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The list is endless. These are just the top 50 rank holder of CSE 2022 and 2023.

And they have been students of ForumIAS Academy in their Civil Service journey at some point.

But what humbles us is that some of our students have chosen us *every* single year - some to *refine* their preparation, some to *increase* their score, some to *improve* their ranks. And some to turn their lives ( and careers ) around.

Ask Shruti and Ishita, Rank 1 who were students of ForumIAS Academy for both their attempts. Or ask Ruhani, who prepared with ForumIAS in both her attempts to first get IPS and then IAS Rank 5 this year.

At ForumIAS, we *build* officers. Year after year.

But why take our word?

...Thanks to ForumIAS...I benefitted from the detailed evaluation and timely query resolution apart from content...

★★★★★

*Aditya*  
Aditya Srivastava  
AIR-3, CSE 23

...MGP helped me in simulating Mains and feedback was helpful. Ayush Sir's mentorship also helped...

★★★★★

*Jenita Kishor*  
AIR-1  
UPSC CSE 2022

...I enrolled myself for GS and Essay guidance. Answer writing practice and written feedback..helped me improve my answers. Ayush's Sir articles were encouraging.. Thank ForumIAS for my two year association with them...

★★★★★

*Shruti Sharma*  
AIR 1, CSE 2021

...Feedback from ForumIAS Mentors were very useful in making me realise my mistakes in answer writing so that I could rectify them. Ayush Sir's post exam discussion were incredibly helpful...

★★★★★

*Divishelly Anand*  
AIR-1, CSE-2017

...thankful to ForumIAS for Dipin Sir's Current Affairs classes which helped me in wholistic understanding of issues. Thank you ForumIAS Community for your efforts...

★★★★★

*Ananya Reddy*  
AIR-3 CSE 2023

...have been part ForumIAS for past 3 years. MGP has a high predictive power.. grateful for the guidance for both Mains as well as Interview..Personal mentorship and professional evaluation by Forum helped me write good answers in Mains...

★★★★★

*RUHANI*  
RANK-5  
(CSE-2023)

...ForumIAS has been a significant part of my preparation. MGP+ was incredibly beneficial. Comprehensive model answers helped in content enrichment and value addition... One to One Session with mentors were equally helpful...

★★★★★

*Anmol Ramesh*  
AIR 7  
UPSC CSE 2023

...very thankful to Ayush Sir and Dipin Sir for all their support. Have been a part of Current Affairs and MGP with ForumIAS... which helped me in my content and answer writing...

★★★★★

*Ashish Kumar*  
AIR 8, UPSC CSE 2023

...have been a part of ForumIAS SFG, MGP, AWFG, CA, Sociology ATS+...Ayush sir has been wonderful mentor..and I would give him all credits for the 13th rank I have secured...

★★★★★

*Medha Anand*  
Rank 13, CSE 2023

...MGP+ with essay helped me practice answer writing, improve my content, and also learn how to handle difficult and dynamic questions...

★★★★★

*Shaurya Anand*  
AIR 14, CSE 2023

...hugely benefitted from Mains Guidance by ForumIAS.. helped me secure Rank 22 in my first attempt...

★★★★★

*Saurabh Sharma*  
AIR-23 (CSE-2023)

...completely followed Dipin Sir's classes for my Mains preparation.. helped me a lot in securing Rank 26...

★★★★★

*Rupal Rama*  
AIR - 26

...I have been part of MGP test series. I found MGP questions to be very close to the CSE Pattern. I am grateful to Ayush sir and ForumIAS team...

★★★★★

*Arjun Gupta*  
CSE Rank 32, 2023

...I have a long association with ForumIAS spanning over 3 attempts. I subscribed Ethics+, Current Affairs Course, Sociology ATS Test Series and MGP. I thank Ayush sir and ForumIAS team...

★★★★★

*Chandana Jahnvi*  
AIR 50 -2023

...I enrolled myself in multiple courses at ForumIAS - SFG, MGP, Current Affairs Classes and Ethics+ Classes. The quality of content, the consistency of classes and availability of mentorship right when I needed it helped me throughout my preparation journey...

★★★★★

*SMRITI MISHRA*  
AIR 4, CSE 2022

मैं ForumIAS पर SFG, MGP & IGP का हिस्सा था MGP में अंग्रेजी माध्यम के विद्यार्थियों से COMPETE करने का अवसर मिला, जिससे मैं खुद को बेहतर कर पाया !

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*ARPIT KUMAR - AIR 131 .CSE 23*

\* For detailed testimonials list visit <https://blog.forumias.com/testimonials>

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What is common between Donoru Ananya Reddy, Garima Lohia, Divya Mishra, Sanjitha Mohapatra, Varun Reddy and Pratham Kaushik? They are all IAS officers, selected in past 7 years and they are among the highest scorers in General Studies Mains. Since its inception, CA classroom students have secured among the highest marks in GS. The CA class is no ordinary Newspaper Classes. They provide you with much needed edge in the mains examination through three things - content differentiation, crispness and issue based preparation. The CA Classes declutter your preparation by providing you curated content to aid a high score in GS. If you are looking for score improvement or rank enhancement, this a must join.

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D16- 8:30 AM, Morning

16 JULY

D17- 8:30 AM, Morning  
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BATCH-1

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COHORT-6 MGP2025  
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Cohort-6  
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मेंटर समर्थित, टेस्ट सीरीज आधारित सेल्फ स्टडी कार्यक्रम UPSC CSE के लिए

हिंदी माध्यम के रिजल्ट्स को हम कैसे सुधार सकते हैं? हमें लगा की अगर, इंग्लिश मीडियम के बेस्ट और गाइडेंस को अगर हिंदी माध्यम स्टूडेंट्स को दिया जाए, तो शायद बात बन सकती है। मात्र 20 बच्चों के हिंदी माध्यम के एमजीपी बैच में से 136वीरेंक प्राप्त किया है। मॉक इंटरव्यू के दौरान जब हमने पूछा - आप यहाँ तक कैसे आए - तो उन्होंने कहा - सर, मैं अंग्रेजी और हिंदी माध्यम की जॉइंट लिस्ट में हमेशा टॉप 50 में रहता था। अर्पित उत्तर प्रदेश से हैं, और SFG, AWFG और MGP के छात्र रहे हैं।

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हिंदी माध्यम

CURRENT AFFAIRS CLASSES 2025 (PRE-CUM-MAINS)

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21 July

What is common between Donuru Ananya Reddy, Garima Lohia, Divya Mishra, Sanjitha Mohapatra, Varun Reddy and Pratham Kaushik? They are all IAS officers, selected in past 7 years and they are among the highest scorers In General Studies Mains. Since its inception, CA classroom students have secured among the highest marks in GS. The CA class is no ordinary Newspaper Classes. They provide you with much needed edge in the mains examination through three things - content differentiation, crispness and issue based preparation. The CA Classes declutter your preparation by providing you curated content to aid a high score in GS. If you are looking for score improvement or rank enhancement, this a must join.

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BATCH-1  
05 July

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### MILESTONE ALERT

## ISRO reusable launch vehicle test successful

NEWS » PAGE 12

### FRESH START

## LS Session begins today; Cong. calls meet of MPs

NEWS » PAGE 11

### ON A HIGH

## Afghanistan humbles Australia, stays alive

SPORT » PAGE 15

# CBI sends teams to Patna and Godhra for NEET case probe

First information report says there were 'certain isolated incidents' in a few States during the May 5 test; Education Ministry has asked agency to conduct a comprehensive investigation and probe the role of public servants, if any, in the controversy

**Devesh K Pandey**  
NEW DELHI

The Central Bureau of Investigation on Sunday registered a case of alleged irregularities in the conduct of the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test for admission to undergraduate medical programmes held on May 5. "The process to take over the other cases related to the examination has also been initiated by the CBI for a comprehensive investigation," an agency official said. "Special teams are being sent to Patna and Godhra where local police cases have been registered."

A first information report filed by the agency says there were "certain isolated incidents" in a few States during NEET conducted by the National Testing Agency in 4,750



Economic Offences Unit personnel leave with the accused arrested in connection with the NEET case, in Patna on Sunday. PTI

centres for over 23 lakh candidates.

"Therefore, the Ministry of Education has requested the CBI to conduct a comprehensive investigation into the entire gamut of alleged irregularities, including conspiracy, cheating, impersonation, breach of trust, and destruction of evidence by candidates, institutes, and middlemen,

## Maharashtra ATS detains two teachers from Latur

**The Hindu Bureau**  
PUNE

The Nanded branch of the Maharashtra Anti-Terrorism Squad on Saturday night detained two teachers from Latur district in connection with

the NEET-UG question paper leak case. Sources said Sanjay Tukaram Jadhav and Jaleel Umrakhan Pathan were released after several hours of questioning, but they could be called for further questioning.

Another case of alleged cheating at a Godhra test centre, in which six people have been arrested, is being investigated by the Gujarat police, but is likely to be taken over by the CBI.

### IN BRIEF

#### BSP president names nephew as successor again

LUCKNOW  
BSP chief Mayawati declared nephew Akash Anand as her successor and appointed him the party's national coordinator again on Sunday, reversing her previous decision. » Page 4

#### Indian industry seeks rethink on Chinese FDI curbs

NEW DELHI  
Indian industry has urged the government to revisit its curbs on investment inflows and the movement of skilled personnel from China, and slash high import duties on electronics components as they have made Indian goods globally uncompetitive. » Page 10

### BRAMASTRA 2025

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EDUCATIONPLUS » PAGES 2, 3

### Hungry herd



On the move: Elephants in search of food cross National Highway 17 at Boko on the outskirts of Guwahati on Sunday. RITU RAJ KONWAR

# Kejriwal moves SC against Delhi HC's interim stay of his bail by trial court

**The Hindu Bureau**  
NEW DELHI

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal urgently approached the Supreme Court on Sunday against the Delhi High Court's suspension of bail granted to him by a trial court in the excise policy case.

Mr. Kejriwal's lawyers said the petition would be mentioned orally for early hearing on Monday before a Vacation Bench of the Supreme Court. They have argued that the interim order was a violation of the fundamental right to personal liberty.

The interim order passed by the Delhi High Court was based on an appeal filed by the Enforcement



Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal

Directorate (ED) within a day of the trial court ordering the release of the Chief Minister, who was arrested on March 21.

The top court had earlier, on May 10, intervened to grant Mr. Kejriwal interim bail to campaign in the recently concluded Lok Sabha election. The Chief Minister, complying with the top court's direction, surrendered on June 2.

The Chief Minister had applied for bail under Section 45 of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act. The trial judge, on June 20, had *prima facie* concluded a lack of evidence with the ED to establish Mr. Kejriwal's guilt, or with proof linking him to any money trail or proceeds of crime. However, the High Court stopped the release of Mr. Kejriwal from jail.

In the High Court, Additional Solicitor General S.V. Raju, appearing for the ED, had argued that the Central probe agency was not given enough time and opportunity by the trial judge to place its arguments against Mr. Kejriwal's plea for bail.

In turn, Mr. Kejriwal's counsel, senior advocate A.M. Singhvi, had argued that the Central agency's attempt was to malign the trial court judge.

**'Peak of hypocrisy'**  
Reacting to Mr. Kejriwal moving the Supreme Court, Delhi BJP president Virendra Sachdeva said, "It's shocking to see that showing peak of hypocrisy, the AAP leaders who were condemning the ED for moving the Delhi High Court against bail to Kejriwal without waiting for a written order have today moved the Supreme Court without even waiting for the High Court's hearing to complete."

## JD(S) leader Suraj Revanna held in sexual abuse case

**The Hindu Bureau**  
SHIVAMOGGA/BENGALURU

Janata Dal (Secular) MLC Suraj Revanna was arrested in Hassan on Sunday for allegedly sexually abusing a 27-year-old male party worker a few days ago.

He is the brother of former MP Prajwal Revanna, who has been under arrest for allegedly sexually abusing several women.

Mr. Suraj was brought to Bengaluru and produced before a magistrate court, which remanded him in judicial custody for 14 days.

## Police fear warring groups in Manipur trying to acquire drones for attacks

**Rahul Karmakar**  
GUWAHATI

In the wake of the recent seizures of intelligent flight batteries and drone parts in Assam, armed forces officials posted in the conflict zones in Manipur believe unmanned aerial vehicles could be used by the warring groups in the State for attacks.

On June 14, 10 intelligent flight batteries were seized from a Manipur-based man in a vehicle at a toll gate about 30 km east of Guwahati. A day later, another person was caught from the Rupnagar area in the Assam capital carrying drone parts on a two-wheeler.



Warning sign: Intelligent flight batteries used in drones seized from a Manipur-based man on the outskirts of Guwahati on June 14. ANI

While Khaigoulen Kipgen, 27, of Gamngai village in Kangpokpi district of Manipur, apprehended at the toll gate, was found to have links with Kuki-Zo extremist groups, the police said the parts seized from Sanjib Kumar Mishra in Guwahati were destined for Meitei outfits involved in the conflict.

"These seizures following reliable input about the unauthorised transportation of drones and related equipment for armed groups on either side of the ethnic divide in Manipur could be the tip of the iceberg," an Assam Police officer of the Inspector-General rank said.

He did not rule out the possibility of intelligent flight batteries and drone parts slipping through checkpoints on the arterial National Highway 27 leading to Manipur, via Nagaland, and an alternative route from Silchar in the Barak Valley of Assam.

**CONTINUED ON**  
» PAGE 10

## Tribal Affairs Minister promises to look into forest clearances for ₹72,000-cr. Great Nicobar project

**Abhinav Lakshman**  
NEW DELHI

The Union Tribal Affairs Ministry will be looking into the forest clearance paperwork for the ₹72,000-crore infrastructure project on Great Nicobar Island that the NDA government has been pushing for, and accordingly determine next steps, Tribal Affairs Minister Jual Oram has said.

In an exclusive interaction with *The Hindu*, Mr. Oram outlined his intent to give special attention to forest and land rights of tribal communities.

The Opposition Con-



Jual Oram

gress has been demanding the withdrawal of clearances granted for the Great Nicobar project and a ground-up review of it over the environmental concerns flagged by experts and constitutional bodies

and amid reports of alleged violations of land rights of the tribal people residing in the region.

**'A specific case'**  
Asked about the concerns raised by the National Green Tribunal (NGT) and the NCST over the environmental and forest clearances, Mr. Oram said, "This is a specific case. It will take time to go through the files. But we will be looking into the issues that have been raised by calling for the relevant files and documents."

**CONTINUED ON**  
» PAGE 10

# Haryana closed barrage gates releasing water to city, says Atishi; Cong., BJP corner AAP govt.

Delhi Minister says 28 lakh people hit due to water scarcity; Cong. accuses her of indulging in 'political showmanship'; wrong to blame Haryana: BJP

**The Hindu Bureau**  
NEW DELHI

Delhi Water Minister Atishi on Sunday alleged that the city is not getting its share of the Yamuna water as BJP-ruled Haryana has "closed" all gates of Hathnikund barrage from where water is released to the Capital.

The BJP junked the charge, accusing the Minister of evading her responsibility. Delhi Congress chief Devender Yadav also said Ms. Atishi was indulging in "political showmanship" and she should have instead taken effective steps to address the water crisis before sitting on the dharna.

The Delhi Congress chief, however, slammed the BJP, saying its seven Delhi Lok Sabha MPs should have taken up the matter with the Haryana government and the Centre if the neighbouring State is releasing less water to the Capital. "Instead of protesting on the streets, they should have worked to save people from their current misery," he said.

The barrage falls in Haryana's Yamunanagar district and it is the starting point of the Western Yamuna canal network. The Munak canal, which supplies the river water to the Capital, is part of the network.

Ms. Atishi had started an indefinite fast on Friday ov-



AAP said doctors found a sharp drop in Water Minister Atishi's sugar levels and body weight during a check-up. SHASHI SHEKHAR KASHYAP

er the issue in Delhi's Bhothal. She has repeatedly accused Haryana of not releasing Delhi's share of the Yamuna water into the

Munak canal.

The Minister told reporters that the barrage gates were found "closed" by many journalists who had

gone to the spot on Saturday. "Haryana is releasing only 513 million gallons per day [MGD] of water, which is 100 MGD less. One MGD fulfils the water needs of 28,500 people, which means when Haryana is releasing 100 MGD less water, 28 lakh people of Delhi are getting hit," she said.

"I request the Haryana government with folded hands to open the gates of the Hathnikund barrage," she added.

Meanwhile, AAP said a team of doctors examined the Minister's health and found a sharp drop in her sugar levels and body weight. "They have said it is dangerous for her health and advised her to stop her

fast," the party said in a statement.

**'People are dying'**

Delhi BJP chief Virendra Sachdeva called Ms. Atishi's indefinite fast a "drama" and said it is extremely shameful that people are dying in Delhi due to severe heatwave. "Instead of taking measures to prevent these deaths, the AAP government is engrossed in the drama of an air-conditioned satyagraha," the BJP leader said.

He said the Haryana government and their officials have proven with evidence that they are supplying more water to Delhi than the stipulated amount.

# L-G dials Saini after meeting AAP leaders

**The Hindu Bureau**  
NEW DELHI

Lieutenant-Governor V.K. Saxena on Sunday spoke to Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini over the release of the Yamuna water to the Capital after a 10-member delegation of Delhi's ruling Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) met him here, according to a Raj Niwas statement.

"The Haryana CM has assured that he would seriously look into the matter and try to help tide over the situation to the farthest possible extent," the L-G said in the statement.

The development came a day after Mr. Saxena squarely pinned the blame for the ongoing water crisis in the Capital on the AAP government.

The L-G said the AAP de-

legation primarily requested him to urge the Haryana government for "extra water" for a few days till the monsoon arrives.

Earlier, Delhi Urban Development Minister Saurabh Bharadwaj said the AAP delegation told Mr. Saxena that Haryana is likely to receive rain in a week and won't be able to stop water even if it wants to. "We have requested him to get water from Haryana for Delhi for a week," he said.

The Minister said they told the L-G that Haryana is releasing 100 million gallons per day of less water.

"Due to it, lakhs of people are facing water shortage. Since he is the representative of the Centre, we requested him to talk to Haryana and get Delhi its full share of water," he said.

# Minor sent bomb threat to airport 'just for fun'

**The Hindu Bureau**  
NEW DELHI

Police apprehended a 13-year-old boy from Uttarakhand's Pithoragarh for sending a fake email threat to the Delhi airport, claiming that a bomb had been planted on a Dubai-bound flight.

The police said the email threat was sent "for fun" by the boy, a Class 9 student, as he was influenced by news on social media platforms.

Usha Rangnani, Deputy Commissioner of Police,

Indira Gandhi International Airport, said that the incident took place on June 17, on a flight scheduled to depart from Delhi to Dubai on June 18. Police had registered a First Information Report (FIR) in connection with the matter. The airport was placed under high alert, and full emergency was declared. The police followed guidelines and protocols for the safety of all passengers. Following proper verification, the email threat was found to be hoax, an officer said.

# Fate of dairy farms in limbo as court weighs health concerns

**Soibam Rocky Singh**  
NEW DELHI

The future of hundreds of dairy farms in Ghazipur and Bhalswa, where two of the city's three landfill sites are located, hangs in the balance with the Delhi High Court scrutinising their compliance with legal and environmental standards.

Late last month, the court had remarked that there was a need to shift Ghazipur and Bhalswa dairies, where most of the dairy farmers sell milk directly to consumers, to an alternate location within

the city or on the outskirts due to their proximity to the sanitary landfills that cause "undeniable adverse effect on public health".

On May 27, the court came down heavily on the Delhi government's animal husbandry unit, observing that there was a "lack of will" in State functionaries to stop the "rampant violation of laws" by dairy owners.

The court's remarks came in response to a petition by Sunayana Sibal, an animal welfare advocate, highlighting the poor state of affairs in Delhi's nine dairy colonies - Ghazipur,



The court has stressed the need to shift Ghazipur and Bhalswa dairies. SOIBAM ROCKY SINGH

Shahbad Dairy (Rohini), Jharoda, Bhalswa, Masoodpur, Goela, Madanpur Khadar, Nangli Sakrawati, and Kakrola.

