraculous win that helped them move into the ICC qualifiers, a peak that was looking impossible to scale at one point. That triumph spurred on a nation to keep investing time and effort in a sport that has charmed the subcontinent for over a century.

In the US and the Caribbean, Nepal began its T20 World Cup campaign with a fighting loss against Netherlands. After a sub-par show with the bat, the bowlers gave it their all to take the game deep, with the Dutch finally scraping through with a little over an over remaining in a low-scoring encounter.

The atmosphere at that game in the Grand Prairie Stadium in Texas was nothing short of electric with the colours of Nepal’s flags dominating the stands and the loud cheers of the team’s fans ringing through the night.

Only time will tell where Nepal goes from here. But if there’s an outfit that knows the value of unwavering self belief and the knack of converting that to stunning victories, it’s this side and the world of cricket is better for it.

THE GIST

▼ Nepal’s last appearance in the ICC T20 World Cup was a decade ago. Its journey in 2014 was one that inspired millions across the world

▼ Full of inspired performances from its players, the team registered two formidable victories against Hong Kong and Afghanistan in that edition

▼ The current Nepal outfit is not short of the miraculous 2014 team. Under coach Monty Desai, it won 11 of its last 12 qualifier games to qualify for the 2023 ODI World Cup Qualifiers



Low-cost MRI machine can improve access to diagnostics in India

A new MRI machine design could drastically lower the cost of scans. It is portable and relatively light-weight, doesn't need cumbersome shielding, and can be plugged into standard wall sockets. In India, such machines can be used for preliminary tests, help doctors responding to accidents, and in paediatric settings

Sneha Khedkar

Scientists have designed a magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) scanner that costs a fraction of existing machines, setting the stage for improving access to this widely used diagnostic tool.

A MRI helps visualise minute details in the human body, with which doctors can diagnose disorders and select treatments for the brain, the heart, various cancers, and orthopaedic conditions.

These scanners work by using strong magnetic fields, measured in units called tesla (T), and radio waves to generate images of internal organs. The strength of these magnetic fields in clinical MRI setups range between 1.5 T and 3 T – or 4-8-times stronger than the typical magnetic field in a sunspot on the Sun.

Around 50-times cheaper

This potentially life-saving medical technology remains inaccessible to most of the population, especially in low- and middle-income countries like India because of the scanner's high cost and the infrastructure required to handle such a powerful instrument. This includes shielding the room that houses the machine to contain the effects of strong magnets; liquid helium to cool the magnets when they heat up during operation; and the electric power required to operate the scanner.

"A 3-T MRI machine can cost anywhere between 9 and 13 crore rupees," Mukul Mutatkar, an interventional radiology consultant with several hospitals in Pune, said. "And that's just the machine. There are additional infrastructure costs."

To address this problem, a team led by Ed Wu at the University of Hong Kong designed and built an MRI machine using low strength magnets and store-bought hardware. This simplified machine costs around \$22,000, or about Rs 18.4 lakh. The machine uses 0.05 T magnets and doesn't need a shielded room or helium coolant to operate. It can be plugged into standard wall-power outlets.

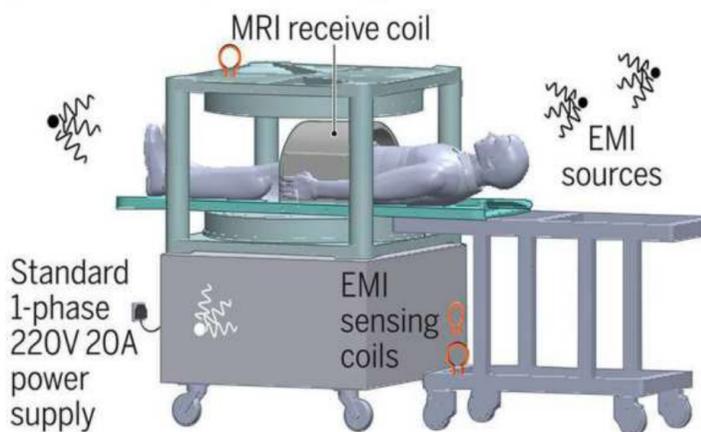
"This will usher in an entirely new class of MRI scanners that are affordable, low-power, and compact," Dr. Wu wrote in an email.

A paper describing the design and its working was published in the journal *Science* on May 10.

Test with 30 volunteers

In the 1970s, researchers first used 0.05 T machines to generate images, but abandoned the option in favour of 1.5 T magnets in the 1980s. The stronger the magnetic field, the better the image produced. A 1.5-T scanner can detect

Low-power low-maintenance simplified 0.05 Tesla MRI scanner (No RF and magnet shielding)



Prototype of a low-cost, low-power, compact, and shielding-free imaging system using an open 0.05-T permanent magnet. It incorporates active sensing and deep learning to address electromagnetic interference signals. DOI: 10.1126/SCIENCE.ADM7168

tissue damage as small as 1 mm whereas the smallest damage detectable at 0.05 T is 4 mm.

To compensate for lower detail, Dr. Wu & co. used a deep-learning algorithm. Trained on data from high-resolution images of human organs, it helped reduce background noise and obtain sharper images.