The Delhi government and Municipal Corporation of Delhi have sought an opportunity from the court until June 30 to take steps to regularise the dairies and ensure that they are in compliance with the law. The court will hear the case again on July 12.

**'Shift the landfill'**

Vijay, a dairy farmer at Ghazipur, the idea of relocating dairy farms was unreasonable. "Either they should relocate the garbage mound, since it is spilling over, or turn it into a green hill. The suggestion that dairy farms should be

relocated is unreasonable. Where were these people when this dairy colony was established?"

Mr. Vijay added that the farms are already burdened by losses due to lower milk production this summer owing to the intense heatwave.

He said that the dairy farm was established in 1976 when the Ghazipur landfill site did not exist. "If relocation is necessary, it should apply to every dairy farm, not just to us," he added.

Mukesh, another dairy farmer, said the Ghazipur landfill site should either

be relocated or transformed into a green hill, such as the Indraprastha Park in central Delhi.

Ms. Sibal said the courts have reiterated the need to relocate the dairy colonies in Ghazipur and Bhalswa since 2002. In an earlier hearing, she showed the Bench photographs of the Bhalswa dairy colony, which showed cattle grazing at the base of the sanitary landfill.

The petitioner said proper waste management practices had not been followed and criticised the lack of segregation and proper disposal of garbage.

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**Saurabh Sinha**  
**Sajai Singh**

## Bytes and rights

Understanding digital rights is imperative in the context of digital classrooms, where students interact with diverse educational technologies



GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

The foundation of digital classrooms rests upon intricate systems of data collection, spanning from learning management systems and educational apps to virtual classrooms and online assessments.

Within this ecosystem, interactions generate a plethora of data points, encompassing student demographics, academic performance metrics, browsing history, and engagement patterns. This collection of student data is fundamental to tailor educational experiences and enhance learning outcomes.

Educational technology platforms leverage data analytics and machine learning algorithms to personalise instruction, identify areas of improvement, and provide targeted support for student progress. However, the indiscriminate gathering of sensitive information without informed consent or transparent disclosure raises significant concerns regarding individual privacy rights and autonomy. The commercialisation of student data poses risks related to ownership, security breaches, and potential exploitation by external entities.

To address these issues, various legal frameworks and regulatory mechanisms including the Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023 and Information Technology Act, 2000

have been implemented to safeguard student data privacy.

In the context of digital classrooms, where students interact with diverse educational technologies, understanding digital rights becomes imperative. The proliferation of digital communication channels

exposes students to a range of cyber threats, such as identity theft, fraud, and online harassment. Sharing personal information online without due diligence can lead to severe consequences, compromising students' privacy and security. It is essential for students to ex-

ercise caution and discretion when sharing sensitive information online and remain vigilant against potential cyber threats.

**The fine print**

Examining privacy policies acts as a frontline defence in defining the boundaries of student data collection,

storage, and utilisation. Through meticulous review, students assert their authority in safeguarding personal information, thereby upholding their inherent rights to autonomy and dignity.

Understanding the utilisation of their data by digital platforms and educa-

tional tools empowers students to make informed choices about their engagement levels. Therefore, it is important for students to acquaint themselves with the privacy policies and terms of service governing digital platforms and educational tools used in the classroom to make discerning decisions regarding online activities.

Scrutinising terms of service enables students to grasp the scope and purpose of data collection, storage, and utilisation and facilitates assessment of implications for privacy and digital security. Delving into privacy policies embedded within terms of service elucidates students' entitlements and safeguards concerning personal information handling. Attention to provisions regarding data access, consent mechanisms, and data-sharing practices empowers students to effectively assert their privacy rights. Moreover, terms of service delineate users' responsibilities and obligations, fostering adherence to ethical standards and nurturing a safe digital environment.

**Copyright laws**

In the digital age, accessing and utilising educational resources often involves navigating complex copyright laws and regulations. Students must adhere to these laws while using digital resources for educational purposes, ensuring proper attribution and compliance with licensing

agreements. When in doubt about the legality of using copyrighted materials, students must:

- Seek explicit permission from copyright holder. Contact the rights owner or use materials that are licensed under open access or Creative Commons licenses, which often grant permission for educational use with proper attribution
- Practise proper attribution by citing sources accurately in academic assignments and projects
- Adhere to recognised citation styles, and provide detailed references for all borrowed materials, including text, images, videos, and other multimedia content
- Take advantage of licensed resources provided by educational institutions, libraries, and digital repositories
- Access e-books, journals,

databases, and multimedia resources that are legally acquired and compliant with copyright laws

• Use these resources responsibly to support academic research and learning objectives.

Understanding digital rights empowers students to navigate the digital world responsibly. They have rights such as knowing how their data is used, reviewing and correcting it, deleting unnecessary data, and objecting to data processing. By understanding their privacy and data protection rights, students can advocate for themselves and ensure ethical treatment of their personal information. This is essential to promote digital literacy, protect privacy, and foster responsible digital citizenship in today's technology-driven education landscape.

Sajai Singh is Partner and Saurabh Sinha is Senior Associate at JSA Advocates and Solicitors.

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# North Education Review

## Empowering the Legal Dream with Drishti Judiciary

As the final school bell rings, many students face excitement and confusion about their future. Inspired by legal dramas like 'Suits,' the idea of becoming a lawyer often emerges, but the path forward can seem daunting. The historic significance of law, rooted in the ancient concept of 'Dharma,' underscores its importance. Law remains a cornerstone of justice, shaping societies and individuals alike.

Legal careers in India are diverse, ranging from Litigation Advocate to Corporate Lawyer, Criminal Lawyer and more. Each path offers unique challenges and rewards, making the profession prestigious and respected.

For students aiming to pursue law, clearing the Common Law Admission Test (CLAT) is essential. CLAT is a national-level exam for admission to law programs at National Law Universities (NLUs) and other institutions. The exam covers subjects like English, General Knowledge, Mathematics, Legal Aptitude and Logical Reasoning.

Many students struggle with affordability and quality when preparing for CLAT. Drishti Judiciary emerges as a solution, offering a comprehensive and affordable CLAT course. Known for its

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updated notes and materials, ensures students are well-prepared.

Additionally, Drishti Judiciary offers a Judiciary Foundation Batch, designed to help students prepare for the Judicial Services Examination. This batch focuses on nurturing future judges by providing an in-depth understanding of legal principles and practical skills.

Drishti Judiciary's commitment to accessibility, affordability and excellence makes it the ideal choice for aspiring law students. In the pursuit of justice, Drishti Judiciary illuminates the path to success, empowering the next generation of legal luminaries.



## Integral University: A Premier Institution in Higher Education, Lucknow, India

Integral University, located in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, India, is a leading university recognized for its academic excellence and holistic development. Approved by the UGC, National Medical Commission, and Pharmacy Council of India, the university is also a member of the Association of Indian Universities and is recognized as a Scientific & Industrial Research Organization by the Department of Scientific & Industrial Research, Ministry of Science & Technology, Government of India.

Integral University was founded by Prof. Syed Waseem Akhtar, whose visionary leadership has been instrumental in shaping the institution's growth and development. His dedication to making higher education accessible and of high quality has been the driving force behind the university's success.

Accredited with an A+ grade by the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC), the university has received numerous awards in the higher education sector. Notably, its Faculty of Architecture, Law, and Engineering are highly ranked by the IIRF 2023. The Fa-



Prof. S.W. Akhtar Founder & Chancellor, Integral University

ulty of Pharmacy has been consistently ranked among the top 100 in NIRF over the years.

The university's 200-acre campus offers world-class infrastructure, including modern classrooms, advanced laboratories with some already accredited by NABL, sports facilities, a gymnasium, a library with over one lakh books and e-journals, an auditorium, and multiple seminar halls. It provides safe and

comfortable hostel accommodations for both girls and boys.

Integral University is a diverse and inclusive community with over 15,000 students, including more than 300 international students from 18 countries. The university offers over 225 academic programs across various disciplines.

Pro-Chancellor Syed Nadeem Akhtar states, "Integral University is committed to not only imparting knowledge but also fostering innovation and community service. We aim to produce graduates who are equipped to meet global challenges and make meaningful contributions to society."

A notable feature of the university is the Integral Institute of Medical Sciences & Research, which includes an 820-bedded hospital. The hospital is renowned for its state-of-the-art facilities and medical research, significantly contributing to the local community's healthcare needs. Additionally, the Integral Institute of Allied Health Sciences & Research is rated 'A' by the Government of Uttar Pradesh for its quality standards. The Centre for Incubation &

Entrepreneurship Development (CIED) under the Integral Startups Foundation supports budding entrepreneurs, startups, and innovators. CIED is recognized as an Incubation Centre by StartInUP, Department of IT & Electronics, Govt. of U.P.

Integral University is committed to quality education, research, and innovation, offering numerous programs that prepare students for successful careers. The university's placement cell collaborates with top multinational corporations, providing excellent career opportunities. Integral University boasts an extensive network of over 41,000 alumni making significant contributions globally.

Vice-Chancellor Prof. Javed Musarrat adds, "Our focus on research-driven education and holistic development ensures that our students are prepared to excel in their careers and become responsible global citizens. Integral University remains dedicated to providing an environment that nurtures talent and encourages lifelong learning."



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## IN BRIEF



## Very heavy rain warning for three districts in Kerala

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) issued an orange alert warning of very heavy rain for three districts of Kerala – Kozhikode, Kannur, and Kasaragod – on Monday. A yellow alert has also been issued warning of isolated heavy rain for the remaining districts, except for Thiruvananthapuram and Kollam. According to IMD, strong westerly and southwesterly winds prevail in the lower levels over Kerala and Lakshadweep region triggered by a trough that runs off the Maharashtra-Kerala coasts. Under its influence, rain or thundershowers is most likely to occur at most places in Kerala until June 29.

## Safai Karamcharis protest in Haryana to press for demands

Safai Karamcharis from Haryana's rural areas held a demonstration at Panipat on Sunday accusing the State government of failing to keep its promise to fulfil their various demands, including annual hike in wages and retirement benefits. Holding a meeting at Babarpur grains market under the aegis of Centre of Indian Trade Unions' Gramin Safai Karamchari Union, the protesters threatened to intensify the agitation if their demands were not met within a fortnight. The protesters then marched to the residence of Haryana Panchayats Minister Mahipal Dhanda and submitted a memorandum. Mr. Dhanda invited their delegation for a meeting on June 26.

## BJP will form govt. in Jharkhand, says election in-charge Chouhan

Amit Bhalerao  
PATNA

The enthusiasm of BJP workers shows that the party will form the government in Jharkhand, said Union Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan, party election in-charge for the State, in Ranchi on Sunday.

He was addressing the media after holding a review meeting for the upcoming Assembly election with his co-in-charge and Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma.

"Today we have decided that under the leadership of Babul Marandiji, the party will contest the Assembly election," he said.

Calling the Jharkhand



Union Minister Shivraj Chouhan

Mukti Morcha (JMM)-led government the "most corrupt in the country", he said the time has come to uproot it. "The government did not fulfil a single promise. It promised jobs, but even the recruitment letter has not been given. Unemployment allowance was not given. I have not seen the kind of loot taking

## Stage set for Akash vs Aazad battle for Dalit leadership as BSP chief reinstates nephew

Mayawati declares Akash Anand as successor again, appoints him party's national coordinator; move seen as bid to project 28-year-old as BSP's future face amid challenge from the Nagina MP

Mayank Kumar  
LUCKNOW

Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) president Mayawati declared her nephew Akash Anand as her successor again and reinstated him as the party's national coordinator on Sunday, reversing her previous decision.

The move is being seen as an attempt to project the 28-year-old as the future face of the BSP amid the rising challenge to claim the mantle of Dalit leadership in Uttar Pradesh posed by Aazad Samaj Party (Kanshi Ram) president and Nagina MP Chandrashekhar Aazad, 37, who has been making inroads into the Dalit vote base.

"Mayawati has once again given Akash Anand a chance to work in the party with full maturity. He will remain Mayawati's only successor along with being the party's national coordinator," read a statement released by the party after a meeting of its national office-bearers to review the Lok Sabha elec-



Mayawati gives her blessings to Akash Anand during a meeting of national office-bearers at the BSP office in Lucknow on Sunday. ANI

tion result. The party had polled just 9.39% votes, its lowest in three decades, and failed to win a single seat in the election.

## 'Backing of party'

Ms. Mayawati, former four-time Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister, expressed hope in Mr. Anand emerging as a mature leader in the interest of the BSP and the Bahujan movement.

"The people of the party will now encourage him by giving him more respect and honour, so that now he can live up to all my expectations," she said.

top trending topics on X (formerly Twitter) on June 8 and 9. He faces a resurgent Mr. Aazad, who is planning to fight the upcoming bypolls to 10 Assembly seats in the State and strengthen his organisation by capitalising on the BSP's eroding base.

## 'Countering Aazad'

"Both leaders will be eyeing the Dalit youth, who are looking for options. The BSP's decision is aimed at countering Chandrashekhar Aazad," said Asad Rizvi, a political commentator from Lucknow.

In the Lok Sabha election, Mr. Aazad had won from Nagina, a Scheduled Caste-reserved constituency in western U.P., by over 1.5 lakh votes, defeating Om Kumar of the BJP. The BSP candidate, Surendra Pal Singh, secured only 13,272 votes. All five Assembly segments under the parliamentary seat are part of Bijnor district. Ms. Mayawati had won the 1989 Lok Sabha election from Bijnor, making her parliamentary debut.

After declaring Mr. Anand as her political heir in December 2023, the BSP chief in the middle of the poll campaigning on May 7 had removed him as the party's national coordinator. She said he needed to "reach maturity" before assuming such key roles.

The move came after Mr. Anand was booked in a case of violation of the Model Code of Conduct for allegedly using "objectionable" language in an election rally in Sitapur.

Mr. Anand's reinstatement comes amid #AkashAnand figuring among the

## NCP MLA's nephew held after his speeding car kills 19-year-old in Pune

Shoumojit Banerjee  
PUNE

The Pune district police have arrested the nephew of a legislator from the Ajit Pawar faction of the Congress Party (NCP) after the sports utility vehicle (SUV) that he was allegedly driving on the wrong side rammied into a motorbike along the Pune-Nashik National Highway, killing a 19-year-old and injuring another person.

The injured person is undergoing treatment at a local hospital.

According to the Manchar police (Ambegaon tehsil), a case has been re-

gistered against Mayur Mohite, who is in his 30s.

He is the nephew of Dilip Mohite Patil, the NCP (Ajit Pawar faction) MLA from Pune's Khed-Alandi Assembly segment.

The deceased has been identified as Om Bhalerao, a resident of Ambegaon.

## 'Driving on wrong side'

Police officials said that the accused was driving his SUV on the wrong side of the highway at high speed when the car crashed into the motorbike, knocking down Bhalerao, who sustained multiple serious injuries and succumbed soon afterwards.

## Lok Sabha election loss exposes rift in ruling alliance in Nagaland

Rahul Karmakar  
GUWAHATI

The Nationalist Democratic Progressive Party (NDPP) and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) have been blaming each other for the Lok Sabha poll debacle, exposing cracks in the ruling alliance in Nagaland.

The NDPP and the BJP are the main constituents of the People's Democratic Alliance (PDA) government headed by Neiphu Rio. It enjoys the support of all 60 MLAs in the Opposition-less Assembly. But the numerical strength could not help Chumben Murry, the PDA's consensus candidate, retain the lone Nagaland parliamentary seat for the

## W.B. not consulted on water pact with Bangladesh: TMC

Press Trust of India  
NEW DELHI

The ruling Trinamool Congress in West Bengal on Sunday criticised the Centre for not consulting the State before taking the decision to start negotiations with Bangladesh for the renewal of the 1996 Ganga Water Sharing Treaty.

The criticism by the TMC comes a day after talks were held between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Bangladeshi counterpart Sheikh Hasina on a range of issues including the treaty.

TMC's Parliamentary Party Leader in Rajya Sabha, Derek O'Brien, said the State is a party to the treaty, but was not consulted.

Farakka-Ganga treaty is being renewed without consulting West Bengal, he said. "The State is a party to the treaty. Even our dues for the previous treaty have not been cleared," Mr. O'Brien told reporters here.

"Dredging of the Ganga has been stopped. It is the primary reason for floods and erosion. This is a plan to sell off Bengal," he alleged.

Prime Minister Modi on Saturday announced India



Dredging of the Ganga has been stopped. It is the primary reason for floods and erosion. This is a plan to sell off Bengal

DEREK O'BRIEN  
TMC party leader in Rajya Sabha

and Bangladesh will begin technical-level talks for the renewal of the 1996 Ganga water treaty, and an Indian technical team will visit Bangladesh soon for the conservation and management of the Teesta river.

## Joint technical panel

An India-Bangladesh Shared Vision document, released after Mr. Modi and Ms. Hasina held delegation-level talks during the latter's visit to New Delhi, said both sides welcome the formation of a joint technical committee to initiate discussions for renewal of the Ganges Water Sharing Treaty of 1996.

## Anger simmers in Balodabazar after protest, violence over desecration of Satnami sacred site

## SPOTLIGHT

Shubhomoy Sikdar

Rakesh Dewangan, a 41-year-old office assistant at the Balodabazar-Bhatapara Collectorate in Chhattisgarh, is accustomed to long workdays. However, June 10 was different.

He recounts the commotion outside the Collectorate. "I was alarmed when I heard the glass of the façade cracking due to stone pelting," he says.

A protest by Satnamis, a community of Scheduled Castes (SCs), over the desecration of Jaithkams or victory pillars – tall, white pillars made of bamboo or wood that are considered sacred – had begun peacefully in another part of the district. Once it reached the Composite Compound – which houses offices of the District Collector, Superintendent of Police (SP), and other officials – it quickly devolved into chaos and violence.

The SP's office was torched, 40 policemen were injured, and over 150 vehicles set on fire, accord-

ing to the police.

Seven FIRs were registered immediately and two later at the Kotwali police station, which is serving as the makeshift SP office. At least 137 people have been remanded as of June 19.

## How it all began

On May 17, Kasam Das Bhaskar, the priest of Amar Gufa, a Satnami temple built on a hill in Mahakoni – a village nearly 3 km from Giraudpuri Dham, the biggest pilgrimage site for Satnamis – approached the police. In his statement, he said on the morning of May 16, he found three Jaithkams in front of the temple broken. "The Jaithkams were cut with a saw and felled, which is an insult to the faith," he said.

An FIR was registered based on it over hurting religious sentiments and an investigation initiated.

The police soon arrested three migrant workers from Bihar for allegedly damaging the Jaithkams, and the local administration installed new Jaithkams. While investigators remained tight-lipped about the motive, local media



Charred: A burnt portion of the SP's office in Balodabazar-Bhatapara district of Chhattisgarh after a protest on June 10. A.M. FARUQUI

coverage suggested that they had some payment dispute with a contractor.

The follow-up action did not convince the members of the Satnami community, who wanted a deeper probe, arguing that the migrant workers were innocent, and this was a conspiracy against the Satnamis that needs to be unearthed. Early protesters included voices from all political parties, who submitted memoranda demanding a CBI probe to the District Collector.

While the rage over the desecration started build-

ing up, another incident took place in another part of Balodabazar.

During the shooting of a Chhattisgarhi film, someone allegedly removed the flag installed at a Satnam religious site and inscribed some words on a Jaithkam. While the director and one member of the cast were arrested, the incident exacerbated the already escalating situation.

Sensing growing public anger over the desecration, the Vishnu Deo Sailed BJP government announced a judicial probe on June 10. Despite the an-

nouncement, the community went ahead with its demonstration at Dussehra Maidan in Balodabazar city, and laid siege to the Collector's office.

The unexpected turn of events put the spotlight on the inability of the administration to assess the impact of the desecration nearly a month before the protest and violence. It also highlighted the simmering anger of the Satnamis over similar incidents against the backdrop of persistent socio-economic issues such as lack of job opportunities and equitable development.

Sunil Barle, a Satnami youth, says while he does not justify the violence, the anger was justified because when such incidents happen all that the community gets are assurances.

In the aftermath of the violence, the focus shifted to the events preceding it. The police investigation found that controversial posts were uploaded on social media, some of them by representatives of the Bhim Regiment and Bhim Krantiveer, two local outfits that operate without re-

gistration but are active on social media platforms.

While SP Sadanand Kumar and Collector K.L. Chauhan were removed and subsequently suspended, the incident became a new flashpoint between the Congress and the BJP. While the Opposition party mounted pressure on the government by announcing a Statewide dharna on June 18, the BJP accused it of hatching the conspiracy behind the incident.

A police officer says there are ample signs of a conspiracy. "So many protesters were mobilised. Someone footed the bill for their food and travel from different parts of Chhattisgarh. It was a planned act."

Among those arrested is Roop Kishore Navrange, a youth the police are calling the main conspirator behind the stone pelting and arson. "Navrange is the founder of an outfit called Bhim Krantiveer. Earlier, he was the district president of Bhim Regiment. He is accused of inciting people to join the protest through social media," says the new SP, Vijay Agrawal. BJP MLA Khushwant Sa-

heb acknowledges that there was public anger but defends the actions taken by the State government. "Such incidents have taken place earlier in Dharampura and Pallari, but the action was never this swift as it was in this case," he says.

The Satnami community is the biggest constituent of the SCs in Chhattisgarh that form 12.8% of its population. Poll results have also been mixed in Satnami-dominated areas. The BJP won Janjgir-Champa – the only Lok Sabha seat in the State reserved for the SC community and one where Satnamis votes decide the outcome. The Congress had won all Assembly segments of the parliamentary seat in the State poll last November, in which it was voted out of power.

## Frustrated youth

Legal expert B.K. Manish says an ongoing legal tangle over reservation has also enraged the Satnami community over time. It manifested first in a nude protest by 29 youth on the opening day of the monsoon session in Raipur last year. They were protesting

against government jobs allegedly going to those holding fake SC/ST certificates. "Cleavages in SC/ST unity, which came to the fore soon after, made Satnamis desperate," he says.

Amit Jogi, the president Janta Congress Chhattisgarh (J), alleges that both the BJP and the Congress want to weaken the unity of the Satnami community. He also points out the leadership crisis that the youth have been facing.

He adds that this frustration is coupled with shrinking employment prospects due to fewer government job opportunities.

"Almost all gurus of the community from Giraudpuri to Bhandarpuri Dham have supported the government and not the community since 1980 due to their changing political ambitions. This is the reason that the Satnamis, who have been rebelling against slavery for centuries, have become leaderless socially and politically, and the youth have taken the place of the gurus," Jogi says.

LINK TO FULL STORY  
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# JD(S) leader Suraj Revanna arrested in sexual abuse case

The MLC was booked for alleged assault of a male party worker; Suraj's father says the case is a 'conspiracy' and he has confidence in judiciary

**The Hindu Bureau**  
SHIVAMOGGA/BENGALURU

One more member from the family of Janata Dal(S) leader and former Minister H.D. Revanna is in the eye of a storm as his son and party MLC Suraj Revanna was on Sunday arrested by the Hassan police after being questioned in connection with a case of alleged sexual abuse of a 27-year-old man. The State government has handed over the case to the Criminal Investigation Department (CID). The case against him was registered in Hassan on Saturday.

On Sunday, Mr. Suraj was brought to Bengaluru by the Hassan police following his arrest. He was produced before a Bengaluru court after his medical examination. The judge then remanded Mr. Suraj in judicial custody for 14 days. Sources said that the handover of the case to the CID was yet to be completed and the investigation agency would likely move for the MLC's custody soon.

His younger brother and former Hassan MP Prajwal Revanna is facing charges of rape in three cases and is in the custody of the Spe-



JD(S) MLC Suraj Revanna brought to Magistrate's residence after he was arrested in an alleged sexual abuse case. K. BHAGYA PRAKASH

cial Investigation Team (SIT), formed to probe his alleged sex crimes. The SIT is also led by senior CID officer B.K. Singh, who will also now supervise the probe into the case against Mr. Suraj. Similarly, both his parents are on bail in connection with allegations of abducting a victim of sexual abuse by Mr. Prajwal.

A youth from Hassan district, who identified himself as a JD(S) worker, had filed a complaint on Saturday at Holenarasipur Rural Police Station alleging that Mr. Suraj had sexually abused him at his farmhouse at Gannikada in Holenarasipur taluk on June 16.

Following the complaint, the police brought the MLC to the Cyber Economic and Narcotics Crime (CEN) police station in Hassan for interrogation that

went on for hours and later arrested him late on Saturday night.

The MLC is facing charges of sexually abusing a man and also threatening to kill him, if he revealed the same to anyone. The Holenarasipur Rural police registered the case against Mr. Suraj and his associate Shivakumar H.L., under Sections 377 (unnatural offences), 342 (wrongful confinement), and 506 (criminal intimidation).

### 'Conspiracy'

Mr. Revanna, MLA, has termed the allegations against his son a "conspiracy" and said he had faith in God and the judiciary. Mr. Suraj's uncle and Union Minister H.D. Kumaraswamy, however, chose to maintain a distance and refrained from commenting on the case.

# Rahul Gandhi pens a letter thanking people of Wayanad

**The Hindu Bureau**  
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

A day ahead of taking oath as the MP for Rae Bareilly in the 18th Lok Sabha, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi penned a letter thanking the people of Wayanad constituency, which he had represented for five years from 2019.

After winning both from Wayanad and Rae Bareilly in the Lok Sabha polls, he had decided to relinquish the Wayanad seat, from where his sister Priyanka Gandhi is expected to contest the bypolls.

Saying that the people of Wayanad are part of his family, Mr. Gandhi thanked them for "the love and protection you gave me when I needed it most".

"When I faced abuse day after day, your unconditional love protected me. You were my refuge, my home and my family. I never felt for even a moment



Rahul Gandhi

that you doubted me. I will remember the countless flowers and hugs you gave me. Each one given with such genuine love and tenderness. How can I ever forget the bravery, beauty and confidence with which young girls would translate my speeches in front of thousands of people. It was truly a joy and an honour to be your voice in Parliament," he wrote.

He further wrote that he was sad to relinquish the constituency, but was consoled by the fact that his sister would be there in his place.

# Telangana Minister sends legal notice to BRS MLA

**The Hindu Bureau**  
HYDERABAD

Telangana Transport Minister Ponnam Prabhakar has served a legal notice on BRS MLA Padi Kaushik

Reddy and a Telugu newspaper and a TV channel, accusing them of "tarnishing" his image and levelling "baseless allegations" on the transport of fly ash from NTPC, Ramagundam.

# Haryana hikes income limit for creamy layer of OBCs to ₹8 lakh

**Press Trust of India**  
CHANDIGARH

Maintaining that it will provide "significant benefits" in employment for the OBC category, Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini Sunday announced an increase in annual income limit for creamy layer from ₹6 lakh to ₹8 lakh.

Mr. Saini was addressing a gathering at 'OBC Morcha Sarv Samaj Samrasta Sammelan' held in Gurugram.

The move comes months before Haryana Assembly polls likely to be held in October.

"With the key aim of en-

sureing the welfare of the OBC community in Haryana and providing substantial benefits to the youth in government jobs, Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh today made a series of pivotal announcements," an official statement said.

The Chief Minister also announced that the reservation for the backward classes in Group-A and Group-B posts, currently at 15%, will be increased to 27%, "in line with the Central government's policy".

Besides this, the backlog of vacancies for backward class in Group-A and B category jobs will be filled on a priority basis, he said.

# O.R. Kelu sworn in as Minister in Kerala Cabinet

**The Hindu Bureau**  
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

CPI(M) leader O.R. Kelu, MLA for Mananthavady in Wayanad district, was sworn in as a Minister in the Pinarayi Vijayan-led Left Democratic Front (LDF) government at a function held at the Raj Bhavan on Sunday.

Kerala Governor Arif Mohammed Khan administered the oath of office and secrecy to Mr. Kelu. Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan and his Cabinet colleagues were present.

Mr. Kelu becomes the second Minister in the State from a Scheduled Tribes community after P.K. Jayalakshmi of the Congress, who was part of the United Democratic Front (UDF) government during 2011-16.

**Timings DELHI**

<b>MONDAY, JUN. 24</b>	RISE 05:25	SET 19:23
	RISE 21:47	SET 07:21
<b>TUESDAY, JUN. 25</b>	RISE 05:26	SET 19:23
	RISE 22:28	SET 08:29
<b>WEDNESDAY, JUN. 26</b>	RISE 05:26	SET 19:23
	RISE 23:05	SET 09:37

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**Delhi Palam Tomorrow**  
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**OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE**

**DEATH**

**B.Muralidhar Reddy** (64), Retired Associate Editor, The Hindu, New Delhi passed away on 22-June-2024. Address: 187, Samachar Apartments, Mayur Vihar, Phase - I Extension, Delhi-110091.

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**Notice of e-tender cum e-auction for sale of Eucalyptus standing trees raised in the plantations in Pudukkottai, Karaikudi and Tirukoilur Regions of TAFORN**

Sale of Eucalyptus standing trees for pulpwood in the plantations raised in the Ranges in Pudukkottai, Karaikudi and Tirukoilur Regions of Tamilnadu Forest Plantation Corporation Limited, for the year 2024-25 will be conducted by way of e-tender cum e-auction through MSTC Portal. Those who are interested may register as contractor in the MSTC website at free of cost and participate in the e-tender cum e-auction. The terms of e-tender cum e-auction and Range wise / Region-wise details of plantations to be brought for Sale are available in the following websites: <https://www.mstcecommerce.com> and <https://www.mstcindia.co.in>. The contractors can update themselves of the details of e-tender cum e-auction from the above websites from time to time. The details relating to e-tender cum e-auction will also be available in the Notice Board of the respective Regional Offices. Arrangements have been made for online registration in the respective Regional Offices and those who are desirous can make use of the same.

Sl No	Name of the Regions/ Ranges	Total No. of Eucalyptus Plantations	Total Area in ha	Total Anticipated yield in M.t	Date / day of time e-tender cum e-auction	Time
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2	Karaikudi / Karaikudi, Kallal	18	260.18	6950.000		
3	Tirukoilur/ Sankarapuram, Pagandai	21	362.36	9200.000		

**Note:** The date, time and details of plantation for the subsequent e-tender cum e-auction will be available in the MSTC website and will also be made available in the Notice Boards of the respective Regional Offices.

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Danish Ali	273	134	139
Dhruv Sapra	273	131	142
Piyush Gautam	269	128	141
Molightson K	265	136	129

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## Limit and excess

**Creamy layer should be kept out, but the ceiling on quota is artificial**

The Patna High Court judgment striking down enhanced reservation for various communities in employment and education marks yet another instance of the strict application of the 50% ceiling on total reservations by the judiciary. The verdict has invalidated the Nitish Kumar regime's decision of last year to amend its quota law to raise Backward Classes (BC) reservation from 12% to 18%, that of Extremely Backward Communities (EBC) from 18% to 25%, and those of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes from 16% to 20% and 1% to 2%, respectively. This took the total reservation level to 65%. Applying judicial precedents that have now crystallised into a legal bar on reservations exceeding 50%, the court has inflicted a huge blow to the Bihar government's plan to utilise its Caste Survey findings to expand its affirmative action programme. The government may have erred in its policy approach – armed with caste-wise population numbers – when its preamble to the amending law said it aimed to achieve “proportionate equality”. The court agreed with the petitioners challenging the increased quotas on a key point: that adequate representation does not mean ‘proportionate representation’, as clarified in the famous nine-judge verdict in *Indra Sawhney* (1992). If any attempt to raise the quota level earmarked for any section to be in proportion to the State's population results in the total reservation percentage exceeding the permissible limit, it is liable to be unconstitutional.

However, it is unfortunate that the court was so zealous about the reservation ceiling, that it rejected the State's argument on the existence of special circumstances. *Indra Sawhney* did allow the quota ceiling to be exceeded in “extraordinary situations”. It suggested that the population living in remote or far-flung areas may require to be treated in a different way. The court seems to have taken that geographical remoteness is the only special situation to justify an enhanced quota and denied the benefit to Bihar. It is difficult to believe that a State which is backward in most parameters of human and social development should be denied the use of its executive and legislative power to expand its social justice programme. The court surely saw merit in the argument that there was no in-depth study before enhanced reservation was implemented. This raises the question whether the survey was indeed quite exhaustive when it gave a caste-wise break-up of the population and their economic conditions. While there may be a case for pruning the BC or EBC list based on the progress made over the last few decades, it might not be just to stymie every attempt to enhance the numerical representation of historically deprived sections on the ground that it exceeds the quota ceiling.

## Money and muscle

**Whatever AIADMK's reasons for the boycott, ECI must ensure fair polling**

Assembly by-elections seldom throw up surprises. In Tamil Nadu, close to three out of four by-polls since 1977, when the AIADMK first swept to power, have gone to the ruling party (or its allies). The July 10 by-election to the Vikravandi constituency, located in the relatively backward Villupuram district of the northern part of the State, might not break this pattern, but the main Opposition, the AIADMK, has added a new dimension by announcing a poll boycott. The ostensible reason was its fear that the ruling DMK would “indulge in enormous use of money and muscle power...”, just as in the Erode (East) by-poll in 2023. But, clearly, the AIADMK, which drew a blank in the 2024 general election, is wary of failure again. The DMK, the PMK (as a constituent of the BJP-led NDA), and the Naam Tamilar Katchi are in the fray. The AIADMK could also be trying to woo back the PMK. In any case, the boycott does not behove a serious party. But whatever the AIADMK's rationale, its stated explanation is a challenge for the election authorities, who will have to ensure a free and transparent bypoll. Previous by-elections have been marred by the flow of gifts and money. In Erode (East), the AIADMK had even alleged that the DMK had confined sections of electors in election offices during the campaign.

There is a widespread perception that the laws with regard to bribery as an electoral offence are no deterrent to political parties, especially those in power. While it is not difficult to sharpen the laws, the question is whether they will be enforced in a fair manner. So, it is up to the Election Commission of India (ECI) to now erase these misgivings. The most powerful weapon that the ECI has against recognised political parties is the power to freeze their symbols. But, this has never been used in Tamil Nadu even when allegations of electoral offences surfaced. In the past decade, on two occasions when the AIADMK was in power, the ECI was tough when it rescinded, in 2016, the polling process in Aravakurichi and Thanjavur during the election to the State Assembly. And, in April 2017, a few days ahead of polling, it cancelled the R.K. Nagar by-poll over money power and the offering of allurements to the electorate. It is another matter that when the elections to the three seats were held later, the candidates who were in the news earlier for the wrong reasons, emerged victorious. Unless the ECI sends out a strong message that there will be no tolerance of bribery, there will not be much change on the ground. Also, the electorate should not be swayed by either money or freebies. In this regard, civil society organisations too have a crucial role to play.

# Parliament's changed bench strength spells more hope

There is a great sense of expectation from the 18th Lok Sabha, with the inaugural session scheduled to commence on June 24. The hope is that the new House will be different in its working and its deliberations during its tenure. The anticipation arises from the reduced numerical presence of the governing coalition's lead partner, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), and the increased strength of a combined Opposition, led by the Congress, than what it was during the previous two editions of the Lok Sabha.

After a hiatus of a decade, a government is a coalition, headed by the leader of the single-largest party, and now dependent on crucial support from two regional allies, the Janata Dal (United) and the Telugu Desam Party. Though, technically, the BJP helmed the National Democratic Alliance government, between 2014-24, the situation then was different as the lead party had comfort in bench strength, an element missing for the present.

### More space for the Opposition

The verdict handed over by the people in 2024 is clear. The country requires a stronger Opposition, which can put forth views that are in contrast with the policies and programmes of the governing coalition, and blunt the ability of the lead party to vigorously push its agenda without facing resistance. As new members of the 18th Lok Sabha take oath, the combined Opposition strength stands a little over 230, while the governing coalition with over 300 members, tips the scales precariously in its favour.

This change in the constitution of the new House gives rise to the hope that there would be greater accommodation on behalf of the government towards concerns of the Opposition. During the past decade, Members of Parliament opposed to the government complained that behind the wall of majority, the BJP's parliamentary managers conceded little space. The instances often cited to back this claim were the non-acceptance, in Parliament, of notices for adjournment or discussions on issues such as the border situation since the bloody clashes with China, and attendant matters.

On the other hand, the government's insistence on performance measured in terms of productivity on legislation became a barometer for the efficacy of Parliament. While both Houses of Parliament remain the only place to legislate laws for the country, the tendency of the governing coalition's parliamentary managers to secure passage without adequate scrutiny and debate became a bone of contention with the Opposition. The sheer presence of its greater numbers permitted the government to follow the latter portion of the adage that the ‘opposition can have its say, the government will have its way’.

The norm of subjecting proposed legislation to parliamentary oversight in the form of scrutiny by committees of jurisdiction became scarce. Three decades ago, Parliament decided to expand the committee system and introduced an additional layer of reading of the Bills. It served



**K.V. Prasad**

Delhi-based senior journalist

Parliament well, permitting Members across the aisle to deliberate on Bills in a non-partisan and dispassionate manner and offer recommendations to fine-tune proposed legislation. The rationale of conducting committee meetings away from the public glare or providing access to the media during its deliberations was to prevent the proclivity of members to grand-stand on party lines. Unanimity was the mantra.

Committees have been transacting a load of business in examining issues and hearing suggestions from domain experts which become integral in arriving at recommendations on a subject under study. For instance, the Opposition cited the three controversial farm laws that were cleared without referral to the Committee, leading to protests and eventually forcing the government to withdraw them.

The Opposition's contention was that an examination by the committee of jurisdiction and its consultation process would have provided the government a well-rounded view. This opportunity was missed. The system of parliamentary oversight cannot be equated to placing Bills in the public domain and inviting suggestions, which are then vetted by bureaucratic processes. The committee work begins after the Ministry concerned drafts a Bill incorporating, if need be, suggestions flowing from the public.

Both Houses have separate Rules of Procedure and Conduct. While following these meticulously is expected, Parliament also functions on time-honoured conventions. For instance, when the Minister makes a *suo motu* statement on any issue in Rajya Sabha, the Chair can permit members to seek clarifications, a convention that is unique to the House.

While many advocate the need for a debate between contesting candidates during elections on the lines of the U.S. presidential candidates, the unique practice of holding the elected government of the day is at play each day during Question Hour. Ministers come prepared to take questions from Members, which reflects the extent of the grasp of the subject of those seeking information and the one who is duty-bound to respond. The schedule of the calendar allocates Ministries on specific days including the Prime Minister's Office. In the last 10 years, the Prime Minister has not made an intervention even as a junior Minister has responded. Another practice given a go by is the Prime Minister making a statement after his foreign travels, a task sometimes delegated to the Minister of External Affairs.

### The post of Speaker

The first test of the governing coalition and the combined Opposition in Parliament will be when Members of Parliament of the new Lok Sabha will be called upon to elect the Speaker and custodian of the House. The governing coalition has the numbers to place its own person even though the Opposition may seek to test the waters. However, the second test will be on the election of the Deputy Speaker, a constitutional post that

remained vacant during the five-year tenure of the 17th Lok Sabha. Citing convention and tradition, the Opposition expects the position to be offered to it in the current House. During the past four decades, there have been exceptions when a member belonging to a party outside the government was elected. In 1985 and then again in 2014, the All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam's M. Thambidurai secured the honour.

As for the proceedings, the new session will offer the Opposition ample opportunity to critically evaluate the policies and programmes of the government, which will be put forth during the address of the President of India, Droupadi Murmu, to Members of both the Houses sitting together. The ensuing debate on the Motion of Thanks to the President's Address offers an opening for the Opposition to pick up and analyse threadbare issues of concern without getting hemmed by the topic being germane. In a way, the Motion can be likened to be an omnibus resolution.

Significantly, just days after the Lok Sabha results, the chief of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh Mohan Bhagwat articulated his thoughts which lay emphasis on consensus building and suggesting that the Opposition must be viewed as a political opponent and not an adversary.