They tested their setup with 30 healthy adult volunteers and obtained clear images of brain tissue, spinal cord, cerebrospinal fluid, the liver, kidneys, and the spleen. They could also visualise details in the lungs and the heart, and knee structures such as cartilage. They found that the image quality of the 0.05-T machine coupled with AI produced was comparable to that of images obtained from a 3-T machine.

The research group wrote that their machine was also less noisy during operation, meaning it could be used with children as well.

Good for access and emergencies

Jyoti Narayan, a clinical associate in the imaging department at Mumbai's Jaslok Hospital, said such a machine offered several advantages, including the possibility of being lighter, more portable, and not requiring specialised power sources other than a wall socket. Thus, such a machine could be practical in places where it is hard for people to access high power MRIs, she added.



A MRI helps visualise minute details in the human body, with which doctors can diagnose disorders and select treatments for the brain, the heart, various cancers, and orthopaedic conditions

Dr. Mutatkar agreed – but also said “the ultra-low field magnets cannot replace standard high-field magnets in MRI machines” due to the better resolution the latter offered.

Dr. Wu said the scanner could nonetheless complement the high-field scanners in radiology departments.

“Conventional MRI [scans] can cost anywhere between Rs 7,000 and Rs 15,000,” Dr. Narayan said. Some facilities may offer scans for as low as Rs 2,000 but the waiting period will be in the order of months, she added.

She and Dr. Mutatkar also said such scanners could be useful during emergencies, without making patients wait for an appointment, and help first responders make more informed medical decisions.

Aside from acute interventions to help stroke patients, low-cost scanners could help in traumatic accidents to assess a

patient's injury at the accident site. Healthcare providers can then decide whether the patient can be safely transferred to a hospital and/or which mode of transport would be most suitable.

'Get basic things done'

According to both Dr. Narayan and Dr. Mutatkar, using a lower power magnet also has the advantage of preventing metal items such as oxygen cylinders, wheelchairs, and stethoscopes from being pulled into the MRI machine. This is a persistent risk around conventional machines. Although such events are rare, they do take place, and can harm both the patient and the machine.

An MRI machine with low strength magnets may generate fewer artefacts due to implants or prosthetics in the final image; such artefacts have been known to mislead doctors about the original anatomy of the tissue, Dr. Narayan said. (Many of these objects are made of titanium, which is paramagnetic, i.e. weakly affected by a magnetic field.)

Dr. Mutatkar added that pacemakers can't be scanned in current MRI machines. And “what happens to pacemakers [in the low strength machine] still remains to be seen.”

He added that the new design will need to be tested in other centres; the data in the current study was from only one. “Even if the image quality is not very good,” he added, “if we can manage this in small places and get basic things done, then this will make a difference.”

(Sneha Khedkar is a biologist turned freelance science journalist.)



Scientists have designed a simplified MRI that could produce images of organs at a quality comparable to that produced by existing MRI machines, at much lower cost. GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

THE GIST

MRIs remain inaccessible because of the high cost and infrastructure required. This includes shielding the room that houses the machine to contain the effects of strong magnets, and the electric power required to operate the scanner

To compensate for lower detail in the new design, researchers used a deep-learning algorithm. Trained on data from images of organs, it reduced background noise and sharpened images. Clear images of brain tissue, spinal cord, and spleen were obtained

An MRI machine with low strength magnets may generate fewer artefacts due to implants or prosthetics. Artefacts have been known to mislead doctors. It may also allow scanning of pacemakers which can't be done with high-strength machines

BIG SHOT



Municipal workers spread quicklime over dead fish on June 7, to reduce the stench. This is the dry bed of the Bustillos Lagoon. High temperatures have caused an intense drought, in Anahuac, Chihuahua state, Mexico. REUTERS

WHAT IS IT?

Hydrogen line: a unique signal

Karthik Vinod

The hydrogen line is an important instrument in modern astronomy – from studying distant stars to looking for extraterrestrial intelligence (if it exists).

Each hydrogen atom is made of one proton and one electron. Both these particles have a property called spin. Colloquially, we can say the spin can point up or down at any given time. When the spins of both particles are pointing up (or down), they are said to be aligned. When they are pointing in opposite directions, they are anti-aligned.

When the spins are anti-aligned, the atom will have more energy than if they are aligned. The atom will shed this ‘excess’ energy when the electron flips its spin, emitting electromagnetic radiation of wavelength 21 cm.

In some detectors, this emission shows as a characteristic line, thus the name ‘hydrogen line’.

Scientists discovered this emission in 1951 and it transformed radio astronomy. By looking for this emission, they could detect clouds of cold, neutral hydrogen atomic gas in interstellar space. Soon after, they were able to create a map of the Milky Way galaxy for the first time, and discover its spiral arms.

Today, astronomers are also using the 21 cm as a probe to spot



The Rosette Nebula is the large hydrogen, sulfur and oxygen gas cloud in the constellation of Monoceros. The nebula is 5,200 light years away from Earth. GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

the first light emitted by the universe's earliest galaxies. Because the emission doesn't require complicated technologies to spot, astronomers also think it can be used to send information across space that, some day, an alien civilisation might detect.

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