### Points of friction

In the run-up to the inaugural session of the new Lok Sabha, points of friction between the governing coalition and the Opposition cropped up on two occasions. The Congress objected to the manner in which the statues of Mahatma Gandhi and B.R. Ambedkar was shifted to a newly constructed and designated spot called ‘Prerna Sthal’ (or an inspirational place) within Parliament's precincts and also the decision to appoint BJP's Bhartruhari Mahtab as *pro tem* Speaker.

The first decision, it contended, was arrived at without due process established in Parliament, while the second decision, on the *pro tem* Speaker ignored the convention that senior-most members in the current House should have been appointed to complete the formalities of the swearing-in of new Members of Parliament. The Speaker, Om Birla, dismissed the first by stating that consultations were held and ‘that there was no need to indulge in politics on this’. In the second instance, the Parliamentary Affairs Minister, Kiren Rijiju, went public criticising the Congress for politicising the appointment.

By calling on the Leader of the Opposition in the Rajya Sabha, Mallikarjun Kharge earlier, the Parliamentary Affairs Minister indicated that in parliamentary democracy, the governing coalition would follow time-honoured traditions. As days progress and regular sessions begin, the role will require dexterity to underscore that the spirit of accommodation. While the governing coalition should be in the forefront to take every shade of opinion along, the Opposition needs to recalibrate its strategy to extract the best by taking recourse to parliamentary tools on the anvil. And, the onus will be on all sides to maintain civility in debate.

In the 18th Lok Sabha, the governing coalition and the Opposition need to do justice to parliamentary business

# Create the space for governance with a green heart

As a new term begins for the government and the Lok Sabha, it must have green concerns close to the heart. While we have never had a government that truly put the environment first, the last one, which was in pursuit of its ‘development’ agenda, proved to be actively inimical to the interests of the environment. For more than a dozen years, Environment Ministers have been concerned primarily with the welfare of mining, oil, coal, highways, and power industries. India stands on the cusp of severe environmental degradation, which can only be arrested by the conscious adoption of green policies even as the country pursues the goal of becoming a middle-income economy. These are the areas that need to be addressed urgently.

### Greater vulnerability

Climate change is something India's leadership mentions often but does little to engage with (with the limited exception of promoting the solar energy industry). Even as energy consumption soars, no steps have been taken to consciously pursue an agenda of cutting down emissions. More importantly, the remedial aspects of climate change which include building resilience, food security, and access to essentials have fallen far behind in priorities. As floods, famines, heatwaves, wildfires, water shortages and droughts become increasingly common, contingency plans must be put in place to protect vulnerable populations and diminish harm. From updating building guidelines to preserving natural storm barriers such as mangrove forests, to establishing funds for evacuation and rehabilitation, these are the tasks that the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change has had no time for recently.

First, forest cover, India has one of the world's lowest levels of green cover per capita. It has only 28 trees per headcount of the populace, in contrast with Canada's 8953 or even China's 130. Qualitatively important forest cover has



**Satvajit Sarma**

a practising lawyer in New Delhi



**Arun Srikumar**

a practising lawyer in New Delhi

A conscious focus on green policies is crucial as environmental issues in India impact the survival and the health of millions

decreased significantly in the last 20 years, and the less said about urban forestry the better. The damage to our forests has been covered up with questionable accounting, which includes plantation forests and tree cover in urban centres. Recent legislation such as the Forest (Conservation) Amendment Bill, 2023, which was legislation ramrodded through the outgoing Parliament, needs to be rolled back and robust new protections put in place.

Second, unlivable cities. The metropolitan centres of India have overgrown any plans that were laid for them. Delhi, Mumbai and a large swathe of tier 2 and tier 3 cities across the Gangetic belt now have unacceptable levels of air pollution, destroying the lifespans of their residents. Bengaluru and Delhi are running out of water, and the poor have to queue for hours to have access to the bare minimum. The rivers that brought life to cities, such as the Adyar in Chennai or the Yamuna in Delhi, have become open sewers. Green spaces and water bodies in cities have been built over, which has created heat islands. Smaller cities have more manageable problems, but without timely intervention, will reach the same crisis levels as the metros. Sewage treatment specifically requires a major national overhaul as Indian cities treat only approximately 28% of the sewage they generate.

### Destruction in the Himalayas

Third, concerns in the Himalayas. Climate change has had outside repercussions in the mountains of India. Glaciers are rapidly receding, and in some places, have disappeared. Up to 80% of their volume is forecast to disappear in this century. Rainfall and temperature patterns have changed beyond recognition. This impacts the water and food security of not just the people of the mountains but also of much of North India. When thousands of Ladakhis fasted and protested to demand governmental action they were ignored – perhaps because they held no

votes. Similar concerns arise for wetlands – whose importance has never been greater – and other marginal landscapes which are critical for biodiversity as well. Fourth, public participation. At the root of many of these problems is the Indian government's age-old refusal to listen to stakeholders and affected persons. Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) mechanisms have become mere checkboxes to be ticked for all projects. Protests are swept aside, criticism is ignored, and the absence of a meaningful Opposition has resulted in rapid, ill-considered steps being taken. The Char Dham Highway project is an example. Passed through amidst a barrage of small EIAs, the grandiose scheme has caused irreparable harm to the river valleys of Uttarakhand. The deforestation and erosion caused has created additional unforeseen risks, best exemplified by the tunnel collapse of November 2023. More importantly, the sanctity of the EIA Notification of 2006 has been watered down over the last five years with hundreds of amendments. EIA mechanisms need to be elevated to statutory status, so that they are beyond such sabotage.

### Restore genuine conservation

Fifth, greenwashing. Ill-advised policies, which have been driven by commercial interest, such as green credits and compensatory afforestation, have taken the place of genuine conservation efforts. Sustainable development does not mean that only commercially profitable steps may be taken by the government. Enforcement mechanisms and bodies also need more teeth so as to ensure genuine environmental rule of law.

These are not luxury concerns. They impact the survival and the health of millions. The absence of these issues from the election manifestos of the major political parties was bitterly disappointing. But it is not too late. If the government is to truly be the steward of the people, it must start by taking a hard look at the physical health of the country.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### The examination system

The stream of irregularities as far as the conduct of all-India competitive and prestigious examinations by the National Testing Agency

is disheartening for young students (Page 1, “Govt. removes NTA chief, hands over probe to CBI”, June 23). From the NEET-UG fiasco and UGC-NET

cancellation to the NEET-PG postponement, the central government must address the concerns of young people. The government should overhaul the NTA's

systems. What is happening now is no blemish but the creation of a deep scar on India's education system. **Shihab Kattathar**, Mangaluru

The NTA has ended up playing with the lives of innocent students who have spent their precious time and energy in preparing for these examinations. The

events are extremely dismaying and gloomy. There needs to be a thorough investigation. **K. Sudha Rani**, Secunderabad

# Indian Railways and safety challenges

The dust and din have not settled since the tragic accident involving the GFCJ container train (goods train), which, while travelling at high speed, rammed into the 13174 Agartala-Sealdah Kanchanjunga Express, resulting in 11 deaths and approximately 40 injuries. Amidst the uproar, it is very important to examine some critical points.

Thanks to focused measures like closing unmanned level crossings and emphasising track maintenance, the safety record of Indian Railways in terms of fatalities and injuries has certainly improved. However, comparing this data to past records to paint a rosy picture is misleading. Modern systems and tools make achieving a zero-fatality record an attainable goal, and this is what the Railways should be pursuing. Moreover, the Union government's substantial investment, allocating nearly 25% of its total capex to railways, makes funding all safety works well within the Indian Railway's reach. The non-availability of resources cannot be a red herring any more.

A statutory inquiry by the Commissioner of Railway Safety (CRS) is under way, and the cause and responsibility for the accident will soon be determined. It is almost a foregone conclusion that the crew of the GFCJ container train, the station master, and perhaps even the signal maintainer will be held responsible for ignoring the stipulated Automatic Signal territory protocol. This pattern of assigning blame to lower level functionaries repeats with each serious accident.

There are other issues which may or may not be routine and beg more attention. First, the information management and communication of Indian Railways. Even as facts about the accident were still emerging, the Chairperson of the Railway Board prematurely declared the container train crew's disregard of signals as the *prima facie* cause.



**Sudhanshu Mani**

Retired General Manager/Indian Railways, Leader of Train 18/Vande Bharat project and independent rail consultant

Extensive digital data from station data loggers and microprocessors on locomotives and trains can be effectively managed by AI, filtering out the irregularities

She also stated that both crew members had died. While the former is proving to be only partially true, the latter was an insensitive and erroneous statement as the assistant loco pilot has survived.

When questioned about the slow rollout of Kavach, an indigenous signalling system that also prevents collisions, she cited limited capacity in the supporting industry as a main reason. If industrial capacity is lacking, it is the Indian Railway's responsibility to encourage and nurture the allied industry with meaningful assurances so they invest in capacity building. Notably, the Railways decided to adopt the Kavach system after extensive trials over 1,400 kilometres on the Southern Central Railway nearly three years ago, preferring it over the established European system, ETCS Level II. The project has been a work in progress since then. Such slow execution of a project indicates a lack of focus on safety works.

If the Indian Railways is still not confident of the system's efficacy or speed of implementation, why plan for its adoption? If that is indeed the case, there is no harm in installing ETCS Level II in some important sections while Kavach matures.

We have heard that Kavach is under implementation on the Delhi-Howrah and Delhi-Mumbai sections, but the target for completion has been missed. It is pertinent to refer to two recommendations from the CRS' report on the Vizianagaram train accident last year. The report emphasised the priority implementation of Kavach in Automatic Signalling territories, as they are prone to collisions, and suggested faster installation in locomotives and trains ahead of ground installations to increase the probability, if not guarantee, of preventing collisions. The Railways should fixate on the trunk routes and Automatic Signalling territories for faster installation of Kavach, aiming for

4,000 to 5,000 km/year, which is achievable. Why are differing views on the protocol to be followed by station masters and crews in the case of Automatic signal failure emerging? This issue was criticised by the CRS in the said report, highlighting badly drafted rules that lead to ambiguity about what to do in the case of Automatic signal failure.

Indian Railways, like many government entities, is overstuffed. However, there are some safety-critical categories where work is intensely continuous, such as loco crew, train manager, station master, pointsman and signal maintainer. Any vacancies in these categories mean stress and overwork for the existing staff. Carrying such vacancies to save some expenditure is self-defeating. Although there are nearly 20,000 vacancies for loco pilot/assistant loco pilot positions, Indian Railways issued a notice for recruiting only 5,658 heads earlier this year. When the issue was raised strongly after this accident, this was revised to 18,799 heads, clearly showing a cavalier handling of an important matter.

A big question is whether the accident was an aberration or if similar near misses are commonplace in the affected section. If the enquiry shows that such incidents were indeed frequent, it would point to a grave management failure. A related issue is the inaction in employing AI-enabled applications to improve safety post mortems and provide actionable alerts. Extensive digital data from station data loggers and microprocessors on locomotives and trains can be effectively managed by AI, filtering out the irregularities to precipitate the grave ones and projecting them regularly to the very top of railway management.

One hopes that the enquiry report will delve more into managerial issues this time, such that a clear path toward a safe, accident-free Indian Railways can be charted out.

# Power dues remain unresolved

The power struggle between Telangana and A.P. has yielded no conclusive solution

## STATE OF PLAY

**M. Rajeev**  
rajeev.madabhushi@thehindu.co.in



The protracted dispute over power dues between Telangana and Andhra Pradesh has come to the fore yet again.

BRS president and former Chief Minister K. Chandrababhan Rao raised the issue in his letter to the Judicial Commission headed by Justice L. Narasimha Reddy, which was formed to investigate alleged irregularities in Telangana's power purchase agreement with neighbouring Chhattisgarh. He recalled the power woes faced by Telangana during its formative years justifying his government's decision to enter into a power purchase agreement with Chhattisgarh to meet the requirements.

Mr. Rao stated that according to the Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation Act, 2014, Telangana was entitled to 53.89% and Andhra Pradesh to 46.11% of the power generated in the erstwhile united Andhra Pradesh, based on power consumption statistics from five years before bifurcation. The ratio was to be followed for 10 years, but the share allocated to Telangana was insufficient. While there was a shortfall of 2,700 MW, the situation worsened with Andhra Pradesh not supplying over 1,500 MW violating the provisions of the Reorganisation Act. There was a non-availability of 900 MW of power from gas-based stations. On the whole, there was a shortage of 5,000 MW power leading to a severe crisis in Telangana.

The crisis worsened when Andhra Pradesh took over the Sileru power unit and failed to supply the agreed power. Besides, Mr. Rao alleged that

Andhra Pradesh canceled power purchase agreements with private power generation companies to deny Telangana its share.

## Continuing dispute

His letter comes against the backdrop of a continuing dispute between the two States over the dues payable by the other since the bifurcation of united Andhra Pradesh in June 2014. The Telangana government has been claiming that its power utilities should get around ₹17,828 crore from Andhra Pradesh utilities, while the neighbouring State asserts that Telangana owes ₹3,441.78 crore in principal and another ₹3,315 crore in late payment surcharges for power supplied post-bifurcation.

The issue was represented to the Union Home Ministry as well as in the Southern Zonal Council meetings by the two Telugu States even as the Telangana government presented papers in support of its contentions. It said that the total receivables from Andhra Pradesh power utilities was ₹17,420 crore while dues payable to Andhra Pradesh Power Generation Corporation were to the tune of ₹4,887 crore leaving a balance of ₹12,532 crore receivable by Telangana.

The issue escalated when the Andhra Pradesh government lobbied the Union government, leading to the Union Power Ministry's intervention. The Ministry di-

rected the Telangana government to pay ₹6,756 crore to Andhra Pradesh for the supply of power post-bifurcation and ordered that the payment should be made within 30 days from the issuance of the order.

The Union Power Ministry was in consultation with the Finance Ministry to give a direction to RBI so that the accounts of the Telangana government could be deducted from the amount that should be paid to the neighbouring State. The Union Minister drew flak from Telangana which claimed that the Union government had not ensured implementation of the assurances given in the Reorganisation Act, but had decided to intervene in power dues issue against the interests of Telangana. The Telangana government on its part, challenged the Union Ministry's decision in the High Court which in turn quashed its orders.

"In our opinion, it is eminently desirable that the dispute between them is resolved amicably, preferably through mediation," Chief Justice Alok Aradhe and Justice N.V. Shrivastava said. Nearly a year after the judgment, the two States have yet to reach a consensus on power dues. Telangana Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy who took over the reins in December has reaffirmed his commitment to resolving the long standing disputes. With Mr. Revanth Reddy, one time associate of TDP president N. Chandrababu Naidu, inclined to resolve the disputes and a regime change in Andhra Pradesh where Mr. Naidu led TDP coalition taking over the reins after their victory in the polls, hopes are rekindled again over the scope for the two States to settle the issues in a mutually agreeable manner in the coming days.

# India among a select few countries that have not conducted the Census

Sharing company with India are countries undergoing invasions, civil wars or economic crises

## DATA POINT

**Jasmin Nihalani**

The last census conducted in India was in 2011 and the decennial counting measure has been postponed indefinitely since 2021. Census numbers play a vital role in identifying beneficiaries for a myriad welfare schemes which could include specific ones such as building schools for tribal children to the large Public Distribution System (PDS). The absence of the census is bound to have grave consequences.

The BJP-led government has repeatedly asserted, including in Parliament, that Census 2021 had to be postponed due to the pandemic. But India stands only among a select few countries that have not conducted the latest Census - 44 of 233 nations. Of the 189 (81%) that managed to conduct their latest rounds, 143 did so after March 2020, the period when COVID-19 started playing havoc across countries. India shares the dubious distinction of not conducting the census with conflict-ridden countries such as Ukraine (invaded by Russia), Yemen, Syria and Myanmar - impacted by civil wars, the Taliban-ruled Afghanistan, the economic crisis-affected Sri Lanka besides several sub-Saharan African countries that have also undergone turmoil.

Chart 1 shows the year in which the census was last conducted in 233 countries. Among the ten most populous countries, India and Nigeria are the only two yet to conduct a census. China, the U.S. and Indonesia were able to conduct their latest census round in 2020. Pakistan, ranked fifth, conducted its census in March 2023.

Among BRICS nations (originally defined), only India has not conducted the census with others having done so during or after the pandemic - Brazil (August 2022), China (November 2020), South

Africa (February 2022), Russia (October 2021). Among neighbours, Nepal, Maldives, Bhutan and Bangladesh have conducted censuses.

An excerpt from The Office of Registrar General and Census Commissioner, published in 2011, emphasises the need for a census. "... India is a welfare State. All these (welfare schemes) require information at the grassroots level... (Census) is the only source of primary data at village, town and ward level...".

Table 2 lists a selection of surveys that need census data to determine their samples and some schemes that require updated population figures to determine the number of beneficiaries. For instance, the consumption survey 2022-23, which collects data on the consumption of goods and services to understand expenditure patterns and standard of living, used the 2011 census for sampling. The National Family Health Survey 2019-21, which highlights districts where health services are inadequate, also depended upon the 2011 figures. Schemes such as the National Family Security Act, which identifies beneficiaries, who are entitled to receive subsidised food grains, are still being implemented using 2011 figures. Calculations by economists Jean Drèze, Reetika Khera and Meghana Mungikar estimate that at least 100 million people have been excluded from the scheme as coverage is still based on the 2011 census.

Even a relatively smaller scheme such as Eklavya Model Residential School (EMRS), which aims to provide quality education for ST children, will miss out on many areas. In 2022, every block with more than 50% of the ST population was targeted to have an EMRS school. As this calculation was done based on 2011, many blocks that fit the criteria in 2022 may have missed out. Similarly, blocks which fit the criteria earlier but did not in 2022, will get an EMRS school which they may not need now.

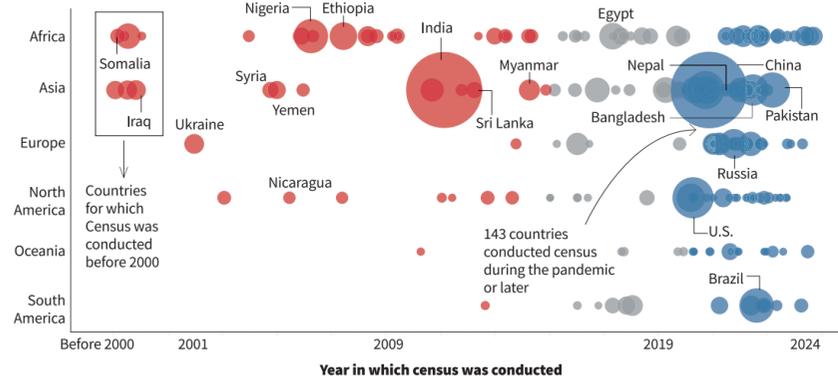
## Counted in bad company

The data for the chart were sourced from the statistics division of the United Nations. Data for the table was sourced from the respective survey reports, CAG audit reports and the NFSA website

**Approximate count:** Women walk in front of a 'population clock' showing India's estimated population, on World Population Day on July 11, last year, in Mumbai. EMMANUAL YOGINI



**Chart 1:** The chart shows the year in which the latest census was conducted in 233 countries. Countries coloured as ● are yet to conduct the latest census. Nations coloured ● did it before the pandemic, while those coloured ● did it during or after pandemic



**Table 2:** Surveys that need census data to determine their samples and some schemes that require updated population figures

Name	Use of census
<b>Consumption survey</b>	The sampling frame for rural sector is the list of villages as per Census 2011
<b>National Family Health Survey</b>	The 2011 census served as the sampling frame for the selection of villages in rural areas
<b>PLFS</b>	List of 2011 population census villages constituted the rural sampling frame
<b>Sample Registration System</b>	The statistical report uses sample from Census 2011 frame
<b>Household social consumption on education</b>	The total number of sample first stage units (census villages in the rural sector and blocks in the urban sector) were allocated to the States and UTs in proportion to population as per Census 2011
<b>Key Indicators of Social Consumption in India: Health</b>	For the rural areas, the list of 2011 Census villages constituted the sampling frame
<b>National Food Security Act</b>	The Act covers nearly 2/3rd of the country's total population on the basis of estimates done using Census 2011 figures. 75% of rural and 50% of urban population is entitled to receive highly subsidised foodgrains
<b>National Social Assistance Programme</b>	Central assistance to States and UTs under NSAP is determined on the basis of BPL population of the respective States/UTs. Estimated number of beneficiaries are calculated using population figures as per Census 2011 and the poverty ratio determined by the erstwhile Planning Commission in 2004-05
<b>Delimitation of constituencies</b>	The Social Studies Division provides the Scheduled Caste (SC) and Scheduled Tribe (ST) Census figures to the Election Commission for delimitation of constituencies and reservation of seats for the SCs and STs

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## FROM THE ARCHIVES

The *Hindu*

FIFTY YEARS AGO JUNE 24, 1974

# Little support for Pak bid against India at Islamic meet

Kuala Lumpur, June 23: Since the beginning of the conference, Pakistan has been canvassing for a resolution that could cite the Indian explosion as a threat to the security of smaller countries in the sub-continent and of other non-nuclear nations.

But countries like Bangladesh, Afghanistan, Malaysia and Egypt opposed the move.

They considered that India could not be singled out. It was agreed that a discussion in general terms on all nuclear tests could be had on the agenda.

At the officials' meeting, Pakistan wanted the conference formally to call upon the five nuclear powers to give an assurance of security to non-nuclear nations around India.

Pakistan said that if all the five powers were not prepared to give a joint assurance, then individual nations should be approached.

The Pakistani delegation spokesman today denied a report that Pakistan sought to condemn India for the nuclear test. He also deplored "tendentious reporting" of the conference by some news agencies in regard to Pakistan's proposed item on strengthening the security of non-nuclear States. Neither the conference nor its committees had yet taken up Pakistan's proposed item for substantive consideration, he added.

Out of 30 delegates, only a few countries touched on the nuclear test.

Pakistan's Defence and Foreign Minister, Mr. Aziz Ahmed said Pakistan's concern over the Indian test did not arise merely on account of its own security or of regional disequilibrium.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO JUNE 24, 1924

# Rumours contradicted.

Bombay, June 24: The Board of Directors have learnt of the several unauthorised and unjustified rumours about the Tata Iron and Steel Company's position and about the intention of the Board to reduce the capital of the Company. The Board have this day completed arrangements for further finance in this Company, and with the co-operation of the shareholders and the investing public, the Board are confident that the necessity for reducing the capital of reconstructing the Company will not arise.

# Text & Context

THE HINDU

**NEWS IN NUMBERS**

**Amount infused by FPIs in Indian equities in June**

**12,170** in ₹ crore. Foreign investors staged a comeback after the the election results in Indian equities, driven by expectations of continued policy reforms. PTI

**Number of infra projects hits by cost overrun in May**

**458** Infrastructure projects, each entailing an investment of ₹150 crore or above, were hit by a cost overrun of more than ₹5.71 lakh crore in May this year, according to the MoSPI. PTI

**The funds needed to repair the damage by Cyclone Remal**

**237.6** in ₹ crore. Mizoram has requested monetary assistance from the Centre for rehabilitation of people and for the repair of damages caused by Cyclone Remal. PTI

**Domestic exhibitors to participate in the garment fair**

**350** Domestic players and foreign buyers from more than 50 nations will participate in the garment fair, beginning on June 25, according to the Apparel Export Promotion Council. PTI

**Number of people killed in North Gaza in Israeli strikes**

**39** The Palestinian Civil Defence said it pulled approximately the same number of bodies from a building hit by an Israeli strike in an eastern neighbourhood of the Gaza City. AP  
COMPILED BY THE HINDU DATA TEAM

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## What are the duties of a Speaker?

What does the office of the 'Speaker pro tem' mean? What does the Constitution state? Who elects the Deputy Speaker of the Lok Sabha? How can the impartiality of the Speaker's office be preserved? What are the main roles of the Speaker?

**EXPLAINER**

**Rangarajan. R**

**The story so far:**

The President has appointed seven-time MP Bhartruhari Mahtab as the 'Speaker pro tem' of the 18th Lok Sabha. The election of the full-time Speaker is scheduled for June 26. There are also reports of the Deputy Speaker being offered to one of the allies of the ruling National Democratic Alliance (NDA), a post that has been held by the Opposition since the 10th Lok Sabha (1991).

**Who is Speaker pro tem?**

Article 94 of the Constitution states that the Speaker of the Lok Sabha shall not vacate his/her office until immediately before the first meeting of the Lok Sabha after its dissolution. This is to ensure that the office of the Speaker is never left vacant. Hence, Om Birla who was the Speaker of the 17th Lok Sabha continues in that post till June 24 when the first meeting of the 18th Lok Sabha is scheduled. Article 95(1) of the Constitution provides that when the post of Speaker and Deputy Speaker is vacant, the President shall appoint a member of the Lok Sabha to perform the duties of the Speaker. This would be the situation when the first meeting of a new Lok Sabha commences.

Hence, the President appoints 'Speaker pro tem' under this provision till the full-time Speaker is elected. The term 'pro tem' means 'for the time being' or 'temporary'.

This term is not found in the Constitution or rules of Lok Sabha but is a conventional term which finds mention in the 'Handbook on the working of Ministry of Parliamentary affairs.' As per tradition, one of the senior-most members of the Lok Sabha is selected by the government, who is then administered oath by the President. The Speaker pro tem administers oath of office to other MPs



**Important role:** Union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan with MP Bhartruhari Mahtab on March 28. PTI

and presides over the election of full-time Speaker. In the 18th Lok Sabha, Bhartruhari Mahtab of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has been appointed as Speaker pro tem.

**How are the Speaker and Deputy Speaker elected?**

Article 93 of the Constitution states that the Lok Sabha shall choose two members to be its Speaker and Deputy Speaker. The election of the Speaker is held on a date fixed by the President. All the Speakers in independent India have been elected unopposed. The election of Deputy Speaker is held on a date fixed by the Speaker.

**What is the role of the Speaker?**

Apart from the conduct of business, the Speakers perform two important constitutional functions of certifying a Bill to be a Money Bill (over which the Rajya Sabha has limited role), and deciding on disqualification under the Tenth Schedule for defection. In discharging these roles in the past, the Speakers have invariably favoured the ruling dispensation, something that should be avoided.

The Lok Sabha rules provide the Speaker with the powers of referral of Bills introduced to Standing Committees and suspension of members for grave disorder up to a maximum of five days. Referral of Bills to committees have

declined from 71% during 2009-14 to 16% during 2019-24. With the return of a coalition government, it is expected that the Speaker would refer important Bills to Standing committees for scrutiny. There were also large-scale suspensions of Opposition MPs during the winter session of 2023. Such suspensions affect the robust functioning of Parliament and should be carried out with restraint.

**What are the conventions?**

In Britain, the Speaker once elected to his/her office, resigns from the political party to which he/she belonged. In subsequent elections to House of Commons, he/she seeks election not as a member of any political party but as 'The Speaker seeking re-election'. This is to reflect his/her impartiality while presiding over the House. Somnath Chatterjee, who was the Speaker of the 14th Lok Sabha acted independently by not resigning from the post despite his party's (CPM) direction after it had withdrawn support from the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) government during a confidence vote in 2008. While the Tenth Schedule allows a Speaker to resign from their political party on being elected to their office, it has never been done by any Speaker till date. Resignation from their political parties on being elected as Speaker could be a first step towards demonstrating independence.

The Deputy Speaker is an important constitutional officer who steps in during the vacancy or absence of the Speaker. The convention of offering the post of Deputy Speaker to the Opposition started in the year 1991. Thereafter, till the 16th Lok Sabha this has been followed without a break. It was a travesty of the Constitution that no Deputy Speaker was elected in the 17th Lok Sabha.

The healthy convention of the post being held by Opposition should return in the current Lok Sabha.

*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 President has appointed seven-time MP Bhartruhari Mahtab as the 'Speaker pro tem' of the 18th Lok Sabha.

Article 94 of the Constitution states that the Speaker of the Lok Sabha shall not vacate his/her office until immediately before the first meeting of the Lok Sabha after its dissolution.

The Deputy Speaker is an important constitutional officer who steps in during the vacancy or absence of the Speaker.

## How is methanol procured and used as liquor?

Was the Kallakurichi incident the first time that methanol poisoning has come to light?

**M. Kalyanaraman**

**The story so far:**

The Kallakurichi illicit liquor tragedy that has so far claimed more than 50 lives is entirely familiar in its cause, sequence of events, and aftermath. Such tragedies happen periodically across India in various States. Almost all the postmortem reports of the victims attribute the cause to methanol consumption.

**How are ethanol, methanol made?**

Ethanol is legal liquor for consumption. It is produced biologically whereas methanol is produced from fuels such as coal in India. Molasses, which are a by-product of the sugar making process, form the starting material of distilleries that are often located close to sugar factories. They produce rectified spirit which is distilled further to produce edible extra neutral alcohol that in turn goes into making Indian Made Foreign Liquor, a lucrative cash cow for State

governments. During ethanol production in responsible distilleries, methanol is also produced but is carefully removed since the processes are highly controlled.

Methanol is produced from coal and other fossil fuels. While ethanol can be made edible, methanol is poison. Even very low concentrations of methanol can be toxic, often fatal. However, it is needed to produce a range of products that are highly useful. Paints, for instance, can't be produced without methanol.

**Is methanol easy to procure?**

Just like ethanol, methanol is a highly controlled substance. Rules in Tamil Nadu ensure the manufacturing, transportation and storage are all licenced, monitored and the quantity and quality audited.

In northern Tamil Nadu, much of the methanol used in industries is sourced from Andhra Pradesh. Ground reportage suggests the existence of a lucrative methanol pilferage racket operating enroute and at the end-user side as well. It is possible that methanol formed

during the crude distillation process, adopted by the bootleggers at Kallakurichi, wasn't removed, leading to methanol poisoning. However, the widespread nature of contamination and scale of the Kallakurichi tragedy suggests that methanol was procured and supplied separately, either as part of a brew or alone in a diluted form. Given that illicit liquor has been produced and distributed widely here over many months, possibly years, methanol use was not a one-off event that happened only this fateful week at Kallakurichi.

**Why is methanol used?**

Most of the hooch tragedies in India occur due to methanol contamination in liquor. Street wisdom, or belief rather, may well be that the relatively inexpensive but potent poison that is methanol, if diluted enough, could provide the same effect as ordinary liquor – a state of intoxication or 'kick' for consumers.

Prosecutors in the 2015 Malvani, Mumbai hooch tragedy case in which

more than 100 people died and some 75 were injured argued that all the accused had entered into a criminal conspiracy, and deliberately procured and supplied poisonous methanol. Lawyers defending the accused argued that their defendants would not knowingly add methanol. It made no business sense. And bootleggers, just like in Kallakurichi, live amidst the community. They provide a service that is much in demand and wouldn't want to kill their own folk. The additional sessions judge S. D. Tawshikar, in the Malvani case, acquitted 10 of the 14 accused but convicted four. The judge did not find anyone guilty of violating the Poisons Act of 1919. The four were convicted of criminal conspiracy, and culpable homicide not amounting to murder.

**What needs to be done?**

The periodic occurrence of methanol poisoning suggests the need for strong central legislation that can work with State legislation. Various laws such as the Poisons Act that involves State governments can tighten the methanol supply chain. The implementation of laws holds the key, especially when there are plans to ramp up the production of both ethanol and methanol for use as cheaper, eco-friendly alternatives to petrol and diesel for transportation.

The NITI Aayog has talked of ramping up methanol production from two metric tonnes to 20. Keeping methanol and ethanol separate and not allowing any pilferage should be a national priority.

**THE GIST**

The Kallakurichi illicit liquor tragedy that has so far claimed more than 50 lives is entirely familiar in its cause, sequence of events, and aftermath. Almost all the postmortem reports attribute the cause to methanol consumption.

Methanol is produced from coal and other fossil fuels. While ethanol can be made edible, methanol is poison.

The periodic occurrence of methanol poisoning suggests the need for strong central legislation that can work with State legislation.

CACHE



GETTY IMAGES

# Is the European Union's 'chat control' law undermining online privacy?

The EU's proposal to thwart child sexual abuse online could potentially create a backdoor for authoritarian governments to snoop on citizens. Some tech companies, along with trade associations, and privacy experts have all vehemently opposed the regulation

Poulomi Chatterjee

The story so far:

The European Union's proposed 'chat control' law has become a bone of contention between members of the bloc. First proposed by the European Commissioner for Home Affairs Ylva Johansson in May 2022 as part of the bloc's push to combat child sexual abuse online, the framework of the bill has now come under fire, earning itself a derisive term "Chat Control". France, Germany and Poland have particularly refused to accept a clause that allows for mass scanning of private messages by breaking end-to-end encryption. Some tech companies, along with trade associations, and privacy experts have all vehemently opposed the regulation. On the other hand, the Interior Ministers of Spain and Ireland have supported the proposal. Separately, a network of organisations and individuals, advocating for children's rights in Europe, have lashed out at EU leaders for failing to tackle child sexual abuse online.

What are the concerns of those against the proposal?

Scanning end-to-end encrypted messages has remained a controversial issue. That's because there is no way to do this without

opening risky backdoors that can be accessed by third parties who can exploit the vulnerability, in turn ending the promise of end-to-end encryption.

Tech firms that have tread the encryption bypassing path have often been made to retreat. In 2021, Apple announced NeuralHash, a feature that could automatically scan iCloud photo libraries of individual devices for Child Sexual Abuse Material (CSAM). Employees and activist groups expressed concerns over the loss of privacy. A year later, Apple said it had abandoned the initiative. Another looming issue the iPhone maker recognised in the process was how authoritarian governments could potentially misuse the feature by using it as a tool to target individuals who oppose the regime.

Erik Neuenchwander, Director of user privacy and child safety at Apple, admitted this in a note saying, "It would [...] inject the potential for a slippery slope of unintended consequences. Scanning for one type of content, for instance, opens the door for bulk surveillance and could create a desire to search other encrypted messaging systems across content types."

When bringing in a similar clause through the U.K.'s Online Safety Bill, lawmakers attempted to make way for client-side scanning of private and

encrypted messages. The proposal was postponed after receiving pushback from encrypted messaging app owners like WhatsApp and Signal. The duo threatened to leave the U.K. if such a law was passed. In its final stages, in September, 2023, the House of Lords considered the potential security threat that the clause would bring saying it would not implement scanning until it was "technically feasible."

What is the status of the EU's chat control law?

On June 30, a new draft of the proposal is set to be reviewed. Legislators have left the idea of scanning text messages and audio, and are instead targeting shared photos, videos and URLs with an adjustment to appease the naysayers.

Another tweak in the making could be people's consent in sharing material being scanned before being encrypted. But this compromise has been largely called out as a farcical one. A report by Euractiv which has been confirmed by internal documents shows that if a user refuses the scanning, they will simply be blocked from sending or receiving images, videos and links hardly leaving them with a choice. Despite these measures, EU's enforcement of such regulations have seen exemptions to the rule. In November 2023, the European Commission

reportedly published a proposal to amend the regulation on a temporary derogation of the E-Privacy Directive against CSAM. Under the regulation, specific online communications service providers were allowed to sift through or scan messages to detect, report and remove online CSAM and content that solicits children. The regulation is set to expire in early August. The initial plan on the table was to simply extend this regulation for another three years. But, according to media reports, plans for further extensions were stalled in February this year.

Meredith Whittaker, President of Signal app called the measures to assuage concerns as "cosmetic", and has signed a joint statement along with a group of over 60 other organisations like Mozilla, Proton, Surfshark and Tuta, voicing out her concerns. Ms. Whittaker has echoed her earlier warning saying Signal will leave the U.K. rather than undermine end-to-end encryption.

A blog, co-authored by Riana Pfefferkorn, a research scholar at the Stanford Internet Observatory and Callum Voge, director of government affairs and advocacy at the Internet Society, notes, "If government surveillance is a concern in an established democratic entity like the EU, what hope is there for beleaguered democracies like Turkey, India and Brazil, much less autocracies?"

THE DAILY QUIZ

The 137th edition of the Wimbledon Tennis Championship starts on July 1. Here is a quiz to test your knowledge on its history

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

Soorya Prakash. N

QUESTION 1

Who are the singles winners who won both in the amateur and open eras?

QUESTION 2

Who is the only player to have won all three types of titles —singles, doubles and mixed doubles, four or more times in the open era?

QUESTION 3

Which two players figured in the longest match to be held in Wimbledon history which went on for 11 hours, and five minutes spread over three days?

QUESTION 4

Who are the two players in the

open era to win the Gentlemen singles without losing a single set in the entire tournament?

QUESTION 5

Name the two pairs of players in the open era to have won six doubles titles together (most for any pair) at the Wimbledon doubles Championships?

QUESTION 6

Who is the only male player to have won four mixed doubles titles in the open era, each with a different partner?

QUESTION 7

Who became the first brother-sister combination to win a Grand slam doubles title together at Wimbledon in 1980?



Visual question: Who receives the round plate and what is its name? GETTY IMAGES

Questions and Answers to the June 21 edition of the daily quiz:

1. A book which is a part of a popular best-selling series was released on this date in 2003. **Ans: Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix**
  2. This Prime Minister, who was sworn in on June 21, 1991, was the first Congress PM outside the Gandhi-Nehru family. **Ans: P.V. Narasimha Rao**
  3. The day the UN adopted June 21 as the International Day of Yoga. **Ans: December 11, 2014**
  4. The Summer Solstice marks the event when the Sun is at its southernmost position to Earth's equator. Is the statement true. **Ans: It is false. It will be at the northernmost position**
  5. This American whistleblower became a naturalised Russian citizen in 2022. **Ans: Edward Snowden**
- Visual: The Ferris wheel debuted at this place. **Ans: World's Columbian Exposition, Chicago**  
**Early Birds:** K. N. Viswanathan| Sadhan Kumar Panda| Kuldeep Sonil| Abhijeet Prakash| Abhinav Raj



KNOW YOUR ENGLISH

## Are soft drinks bad for your health?

Don't go with the team, you always end up being the whipping boy when they make mistakes

S. Upendran

What is the meaning and origin of the term 'whipping boy'?

(K.C. Roshni) If 'good boy' means 'a boy who is good' and 'city boy' means a 'boy who is used to city life', logic suggests that a 'whipping boy' should be someone who likes to whip – someone who enjoys whipping or beating others. This, however, is not the case; he is someone who gets whipped. In everyday contexts, the expression is mostly used to refer to someone who gets blamed for everything that goes wrong in an organisation or a household. Someone else may have made the blunder, but it is the poor individual who gets blamed; he is punished or reprimanded for no fault of his. The word can be used with people and things. The expression 'whipping boy' is not heard very often; it has been replaced by 'scapegoat' and 'fall guy'.

As usual, it was the poor coach who became the whipping boy for the team's terrible performance in the tournament.

In the past, a boy from a poor family was usually chosen to be with a prince; this companion participated in all the daily activities of the prince. Like the prince, he lived a life of luxury – he dined on good food, wore good clothes, and perhaps what is more important, he studied along with the prince. He was given a free education. The problem was whenever the prince committed a mistake, it was the poor boy, and not the prince, who was punished. He was the one who received a beating from the master! Hence the term 'whipping boy'.

How is the word 'accost' pronounced?

(K. Madhusudhan, Gulbarga) The word consists of two syllables; the first sounds like the 'a' in 'china', while the second is pronounced like the word 'cost'. This word of Latin origin is pronounced 'a-COST' with the stress on the second syllable. It comes from the Latin 'accostare' meaning 'come up to the side'; so, when you 'accost' someone, you approach an individual. Nowadays, the word is mostly used to suggest walking up to a stranger in an aggressive manner and speaking to him rather rudely. Do not use the word to mean 'to greet someone'. You usually accost someone you are not familiar with.

On her way to court, Revathi was accosted by three gang members.

Is it okay to say 'cool drink'?

(C. Vaidehi, Trichy) Yes, within India, it is perfectly acceptable. When we go to someone's house, we are often asked if we would like a 'cool drink'. What the host wishes to know is whether we would like to have a cola of any kind – Pepsi, Fanta, Coke, etc. Native speakers of English, on the other hand, do not refer to this kind of drink as 'cool drink'. The terms that they commonly use are 'soft drink', 'soda', 'soda pop', etc.

Would you be interested in a soda pop? [upendrankye@gmail.com](mailto:upendrankye@gmail.com)

Word of the day

**Supersede:** take the place or move into the position of  
**Synonyms:** replace, supervene, supplant  
**Usage:** This edition supersedes the previous one.

**Pronunciation:** bit.ly/supersedepr  
**International Phonetic Alphabet:** /su:pə'si:d/

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

## From Page One

## CBI sends teams for NEET case probe

This year's NEET has been embroiled in several controversies. After students alleged irregularities in the rankings, the matter went to the Supreme Court which approved a re-test for over 1,500 students who had preciously been given "grace marks" to compensate for the time they lost while taking the test.

Opposition parties have targeted the Union government for its failure to conduct the entrance examinations properly, affecting lakhs of students.

Citing concerns about the integrity of competitive examinations, the Union government took a last-minute decision to postpone the NEET-PG examination scheduled for Sunday. Last week, the CBI registered a case against unknown persons following an Education Ministry complaint alleging that the integrity of the UGC-NET, also conducted by the NTA, may have also been compromised, based on inputs from the Home Ministry. The UGC-NET was also cancelled.

On Wednesday, Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan had acknowledged that the back-to-back paper leaks were an institutional failure of the NTA, whose chief has now been removed.

## Police fear Manipur groups going for drones

A few days ago, Lieutenant-General Pradeep Chandran Nair, Director-General of Assam Rifles, said that some 5,400 refugees from Myanmar in Kamjong district of Manipur feared aerial attacks.

"We have no reports of drones having been used in the ethnic battle between the Kuki-Zo and Meitei people in Manipur, but their visibility is all across Manipur of late. How many are in operation and for what purpose is anybody's guess, though these could be used for surveillance for the time being," an Army officer below the rank of Brigadier said.

The foothills on the periphery of the Imphal Valley, almost at the centre of Manipur's map, are considered most vulnerable to drone attacks because the corrugated territory allows the flying gadgets to "peep and fire" from the top of mounds or trees.

Acquiring an assortment of firearms, explosives, and shoulder-fired missiles from weapons dealers in Myanmar has been fairly easy for extremist groups in the northeast over the past six decades. The looting of 5,600 firearms and 6.5 lakh rounds of ammunition from the Manipur Police armoury during the initial days of the conflict in 2023 indicated similar ease on the Indian side of the 1,643-km border with Myanmar.

A year after the conflict, the Manipur police recovered 1,757 of these looted firearms.

Despite reports of extremists equipping themselves with weapons beyond the conventional guns and grenades, Manipur Chief Minister Nongthombam Biren Singh pinned hopes on the Narendra Modi government to resolve the conflict in two to three months.

## Oram to look into Great Nicobar clearances

The Great Nicobar Project involves developing a trans-shipment port, an international airport, township development, and a 450-MVA gas and solar-based power plant on the island. The project area is expected to cover over 130 sq. km. of pristine forest, and has been accorded environmental clearance — one of the mandatory pre-requisites — by an expert committee.

The government told Parliament in August 2023 that 9.6 lakh trees would likely be cut for it and 'compensatory afforestation' for the loss of this unique rainforest ecosystem had been planned, but in Haryana, thousands of kilometres away and in a vastly different ecological zone.

A total of 7.114 sq. km of tribal reserve forest land, where the Shompen, a Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group resides, is also expected to be used for this project with the government insisting that they will not be relocated because of this work.

Meanwhile, the NCST is in the middle of investigating a complaint from retired bureaucrat E.A.S. Sarma, a former Tribal Affairs Secretary to the Andhra Pradesh government, who alleged violations of the Forest Rights Act (FRA) in the forest clearance process for the project, for which the government had also not consulted the NCST as mandated by the Constitution.

On the large number of rejections of FRA claims by tribal communities and individuals across the country, for which the Supreme Court has already pulled up the Union government and States, Mr. Oram maintained that these rejections were a "case-to-case issue", depending on the State or U.T., and must be seen as such.

Latest available government data from FRA implementation reports as of February 2024, showed that a total of 50,26,801 FRA claims had been received, of which 34.9% had been rejected and 15.5% remain pending for disposal.

These FRA reports also showed that the Andaman and Nicobar administration has neither recognised nor granted ownership of any forest land across the U.T. to local tribespeople under FRA — a requisite step under the Forest Conservation Rules, 2017 — before Stage-I clearance, which was granted in October 2022.

## Industry seeks rethink on Chinese FDI curbs and high import tariffs

Country's electronics sector heavily import-dependent for vital components; PLI scheme may no longer help, and the curbs have hurt component ecosystem development and sent out a message of 'non-friendly investment environment', says CII

Vikas Dhoot  
NEW DELHI

Indian industry has urged the government to revisit its restrictions on investment inflows and the movement of skilled personnel from China, and slash high import duties on electronics components as they have made Indian electronic goods globally uncompetitive vis-à-vis rivals such as Vietnam and China, rather than boosting localisation of critical inputs.

Warning that the Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme for large-scale electronics manufacturing, introduced in April 2020 to offset some cost disadvantages, may soon lose its effectiveness in the face of "tariff-induced cost", industry players have flagged that the 4%-6% fiscal support under PLI is "grossly inadequate to negate the overall disability as compared to

China and Vietnam".

In a report on "Developing India as the Manufacturing Hub for Electronics Components and Sub-Assemblies", the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) has outlined "critical actions required to transition India's electronics sector ecosystem from an 'import dependent assembly-led manufacturing' to 'component level value-added manufacturing'.

'Adequate guardrails'

On the restrictions imposed in 2020, through Press Note 3, on foreign direct investment (FDI) from countries sharing land borders with India, the report said the move aimed at preventing predatory acquisitions during the pandemic has now outlived its utility and must be reconsidered with "adequate guardrails".

"India should adopt a non-restrictive approach



India's import duties on electronic-related tariff lines range from zero to 27.5%, burdening manufacturing costs. GETTY IMAGES

towards investments, component imports, openness towards technology transfer in deficient areas, ease of inward movement of skilled manpower and easing of non-trade tariffs," the report said, stressing these curbs have hurt India's component ecosystem development and sent out a message of "non-friendly investment environment".

In an interdependent

world, no country can aspire to produce all components for domestic consumption and a right balance between imports and exports of higher value-added products is the recipe for long term industrial sustenance, the report argued. "The largest electronics manufacturer China with its \$1.6 trillion international electronics trade relies on 42% imports," it pointed out.

"India's components demand is largely met through imports from China and short-term strategies are likely to have adverse impact on potential expansion of domestic manufacturing... The import tariffs on priority sub-assemblies and components need to be urgently rationalised in line with key competing economies. Majority of tariff lines need to be brought under the level of 5% or lower to ensure that product manufacturers become competitive," the report mooted.

India's import duties on 118 electronic-related tariff lines range from zero to 27.5%, with the largest number of components falling in the 10%-15% range, burdening manufacturing costs. About 47.2% of the electronic imports pass through under zero tariff, the remaining 52.8% imports are subjected to varying tariff levels but largely over 10%.

## Naidu on a thanksgiving visit to Kuppam tomorrow

K. Umashanker  
KUPPAM (CHITTOOR DISTRICT)

After a hiatus of five years, the tail-end Kuppam Assembly constituency at the tri-State junction in Andhra Pradesh is gearing up to get back its lost tag — 'CM constituency'. N. Chandrababu Naidu, the eight-time MLA from the backward region who has returned to power now, is scheduled to visit the constituency on a two-day thanksgiving visit on June 25 and 26.

The constituency had enjoyed 'VVIP status' from 1995 till 2004 during Mr. Naidu's first and second tenures in the undivided State. After a decade in the Opposition, Mr. Naidu again came to power in the residual State in 2014.

## T.N. hooch tragedy: main supplier of methanol held as death toll rises to 56

The Hindu Bureau  
CHENNAI/KALLAKURICHI

The police on Sunday arrested Sivakumar, 30, suspected to be one of the main suppliers of methanol to the sellers of illicit liquor, even as the death toll in last week's hooch tragedy in Kallakurichi district rose to 56.

A central investigation unit of the Enforcement wing of the Tamil Nadu police nabbed Sivakumar, who was hiding in his sister's house at Sulapallam under the MGR Nagar police station limits in Chennai, in the early hours of Sunday. He was handed over to the CB-CID for further investigation. Sources said that he was working at a private



Sivakumar

firm dealing in chemicals at Vadaperumpakkam near Puzhal. The police also searched the factory premises, the sources added.

One more dies

Meanwhile, another person who consumed illicit liquor died on Sunday. So far, 31 persons have died at the Government Kallakurichi Medical College and Hospital; 18 at the Government

Mohan Kumaramangalam Medical College and Hospital in Salem; four at the Government Villupuram Medical College and Hospital; and three at the Jawaharlal Institute of Postgraduate Medical Education and Research (JIPMER) in Puducherry.

A total of 32 deaths were reported from Karunapuram, the epicentre of the tragedy. As many as 216 persons have been hospitalised. The case is being investigated by the Crime Branch CID (CB-CID), and it has been confirmed that the deaths were due to the consumption of illicit liquor mixed with methanol. Ten people have been arrested in connection with the case so far.

## Six held on charge of cheating Delhi man using 'courier ploy'

The Hindu Bureau  
NEW DELHI

Six people have been arrested from across the country for allegedly duping a man of ₹2.5 lakh in a so-called FedEx scam, the police said here on Sunday. The police froze the bank accounts used by the accused and seized ₹38.23 lakh.

With these arrests, the police said 72 complaints related to the scam reported on the National Cyber-crime Reporting Portal (NCRP) had been solved.

The accused have been identified as Ansh, Samarth, Pranjal Kumar Sahni, Satender Dhaka, Vedant Prabhkar Nagarkar, and Vishal Joshi. They are graduates in the 23-30 age group.

## Militant killed close to LoC in Uri sector, says Army

The Hindu Bureau  
SRINAGAR

One militant was killed in an ongoing anti-militancy operation in north Kashmir's Baramulla on Sunday.

"One terrorist has been killed in the ongoing anti-infiltration operation that was launched on Saturday in the Uri Sector. Operations are continuing," an Army spokesperson said on Sunday.

The Army established contact with a group of freshly infiltrated militants near the Line of Control in Baramulla district's Uri Sector on Saturday.

An official said the group of militants was spotted in the Bajrang-Uri sector. The group was engaged in a firefight in the anti-militancy operation, which was launched following "inputs about the presence of some infiltrating terrorists" in the area.

North Kashmir has seen three major anti-militancy operations since June 19, which left three militants dead.

Deputy Commissioner of Police (East) Apoorva Gupta said the police had received a complaint from a resident of Vasundhara Enclave on April 29 that he had received a call from an unknown number, and the caller identified himself as employee of the Mumbai branch of an international courier company.

The caller had said that a parcel was booked using the complainant's Aadhaar card and phone number, and it contained his passport, bank cards, clothes, a laptop, cash, and drugs. The accused transferred the call to what he called the "Mumbai cyber cell", and under the pretext of saving the complainant from being party in a criminal case, he cheated him of ₹2.49 lakh.

## India may be returning Israel a favour with supply of weapons, says ex-envoy

Kallol Bhattacharjee  
NEW DELHI

Former Israeli Ambassador to India Daniel Carmon, speaking with the leading Israeli publication *Ynetnews*, has said that India might be supplying weapons to Israel as a sign of gratitude for Israeli assistance during the Kargil war of 1999. The seasoned diplomat's comments came against the backdrop of speculation that India has supplied drones and artillery shells to Israel as the latter ran short of the items with its war against the Hamas continuing for more than eight months.

"The Indians always remind us that Israel was there for them during the Kargil war. Israel was one of the few countries that stood by them and provided them with weapons. The Indians don't forget this and might now be returning the favour," Mr. Carmon said in his remarks to the *Ynetnews*.

The *Ynetnews* report re-



Daniel Carmon

counted that in May, Spain had prevented the cargo vessel *Marianne Danica* from docking at the port of Cartagena as it was sailing to a port in Israel carrying 27 tonnes of munitions meant for the Israel Defence Forces.

"The incident highlights the fact that India has been providing significant military assistance to Israel since October 7," the news outlet said.

It had earlier come to light in February that New Delhi was supplying Israel with advanced Hermes 900 drones manufactured in Hyderabad. The Hyderabad factory was set up to

cater to the requirements of the Indian military forces, but it had to rush 20 units of them to Israel, which faced a shortfall during its war with the Hamas in the Gaza Strip, and with the Hezbollah in Israel's northern border with Lebanon.

The Hyderabad factory is a joint venture between Israel's Elbit Systems and Indian industrialist Gautam Adani's Adani Group.

The *Ynetnews.com* report has been picked up by Arab media, and the Iranian news agency *IRNA*, which has reported, "Zionist media reveals India has provided the Israeli regime with large hauls of weaponry".

India has neither confirmed nor denied supplying weapons to Israel so far, maintaining that it wishes a negotiated settlement to the conflict in Gaza. India has sought an end to the fighting, and supports the creation of a Palestinian state to ensure a permanent solution to the Israel-Palestine conflict.

## After years, Russia approves draft logistics agreement to be signed with India

Dinakar Peri  
NEW DELHI

After being held up for several years, the India-Russia mutual logistics agreement is ready for conclusion, with Russia approving the draft agreement over the past week.

The agreement will simplify military-to-military exchanges for exercises, training, port calls and Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) efforts. It is similar to a series of such agreements that India has signed with a number of countries, beginning with the U.S. in 2016.

An official order dated June 20 was published on Russia's official legal information website, authorising the signing of the logistics agreement with India. The draft of the agreement was also published. "It's a Russian governmental decree that approves signing the agreement and makes relevant instruction to the MoD [Ministry of Defence]," a diplomatic source said, commenting

**The agreement involves interaction between troops, and supply of weapons and military gear**

on the order. Russian Prime Minister Mikhail Mishustin has instructed the MoD to hold negotiations with the Indian side on the draft document, sources said.

**Delayed agreement**

The conclusion of the Reciprocal Exchange of Logistics Agreement (RELOS) has been delayed for several years. Official sources said that this was the same agreement which has now been approved by the Russian side, and has to be signed by both sides before it can become effective. The agreement, as and when concluded, will be valid for five years and will be renewed automatically unless either party notifies the other of its desire to terminate it, sources said. Defence cooperation is

a major pillar of the India-Russia strategic partnership and is guided by the agreement on military technical cooperation. The agreement for the decade from 2021 to 2031 was signed during the inaugural meeting of India-Russia 2+2 dialogue held in December 2021.

The cooperation agreement involves interaction between troops, and also addresses issues of the supply and development of weapons and military equipment, the Russian Ministry of Defence explained.

A Navy-to-Navy cooperation agreement along the same lines has also been in the works for some time.

Among the three services, the Indian Navy has been the biggest beneficiary of these administrative arrangements signed with several countries, improving its operational turnaround and increasing interoperability on the high seas. The agreements have been a win-win for both the parties involved.

# 'Status report of probe in NEET paper leak case sent to Centre'

So far, 18 people have been arrested in the case, including 13 from Patna and five from Jharkhand; searches are continuing, evidence has been sent to the Central Forensic Laboratory in Delhi, says official of the Bihar Economic Offences Unit

**Amit Bhelari**  
PATNA

Multiple players are involved in the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test paper leak case, and evidence collected in the course of investigation is being examined, a highly placed source in the Bihar Police's Economic Offences Unit (EOU) told *The Hindu* on Sunday.

The official confirmed that a status report on the investigation was sent to the Union Education Ministry on Saturday.

Evidence has been sent to the Central Forensic Laboratory in Delhi and EOU teams are searching places linked to the case. The team had visited neighbouring Jharkhand and picked up six persons from Deoghar on Friday.

So far, 18 people have been arrested in the case, including 13 from Patna and five from Jharkhand. One person, Kajju, alias Prashant Kumar, has not been shown on the list of arrested persons yet.



**Voicing concerns:** Students holding placards as they stage a protest against NEET-UG re-examination, in Rajkot on Sunday. ANI

"Though we received the details from the National Testing Agency [NTA] late, we have conducted the follow-up investigation. Our team went to a few places in Jharkhand, including Ranchi, Hazaribagh and Deoghar. We got so much information, a lot of things were seized and many statements recorded under Section 161 of the CrPC. At present, the in-

vestigation is at a very sensitive stage," the source said.

The official also said that many aspects are being looked into, and teams are scouring places of suspects for corroborative evidence.

Asked about the report submitted to the Education Ministry, the official said, "It's only a status report of the investigation with no

other material... just bare facts. At present, it is not possible to share details because it may jeopardise the investigation."

The role of Nalanda resident Sanjeev Mukhiya, who had been arrested in earlier paper leak cases, is under the scanner. "Mukhiya is part of an organised crime syndicate and there are multiple players involved in it. So, calling him

the kingpin is premature but he also had some role because he had already been involved in the earlier paper leak cases. He had a role and we have leads in that direction," the official said.

The six people brought from Deoghar were produced before the Special Court before being sent to judicial custody.

A Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) team probing the UGC-NET paper leak case was attacked by villagers in Nawada district of Bihar on Saturday. The Nawada Police on Sunday said four people were arrested. "Around 4.30 p.m. on June 22, Rajauli police station received information that a CBI team was gheraoed at Kasiyadh village and was manhandled. A police team rushed to the spot and escorted the team. Four persons were arrested," the official statement said.

Superintendent of Police Ambrish Rahul said the villagers mistook the CBI team for impersonators and manhandled them.

# 750 of 1,563 candidates skip NEET re-test held in four States, Chandigarh

**The Hindu Bureau**  
NEW DELHI

Of the 1,563 candidates eligible to appear for the re-test of the undergraduate National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (NEET-UG), only 813 (approximately 52%) took it on Sunday.

Another 750 candidates (approximately 48%) remained absent. The three-and-a-half-hour exam was conducted across seven centres in the States of Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Haryana, and Meghalaya, and the Union Territory of Chandigarh. The 1,563 candidates eligible to appear for the re-test directed by the Supreme Court had been given the opportunity after the top court scrapped their grace marks. At least 67 candidates had obtained 720/720, after grace marks were doled out by the National Testing Agency (NTA) in a non-transparent manner earlier this month.

The highest number of students eligible for the re-test were from two centres in Chhattisgarh. Of them, 417 candidates were from



**In a turmoil:** Nearly 24 lakh candidates had taken NEET across the country on May 5. FILE PHOTO

the Swami Atmanand Ukrist Hindi Medium Government Girls High School in Dantewada, where 176 candidates appeared for the re-test; and 185 were from the DAV Ispat Senior Secondary Public School, Balod, of whom 115 appeared for the re-test.

Similarly, from Haryana, 312 eligible candidates were allotted the DAV Police Public School in Jhajjar as the centre, of whom 178 candidates appeared for the re-test, and of the 182 eligible candidates from the Kendriya Vidyalaya in Jhajjar, 109 candidates appeared.

In Meghalaya, 464 candidates were eligible at the Don Bosco College in Tura, of whom 234 candidates took the exam.

In Gujarat, one candidate sat for the re-test in the Mount Litera Zee School at Surat, and in Chandigarh, there were only two eligible candidates, both of whom remained absent.

According to the Supreme Court's order, the original score minus the grace marks would be considered for students who skip the exam. The revised scores would be considered for those who appeared.

# ED duty-bound to investigate NEET question paper leak: petitioners in Supreme Court

**The Hindu Bureau**  
NEW DELHI

Students who have approached the Supreme Court against the alleged irregularities in the conduct of the undergraduate National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (NEET-UG) have filed an application saying that the Enforcement Directorate (ED) is "duty-bound to take cognisance of, investigate and secure punishment" to the accused persons behind the question paper leaks.

The application, filed by Shivangi Mishra, represented by advocates Mathews Nedumpara and Usha Nandini, has also urged the Supreme Court to implead the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) and the ED in the case.

The petitioners said investigation into the "scam"



should proceed under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002 and the Information Technology Act, 2000.

"The Enforcement Directorate is duty-bound to take cognisance of, investigate and secure punishment. The NEET Exam, which now has undoubtedly been exposed to be a scam, has its tentacles in different parts of the country... Until and unless the Enforcement Directorate

takes cognisance of the matter or the Supreme Court directs the Enforcement Directorate to take action, the accused will not be brought under the stringent provisions of the PMLA," the application noted.

The plea has been filed in the court even as the Centre said the NEET case had been transferred to the CBI on Saturday. The petitioners have also called for the cancellation of the entire test.

"The consequence arising out of the question paper leak which the Patna Police has now unearthed leaves the authorities with no option than to cancel the entire examination and conduct it afresh in the most foolproof manner," the application said.

The court has scheduled the next hearing for July 8.

# Education Minister likely to make a statement on NTA issue in Parliament

**Devesh K. Pandey**  
NEW DELHI

Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan is likely to make a statement in Parliament during the special session beginning on Monday, on the issue of recent irregularities related to the tests conducted by the National Testing Agency (NTA), government sources said on Sunday.

A seven-member committee of experts has already been set up by the government to examine the matter and make recommendations on the structure and functioning of the NTA in order to bring in reforms in the mechanisms of the examination process and improve data security protocols.

The suggestions are expected to be implemented ahead of the next cycle of examinations, they said. Stating that safeguard-



Dharmendra Pradhan

ing students' interests was a top priority for the government, a senior official said the Education Minister took a series of actions after the irregularities were detected.

## 'Panel set up'

"The credibility of NTA was called into question with respect to the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (Undergraduate) primarily because of the manner in which grace marks

were given to 1,563 candidates to compensate for the time they had lost during the examination, though there was no such provision. Corrective steps have been taken, the NTA Director-General has also been removed. To address the larger aspects, an expert committee has been constituted and it will give its recommendations in two months," the official said. The panel is expected to meet on Monday, said a high-level source from the IIT-Madras.

Stressing that the alleged NEET (UG) paper leak was a localised issue, another official pointed out that about one lakh successful candidates were from about 4,500 of the 4,750 examination centres. "As part of the punitive measure, 17 show-cause notices for debarment students have been given in Bihar, 30 in Gujarat and 63

in other parts of the country for various reasons," the official said.

"Demands were also being made for a Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) inquiry, which has been recommended. The CBI has registered a case and will conduct a comprehensive investigation by also taking over the cases in Gujarat (Godhra) and Bihar (Patna). It will also look into the role of public servants, if any, connected with the conduct of the examination," the official said.

The government has also notified the Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Act, 2024, and will soon come up with "stringent" rules to prevent unfair practices. "In January, a detailed guideline for coaching centres had been issued. Further steps may be taken to check malpractice, if any," the official said.

# IMA welcomes CBI probe into entrance test irregularities

**Press Trust of India**  
NEW DELHI

The Indian Medical Association (IMA) on Sunday welcomed the government's decision to transfer the probe into alleged irregularities in the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (Undergraduate) [NEET-UG] to the CBI.

The association also expressed its gratitude to Prime Minister Narendra Modi and other key Ministers for their prompt response to concerns surrounding the controversies over the exam.

"We extend our gratitude to the Union Ministry of Education for transferring the investigation of the 'irregularities' in NEET-UG to the CBI for a thorough probe," it said.

The IMA said it is thankful to the government for removing the National Testing Agency's Director-General.

The IMA also urged the government to take swift action to ensure that counselling for admission in medical, dental, and other courses begins on time.

# Kharge calls meeting of Congress MPs-elect before Parliament session

**The Hindu Bureau**  
NEW DELHI

The MPs of Opposition parties are likely to enter the Lok Sabha on Monday with a copy of the pocket-sized Constitution to take oath after assembling at the Mahatma Gandhi statue inside Parliament complex.

The first session of the 18th Lok Sabha will begin on Monday. The session will see oath-taking by newly elected members followed by election of the Lok Sabha Speaker on Wednesday and President Droupadi Murmu's address to the joint sitting of both the Houses on Thursday.

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge, who is the Leader of the Opposition (LoP) in the Rajya Sabha, convened a meeting of all the party's MPs-elect, including party leader Rahul Gandhi, at the Congress Parliamentary Party (CPP) office, a senior leader said



**Gearing up:** The President's Bodyguard taking part in a rehearsal ahead of President Droupadi Murmu's address in Parliament. ANI

on Sunday. The Indian National Developmental, Inclusive Alliance (INDIA) bloc and the Congress will also have to decide its strategy for the Speaker's election. On Monday, *pro tem* Speaker Bhartruhari Mahtab will announce the schedule by which the nomination process has to be completed.

The BJP-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) has a comfortable majority

to elect a Speaker of its choice. The office of the Speaker has not seen a contest in the recent past. The convention has been to arrive at a choice by consensus as the Lok Sabha Speaker is meant to be above partisan politics.

**Opposition's charge** However, a section of Opposition leaders argue that the Narendra Modi government has not followed con-

vention, either in giving the Deputy Speaker's post to the Opposition or making the senior-most MP, Kodikunnil Suresh of the Congress, the *pro tem* Speaker.

"Kodikunnil Suresh of the INC, who is in his 8th term, should have been Speaker *Pro tem*. But Bhartruhari Mahtab of the BJP has been appointed on the flimsy grounds that he has greater claim because this is his 7th consecutive term," the Congress's Jairam Ramesh said in a post on social media platform X. "If this argument is adopted, then why has Ramesh Chandappa Jigajinagi, a BJP MP who is also in his 7th consecutive term, not been considered? Is it because he is a Dalit like Suresh?" he asked.

On Monday, President Droupadi Murmu will administer the oath to Mahtab as the *pro tem* Speaker at the Rashtrapati Bhawan. (With PTI inputs)

# Sri Lankan Navy arrests 22 T.N. fishermen from Rameswaram

**The Hindu Bureau**  
RAMESWARAM

In a fresh incident, the Sri Lankan Navy on Saturday arrested 22 Tamil Nadu fishermen on charges of poaching at Delft Island.

Three mechanised boats, and the catch in them were seized. According to officials of the Fish-

eries Department, the fishermen were taken to Kankesanthurai Port, and were likely to be produced before a court after interrogation.

Fishing resumed, after the annual 61-day ban, on June 15. Within two days, three fishermen from the coastal district died after a mechanised boat deve-

loped snag. Now, these fresh arrests have brought psychological pressure and anxiety in fishermen, P. Jesu Raja, a fishermen leader, said.

In Thangachimadam, fishermen associations convened an urgent meeting and unanimously resolved to boycott fishing with immediate effect.

**KERALA IRRIGATION INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION LTD**  
Thiruvananthapuram

**Tender Notice**  
KIIDC, a Government of Kerala PSU invites offers through two cover e-Tender system from eligible bidders for

1. DESALTATION OF ARUVIKKARA DAM RESERVOIR ON TURN-KEY METHOD.
2. General Civil works of CONSTRUCTION OF MUSICAL DANCING FOUNTAIN WITH MULTIMEDIA SHOW IN VAZHANI DAM at Thirissur District.

Tender Id: 2024\_KIIDC\_661941\_2  
2024\_KIIDC\_670835\_2. Details are available in [www.etenders.kerala.gov.in](http://www.etenders.kerala.gov.in) and [www.kiidc.kerala.gov.in](http://www.kiidc.kerala.gov.in)

Managing Director

# Row over welcoming Haj pilgrims in J&K

**The Hindu Bureau**  
SRINAGAR

The National Conference on Sunday objected to the J&K Lieutenant-Governor Administration's move to change the protocol and send a Deputy Commissioner-level officer to receive Haj pilgrims at the Srinagar airport in J&K.

An NC spokesperson said there was a precedent that the head of State, specifically the Chief Minister, along with his Ministers, has always welcomed the first batch of Hajjis at the airport and greeted them upon their return.

"This change... deeply hurts the sentiments of many," he said.

**BANGALORE WATER SUPPLY AND SEWERAGE BOARD**  
Office of the Chief Engineer (Project), 3rd Floor  
Cauvery Bhavan, KG Road, Bangalore-560009.

IFT No.: BWSSB/CE(P)/TA/530/2024-25 Date: 21.06.2024

**INVITATION FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST**  
(Only through KPP-Portal)

BWSSB, invites Expression of Interest for Providing Consulting Services for detailed engineering, tendering supervision and monitoring to implement **Karnataka Multi Sector Disaster and Climate Resilience Project (KMSDCRP)** of BWSSB.

For above work will be available in <https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in> from **24.06.2024 to 08.07.2024 by 16.00 Hrs.** The submitted EOIs will be opened on **09.07.2024 after 17.00 Hrs.** For further details contact the undersigned office during working hours.

Sd/-  
**Chief Engineer (Project)**

DIPRI/CP/BC/1506/2024-25

## INBRIEF



## Cloudburst in Itanagar causes landslides, flood-like situation

A cloudburst on Sunday morning triggered landslides and a flood-like situation in Itanagar. Though Arunachal Pradesh has been witnessing heavy rain over the past few weeks, the situation had improved in the past two days. Following the cloudburst around 10.30 a.m., landslides were reported from various parts of Itanagar and its adjoining areas, while a flood-like situation occurred in several stretches of National Highway 415. Meanwhile, Union Home Minister Amit Shah chaired a meeting in New Delhi for flood preparedness ahead of monsoon. He instructed departments concerned to study the recent floods in Sikkim and Manipur and file a report.

## Two CoBRA personnel killed in bomb blast in Chhattisgarh

Two personnel of the Central Reserve Police Force's jungle warfare unit (CoBRA) were killed after Naxalites blew up a truck with an improvised explosive device (IED) in Sukma district of Chhattisgarh on Sunday, the police said. Constable Shailendra, 29, and vehicle driver R. Vishnu, 35, were killed in the blast that took place around 3 p.m. near Timmapuram village between Silger and Tekalgudem camps of the security forces. **PTI**

# Censor board thwarts *Monkey Man* release even after global cuts

Aroon Deep  
NEW DELHI

The Dev Patel-directed revenge drama *Monkey Man*, set in a dystopian version of India, is yet to be seen in the country because the Central Board of Film Certification has thwarted its release without formally banning it, by simply not scheduling a screening of the film for its advisory panel, according to a source.

This is despite the fact that Universal Studios has already made changes from its original cut of the film, clipping scenes that sharply emphasised the nexus between religion and politics. The version of the film that was released globally in theatres on April 5, and on streaming platforms recently, does not include these scenes. Apart from the cut scenes, Universal Studios also changed the colour of political banners in the film



A promotional still of the film featuring Dev Patel.

from saffron to red.

Universal Pictures had scheduled the film for a theatrical release in India on April 19, but it has still not been released officially. According to a source with direct knowledge of the film's journey through the censorship process, this is because the CBFC, which is in the position to either ban or approve the movie, has simply avoided

# Pushpak, ISRO's reusable launch vehicle, clears test

This was the third and final test of a series; the mission demonstrated the autonomous landing capability of the vehicle under more challenging release conditions, says the space agency

The Hindu Bureau  
BENGALURU

The Indian Space Research Organisation successfully completed the third reusable launch vehicle landing experiment (RLV LEX) at the Aeronautical Test Range in Chitradurga, Karnataka on Sunday.

The third and final test in a series was conducted at 7.10 a.m.

"Following the success of RLV LEX-01 and LEX-02 missions, RLV LEX-03 demonstrated the autonomous landing capability of the RLV under more challenging release conditions and more severe wind conditions," the ISRO said.

On Sunday morning, Pushpak, the space agency's winged vehicle, was released from an Indian Air Force Chinook helicopter at an altitude of 4.5 km.

The ISRO said that from the release point 4.5 km away, Pushpak autonomously executed cross-range correction manoeuvres, approached the



Textbook touchdown: Pushpak performed a 'precise horizontal landing at runway centre line', the ISRO says. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

runway, and performed a precise horizontal landing at the runway centre line.

"Due to this vehicle's low lift-to-drag ratio aerodynamic configuration, the landing velocity exceeded 320 kmph, compared with 260 kmph for a commercial aircraft and 280 kmph for a typical fighter aircraft. After touchdown, the vehicle velocity was reduced to nearly 100 kmph using its brake parachute, after which the landing gear brakes were em-

ployed for deceleration. During this ground roll phase, Pushpak utilises its rudder and nose-wheel steering system to autonomously maintain a stable and precise ground roll along the runway," it said.

The space agency said this mission simulated the approach and landing interface and high-speed landing conditions for a vehicle returning from space, reaffirming its expertise in acquiring the most critical technologies

required for the development of an RLV.

"Through this mission, the advanced guidance algorithm catering to longitudinal and lateral plane error corrections, which is essential for the future Orbital Re-entry Mission has been validated," it said.

The ISRO said that the LEX used sensors such as an inertial sensor, radar altimeter, flush air data system and NavIC. Notably, the LEX-03 mission reused the winged body and flight systems from the LEX-02 mission without any modification, demonstrating the robustness of the ISRO's capability of design to reuse flight systems.

ISRO Chairman S. Somnath congratulated the team for its efforts in maintaining the success streak in such missions. S. Unnikrishnan Nair, Director, Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre, emphasised that this "consistent success boosts ISRO's confidence in the critical technologies essential for future orbital re-entry missions".

# New research heralds breast cancer diagnosis with just a drop of blood

V. Geetanah  
HYDERABAD

Scientists at the CSIR-Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology (CCMB) here, in association with clinicians of the Regional Cancer Centre (RCC) in Thiruvananthapuram, have identified a potentially cost-effective and non-invasive method to detect various kinds of breast cancer from just a drop of blood.

The researchers have analysed microRNA (miRNAs) signatures in hundreds of human cancer samples and identified 439 of them associated with invasive breast cancer, of which 107 qualified to be potential biomarkers for the stratification of different types, grades and stages of invasive ductal carcinoma, said CCMB Chief Scientist Lekha Dinesh Kumar, who led the research.

Most of the cellular processes in a body are regulated by miRNA molecules which are 23-25 base small non-coding RNA mole-



Screening test: Scientists have identified a potentially cost-effective, non-invasive method to detect breast cancer. V. RAJU

cules. Identification of miRNAs involved in the regulation of the initiation and progression of breast cancer holds great promise for the development of molecular tools for early diagnosis and prognosis, Dr. Lekha said.

The scientist explained that cancer cells shed DNA/RNA into the circulation called 'circulating nucleic acids (CNAs) and tumour-specific genetic changes, including DNA, RNA, and proteins, which are detectable in plasma or other bio-

fluids of cancer patients to identify the earlier stages of cancer development.

Based on this principle, the identified biomarkers could be made into a liquid biopsy system that might prove to be a boon for developing countries, as cancer could be detected from one drop of blood.

### Cost-effective method

"Our study has paved the way for the application of miRNAs as biomarkers and would open up new vistas in developing a refined,

# Advisory on organ transplantation may be put up at airports

S. Vijay Kumar  
CHENNAI

With more number of foreigners visiting India to undergo organ transplantation, the Union Health and Family Welfare Ministry has issued an advisory to sensitise international patients to the organ transplant protocol and legal framework in the country.

In a note to the Home Ministry, Health Secretary Apurva Chandra said India had emerged as one of the leading destinations for foreign nationals to undergo organ transplantation due to the availability of world-class facilities and highly skilled medical personnel.

It was essential for these foreign nationals to understand the specific guidelines and legal requirements that regulate the process of organ transplantation in India. To sensitise them on medical visa for organ transplantation and address queries regarding rules pertaining to the surgery, the Health Ministry had prepared a set of protocols and guidelines to be published on websites of the Bureau of Immigration

of the Home Ministry.

The Health Secretary also wrote to the External Affairs Ministry to circulate and publish the guidelines at prominent places in airports to create awareness among foreigners visiting the country for organ transplantation. Some of the basic requisites were that treatment of diseases which required organ transplant would be permitted only on a medical visa and all living donors should be of the age 18 or above.

### Guidelines

Going by provisions of the Transplantation of Human Organs and Tissues Act, 1994, and other Rules, no Indian donor is permitted to donate his organ or organs to a foreigner unless they are a near relative of the recipient. A near relative could be a spouse, son, daughter, father, mother, brother, sister, grandfather, grandmother, grandson or granddaughter.

A senior official of the embassy of the country of origin in India is required to certify the relationship between the donor and the recipient.

# Student held for alleged terror links in West Bengal

The Hindu Bureau  
KOLKATA

The Special Task Force (STF) of the West Bengal Police has arrested a second-year computer science student from Panagarh in Purba Bardhaman district of the State, for his alleged links to a Bangladesh-based terror outfit.

The accused was produced before a district court on Sunday and remanded in police custody for 14 days.

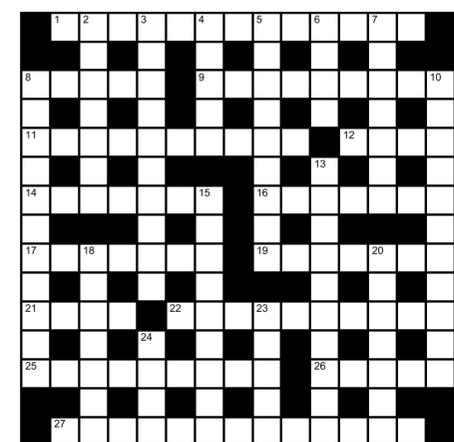
"Today, STF West Bengal has arrested Md Habibullah from his residence. It has been learnt that the members of the group mostly communicate through a cryptic messaging platform," an STF official said after the arrest on Saturday.

The police said the accused has links to a new terror module named 'Shahadat', which is also operating in Bangladesh. Charges have been brought under the UAPA.

**THE CROSSWORD+ 14209** (set by Dr. X)

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

SCAN TO PLAY



- 14 Fling during intermission? It will brighten things up (3,4)
- 16 Old doggy leaping to tackle thugs at centre is a hero (4,3)
- 17 Formal ritual performed after end of toast (7)
- 19 Whirlwind starting to twirl violently on road (7)
- 21 Detailed chronicle about invasion (4)
- 22 A, say, good lady dancing with retired men in retro bar (5,5)
- 25 One left fumbling in darkness? This will provide illumination (4,5)
- 26 Former South African cricketer hit a fantastic sixer finally (5)
- 27 Mark led maiden astray? That's cheap (6-3-4)

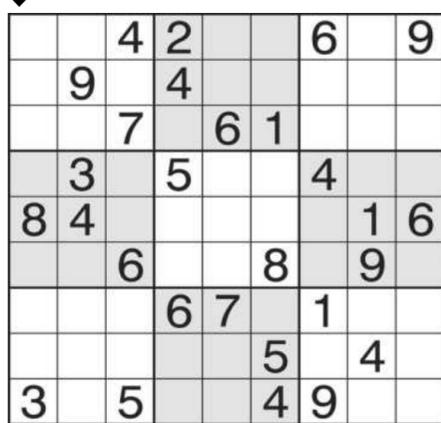
### Down

- 2 They destroy crooked insurer (7)
- 3 Warm clothes or dresses, primarily inexpensive (10)
- 4 Start to inspect garden containing money plant (5)
- 5 Sentimental drive by director, mushy thing that's said before retiring (4,5)
- 6 Brought back LSD, dope, taking chances (4)
- 7 Demanding information about arresting journalist at home (7)
- 8 Tungsten, crude tin or another malleable metal (7,4)
- 10 Spooner picked up two hats for youngster following latest trends (5-6)
- 13 Grooved with my date, twirling over carpet (10)
- 15 Knock back drink with girl, one serving person at the bar (9)
- 18 Expedition discovered oil in African capital (7)
- 20 Sound of clearing throat after consuming drug in a line (7)
- 23 Son lost temper frequently (5)
- 24 Criticism of skirt? Ignoring puritan ultimately (4)

### Across

- 1 Moment of greatest stress, close to numb with doctor operating to save family (8,5)
- 8 Suspicion is strong after spouse almost catches husband (5)
- 9 Most ferocious leader of bandits perishes in raid (9)
- 11 Most important reason for jockey getting tired? (10)
- 12 Ignoring Trump's latest ego trip (4)

## SUDOKU



DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

**Solution to previous puzzle**

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

**Solution to yesterday's Sudoku**

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

**MADGALDEEP** SCENT 3in1

PREMIUM QUALITY INCENSE

PERFUME LIKE FRAGRANCES

## FAITH

### Beyond definition

In his Kandar Anubhuti, Arunagirinatha wonders if Murugan is the sky, earth, fire, water or air? Or is He more than these five elements? Can we say He is the embodiment of the Vedas? But the Vedas themselves seek Him. Is Murugan the mind? He is unaffected by the three *mams* that Saiva Siddhanta describes. Murugan cannot be restricted by any definition, said So. So. Meenakshisundaram, in a discourse.

The questions that Arunagirinatha asks in Kandar Anubhuti are similar to ideas that he expresses in an earlier work, Kandar Alankaram. Murugan is not *sareeri* (one with a body) or *asareeri* (one without a body).

Through the questions, Arunagirinatha is, in fact, explaining his own spiritual experience. In the course of his spiritual quest, he must have asked himself all these questions, and must have got the answers through Murugan's grace. Attachment to his family and attachment to material possessions are fetters that keep him from reaching Murugan's feet. Was Murugan not the one who killed Soorapadman with His *vel* (spear)? Was He not the God who destroyed the Krauncha mountain? Arunagirinatha asks Murugan if it is fair to let him perish.

"*Thagumo* [is it fair]" Arunagirinatha asks twice, to emphasise the need for help from Murugan.

# MONEYWISE

## Health claims without tears!

### COVERNOTE

In motor policies, such a no-claim bonus is passed on as a discount in the renewal premium. Now, this option is to be made available under health policies also

**K. Nitya Kalyani**

In the previous instalment of CoverNote we saw some changes imposed by the insurance regulator relating to Health insurance. This was done through a consolidation of circulars on the matter into a Master Circular dated 29 May, 2024. Most provisions/ changes come into effect immediately and some have specified target dates for implementation.

One was ensuring coverage during grace period for renewal of hospitalisation policies (usually annual, but there are multi-year policies as well), and another was timely authorisation/ approval of cashless claims at the time of hospital admission, the insurer being responsible for financial implications of delays in this and also immediate approval of payment on discharge intimation.

The circular also lays down that if the policyholder should die during the treatment, the insurer 'shall immediately process the claim and get the mortal remains of the deceased released from the hospital immediately.'

Here are some more moves.

When you renew a health policy and haven't made any claim in the previous policy period, you are rewarded with an enhancement of the sum insured without additional premium. In motor policies, such a no-claim bonus is passed on as a discount in the renewal premium. Now this option is to be made available under health policies also and it is up to the insured to choose between the two.

A common doubt when making claims under a health policy is how does one claim under multiple policies. Many have coverage under group policies from the employer. In addition, they may be part of a group policy of some service provider, usually a bank or credit card issuer, or groups like professional bodies, alumni, retirees and so on. And of course they may have bought individual health policies as well.

The master circular, while repeating that the policyholder can choose to claim under any policy, adds that the "insurer of that chosen policy shall be treated as the primary Insurer."

#### Insurers' duty

This means that if the claim exceeds the coverage under that policy, it is now the duty of the insurer to seek information about other policies with the policyholder and coordinate with those insurers to settle the balance amount, "without causing any hassles to the policyholder". This is as far as indemnity policies go which pay claims against expenses incurred.

In the case of benefit policies, where a flat sum insured is payable on the occurrence of a specified contingency, let us say on diagnosis of cancer, the policyholder can claim from all the insurers under all the policies he may have.

Moreover, this claim can be over and above the claims on indemnity policies since both policies operate on totally different bases.

The only thing that gives pause is that insurance companies apparently are approaching the regulator about some requirements in this circular. Hopefully this does not lead to any roll-backs or dilutions because there is still a long way to go!

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



ILLUSTRATION: SOUMYADIP SINHA

## How credit card helps you to build credit score

While loans are need-based and carry high interest charges, credit cards can help you build a strong credit profile without any hefty charges and save on spends in the form of reward points

### PLASTIC MONEY



**Radhika Binani**

Starting to build your credit score early is a sign of financial prudence. The sooner you begin your credit journey, the easier it will be to build a strong credit profile. This will play a major role when you later set out to achieve bigger life goals like buying your dream home or a luxury car.

To build a strong credit profile, you must have experience in handling credit in the form of a loan or a credit card in a responsible manner. While loans are need-based and carry high interest charges, credit cards can help you build a strong credit profile without incurring any hefty charges. Even those who have just begun their professional journey can avail an entry-level credit card and give an early start to their credit journey. At the same time, credit cards can help you save on your spends in the form of reward points, cashback, discount or additional benefits.

Since credit score is largely dependent on your bill payments, credit history and credit utilisation ratio (CUR), let us see how credit cards help you in these areas.

#### Manage responsibly

While calculating your credit score, credit bureaus give the highest weightage to bill payments. When

consumers not eligible for an entry-level unsecured credit card can consider applying for a secured credit card issued against an FD

you clear your credit card dues on or before the due date every month, it is recorded in your credit report and shows that you are using your credit in a disciplined manner. Missed or delayed payments are shown in the 'Days Past Due' section of your credit report.

For each month where you pay the dues on time, the DPD section will show the number zero indicating that the payment was made timely. With no missed or delayed payments for several consecutive months, your credit score gradually improves. Timely bill payment not only contributes towards building a strong credit profile but also helps you avoid late payment fees and penalties. It is still a common misconception among cardholders that paying the minimum amount due on your credit card is enough to avoid negative impact on your credit score. While it is true that if you clear the minimum due by the due date, your credit score will not be affected, the remaining balance as well as all new transactions will start attracting interest until you pay the total amount due.

Since credit card interest rates are quite high, even a small outstanding amount can quickly escalate to a large debt, which could be difficult to pay off. Hence, you must always pay the total amount due on your credit card to avoid creating a debt spiral.

#### Start early

A good credit profile is not built overnight but is a result of multiple credit activities over several years. Hence, availing a credit card in the beginning of the career can be quite beneficial in the long run. A longer history is indicative of your financial credibility and withstanding, helping lenders to understand how responsibly you have dealt with credit before.

Consumers who are not eligible for an entry-level unsecured credit card can consider applying for a secured credit card issued against a fixed deposit. While these cards might come with basic benefits and comparatively lower value-back potential, using them with discipline will work in your favour.

Another major factor that contributes towards your credit score is the Credit Utilisation Ratio (CUR). CUR shows the amount of credit that you have utilized in comparison to the total credit available with you. If you max out your credit cards regularly and struggle to make on time payments in full, it shows that you are highly dependent on credit and might make it difficult for you to avail credit in future. Thus,

the lower the CUR the better it is. For consumers who own a single credit card, maintaining a low CUR could be difficult. In such cases, you can request your bank for a limit increase on your existing card or opt for a new credit card. Increased limit or the credit limit offered on your new card will add to the overall credit limit available with you, which, with responsible usage, will help you lower your CUR.

For example, if your credit limit is ₹2 lakh and you have used ₹1.7 lakh, your CUR would be 85%. If you get a new credit card with a credit limit of ₹2 lakh, your total credit limit will be ₹4 lakh. Now, if your expenses remain the same at ₹1.7 lakh, your overall CUR will reduce to 42.5%, which will positively affect your credit score.

Even though maintaining a low CUR is necessary, it is also important that you keep your credit card active. Many users believe that owning a credit card is enough to build a credit score. However, what is equally important is to keep the card active, make regular usage and on-time payments.

Building a strong credit profile takes time. Once you get a credit card and start using it, you should check your credit score and credit report regularly and track your growth. It will also help you identify any errors in your report and get them rectified at the earliest.

*(The writer is Chief Product Officer, Paisabazaar)*

## Nudging investors for good

### THINKINVESTOR

You may have to rebalance your portfolio annually. This is to reduce the risk of losing unrealised gains on your equity investments

**Venkatesh Bangaruswamy**

The following discussion is food for thought. In this article, we discuss how asset management companies (AMCs) can nudge their index fund investors for good.

#### Rule-based profit taking

In a core-satellite framework, the core portfolio represents your goal-based investments, and the satellite portfolio refers to your trading account. The optimal way to create your core portfolio is to invest in passive funds for equity allocation and bank deposits for your bond allocation.

Now, consider your investments in passive funds. You may have to rebalance your portfolio annually. This is to reduce the risk of losing unrealised gains on your equity investments. But you cannot take out the entire gains because your returns must be allowed to compound annually to achieve a goal. Suppose you expect 12% annual pre-tax return on equity, you must leave 12% unrealised gains on your investments. But you can take out gains that are more than 12% in any year. This requires you to sell your ETF units or redeem units in your index fund.

That is easier said than done. You must manually redeem the units to take profits. Many individuals may fail to do so for various reasons. For one, you may forget to do it due to work-related pressure. For another, strong inertia will prompt you to postpone the decision to take profits. Research in behavioural finance shows that a simple nudge can go a long way in helping individuals take the necessary action. So, why not have the AMC nudge the investors to redeem the units annually when unrealised gains in the fund is more than a pre-determined threshold? Note that the redemption will attract taxes and may have to be a deliberate decision. Also, note that the redemption proceeds must preferably be invested in a bank fixed deposit. The fixed deposit can be withdrawn, and the amount reinvested in equity during years when unrealised gains from the fund is lower than the pre-tax expected return.

#### Conclusion

The nudge an AMC designs should inform each investor how many units they should redeem in the index fund based on a pre-determined annual threshold. This requires a simple arithmetic that a program can easily handle based on an investor's account details. True, suggesting investors to redeem may not be financially optimal for an AMC, as it reduces their AUM. But the action may foster long-term goodwill; for the AMC would have nudged their investors for good.

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

### Bank Fixed Deposit Rates

Bank Name	Interest Rates (%)				Bank Name	Interest Rates (%)			
	Highest Slab	1-year Tenure	3-year Tenure	5-year Tenure		Highest Slab	1-year Tenure	3-year Tenure	5-year Tenure
<b>Small Finance Banks</b>									
AU Small Finance Bank	8.00	7.25	7.50	7.25	Jammu & Kashmir Bank	7.00	7.00	6.50	6.50
Equitas Small Finance Bank	8.50	8.20	8.00	7.25	Karur Vysya Bank	7.50	7.00	7.00	7.00
ESAF Small Finance Bank	8.25	6.00	6.75	6.25	Karnataka Bank	7.25	7.10	6.50	6.50
Jana Small Finance Bank	8.50	8.50	7.25	7.25	Kotak Mahindra Bank	7.40	7.10	7.00	6.20
NorthEast Small Finance Bank	9.00	7.00	9.00	8.00	RBL Bank	8.00	7.50	7.50	7.10
Suryoday Small Finance Bank	8.65	6.85	8.60	8.25	SBM Bank India	8.25	7.10	7.60	7.75
Ujjivan Small Finance Bank	8.50	8.25	7.20	7.20	South Indian Bank	7.25	6.70	6.70	6.00
Unity Small Finance Bank	9.00	7.85	8.15	8.15	Tamilnad Mercantile Bank	7.50	7.00	6.50	6.50
Utkarsh Small Finance Bank	8.50	8.00	8.50	7.75	YES Bank	8	7.25	7.25	7.25
<b>Private Sector Banks</b>									
Axis Bank	7.20	7.00	7.10	7.00	Bank of Baroda	7.25	6.85	7.25	6.50
Bandhan Bank	7.85	7.85	7.25	5.85	Bank of India	7.30	6.80	6.50	6.00
City Union Bank	7.25	7.00	6.50	6.25	Bank of Maharashtra	7.25	6.75	6.50	6.50
CSB Bank	7.75	5.00	5.75	5.75	Canara Bank	7.25	6.85	6.80	6.70
DBS Bank	7.50	7.00	6.50	6.50	Central Bank of India	7.30	6.85	6.50	6.50
DCB Bank	8.05	7.10	7.55	7.40	Indian Bank	7.25	6.10	6.25	6.25
Federal Bank	7.40	6.80	7.00	6.60	Indian Overseas Bank	7.30	6.90	6.50	6.50
HDFC Bank	7.25	6.6	7.00	7.00	Punjab National Bank	7.25	6.75	7.00	6.50
ICI Bank	7.20	6.70	7.00	7.00	Punjab & Sind Bank	7.25	6.20	6.00	6.00
IDFC First Bank	7.90	6.50	7.25	7.00	State Bank of India	7.10	6.80	6.75	6.50
Indusind Bank	7.99	7.75	7.25	7.25	Union Bank of India	7.25	6.75	6.50	6.50

### Home Loan Interest Rates

Name of Lender	Loan Amount (Rs.)			Name of Lender	Loan Amount (Rs.)		
	Upto 30 lakh	Above 30 lakh & upto 75 lakh	Above 75 lakh		Upto 30 lakh	Above 30 lakh & upto 75 lakh	Above 75 lakh
<b>Public Sector Banks</b>							
State Bank of India	8.50-9.85	8.50-9.85	8.50-9.85	Karnataka Bank	8.50-10.62	8.50-10.62	8.50-10.62
Bank of Baroda	8.40-10.65	8.40-10.65	8.40-10.90	Federal Bank	8.80*	8.80*	8.80*
Union Bank of India	8.35-10.75	8.35-10.90	8.35-10.90	Dhanlaxmi Bank	9.35-10.50	9.35-10.50	9.35-10.50
Punjab National Bank	8.45-10.25	8.40-10.15	8.40-10.15	Tamilnad Mercantile Bank	8.60-9.95	8.60-9.95	8.60-9.95
Bank of India	8.40-10.85	8.40-10.85	8.40-10.85	Bandhan Bank	9.16-15.00	9.16-13.33	9.16-13.33
Canara Bank	8.50-11.25	8.45-11.25	8.40-11.15	RBL Bank	8.90*	8.90*	8.90*
UCO Bank	8.45-10.30	8.45-10.30	8.45-10.30	CSB Bank	10.73-12.58	10.73-12.58	10.73-12.58
Bank of Maharashtra	8.35-11.15	8.35-11.15	8.35-11.15	HDFC Bank Ltd.	8.75*	8.75*	8.75*
Punjab and Sind Bank	8.50-10.00	8.50-10.00	8.50-10.00	City Union Bank	8.25-9.50	8.50-10.00	8.75-10.50
Indian Overseas Bank	8.40-10.60	8.40-10.60	8.40-10.60	<b>Housing Finance Companies (HFCs)</b>			
Central Bank of India	8.45-9.80	8.45-9.80	8.45-9.80	LIC Housing Finance	8.50-10.35	8.50-10.55	8.50-10.75
<b>Private Sector Banks</b>							
Kotak Mahindra Bank	8.70*	8.70*	8.70*	Bajaj Housing Finance	8.50*	8.50*	8.50*
ICI Bank	8.75*	8.75*	8.75*	Tata Capital	8.75*	8.75*	8.75*
Axis Bank	8.75-13.30	8.75-13.30	8.75-9.65	PNB Housing Finance	8.50-14.50	8.50-14.50	8.50-11.45
HSBC Bank	8.50*	8.50*	8.50*	GIC Housing Finance	8.80*	8.80*	8.80*
South Indian Bank	8.70-11.70	8.70-11.70	8.70-11.70	SMFG India Home Finance	10.00*	10.00*	10.00*
Karur Vysya Bank	9.00-11.05	9.00-11.05	9.00-11.05	Aditya Birla Capital	8.60*	8.60*	8.60*
				ICI Home Finance	9.10*	9.10*	9.10*
				Godrej Housing Finance	8.55*	8.55*	8.55*

\*Onwards Rates as on June 19 Source:Paisabazaar.com

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

## BEIRUT

## Hezbollah targets Israeli barracks after Islamist commander's death



Lebanon's Hezbollah militant group said on Sunday it had targeted two military positions in northern Israel with an armed drone in response to the killing of an Islamist commander. Hezbollah said its fighters launched a strike on a military leadership position in the Beit Hillel barracks. No injuries were reported. AFP

## MOSCOW

## 6 policemen, priest dead as gunmen hit synagogue, churches in Russia



Gunmen on Sunday attacked a synagogue and churches, killing a priest and six police troops in Russia's Caucasus region of Dagestan. The attacks took place in Dagestan's largest city of Makhachkala and in the coastal city of Derbent. Dagestan is a largely Muslim region of Russia bordering Georgia and Azerbaijan. AFP

## ISLAMABAD

## 23 held for involvement in tourist's lynching in Pakistan's Swat town



The Pakistan police have arrested more than 20 people for alleged involvement in the lynching of a tourist in the town of Swat for allegedly desecrating the Koran. The police arrested 23 people for alleged involvement in the man's lynching and the arson attack on the Madyan police station, media reports said on Sunday. PTI

## CAIRO/RIYADIH

## 98 Indian Hajjis among more than 1,000 who died in scorching heat



More than 1,000 people died during Hajj this year as extreme heat hammered the nearly two million who took part in the annual Muslim pilgrimage to Mecca. The victims included 672 Egyptians, 236 Indonesians and 98 Indians. Further deaths were reported by Tunisia, Jordan, Iran, and Senegal, taking the toll to 1,114. REUTERS

## Israeli soldiers tie wounded man to military jeep in West Bank raid

The 24-year-old resident of Jenin refugee camp suffers burns on his back from being tied to the military jeep in the scorching summer heat; military admits that the conduct of the forces does not conform to the values of the IDF

Agence France-Presse  
JENIN

Israeli troops tied a wounded Palestinian to a military vehicle during a raid in the occupied West Bank city of Jenin, the Army said on Sunday, admitting that soldiers had violated operational procedures.

Footage of the incident, which occurred on Saturday, shows a man strapped horizontally to the bonnet of a military jeep as it passes through a narrow alley.

Medics identified the Palestinian as Mujahid Raed Abbadi, 24, who said he lives in the Jenin refugee camp.

The military said a Pal-



Muted response: Activists covered in fake blood lie on the ground during an anti-government protest in Tel Aviv on Saturday. AFP

estinian man was wounded during a "counterterrorism operation" to arrest wanted suspects in the area of Wadi Burqin, between the town of Burqin and Jenin.

During an exchange of fire between troops and militants in Burqin's Jabriyat neighbourhood, a Palestinian was wounded and apprehended, the military said in a statement.

The military said: "In violation of orders and standard operating procedures, the suspect was taken by the forces while tied on top of a vehicle."

He was later transferred to the Palestinian Red Crescent for treatment, it said.

"The conduct of the forces in the video of the incident does not conform to the values of the IDF (military)," the statement said. "The incident will be investigated and dealt with accordingly."

Francesca Albanese, the United Nations special rapporteur, suggested the troops were using Mr. Abbadi to shield themselves from gunfire.

The doctor treating Mr.

Abbadi said "he has burns on his back from neck to lower back" from being tied to the military jeep in the scorching summer heat.

Jenin has long been a stronghold for Palestinian militant groups, and the Israeli Army routinely carries out raids in the city and an adjacent refugee camp.

Violence in the West Bank, which had already surged before the Israel-Hamas war broke out on October 7, has only escalated since.

At least 553 Palestinians have been killed in the West Bank by Israeli troops or settlers since the Gaza war broke out.

## Russia blames U.S. for missile attack on Crimea

Agence France-Presse  
MOSCOW

Russia on Sunday said the United States had responsibility for a Ukrainian missile attack on Russian-annexed Crimea, which it said killed five persons, including three children, and wounded over 100.

A missile exploded above a beach area of the city of Sevastopol, firing shrapnel at people relaxing there, Russian-appointed officials said.

Russia's Defence Ministry said Washington and Kyiv bore "responsibility for a deliberate missile strike on peaceful residents", which it said used U.S.-supplied ATACMS missiles.

Sevastopol governor Mikhail Razvozhayev said three children and two



Russian officials said a missile exploded above a beach area of the city of Sevastopol, firing shrapnel at people relaxing there. REUTERS

adults had died and almost 120 people were injured.

The Black Sea port city and naval base on the Crimean peninsula was annexed by Russia in 2014 but is still internationally recognised as part of Ukraine.

Sevastopol regularly comes under fire from Uk-

raine but Sunday's attack was unusually deadly.

Razvozhayev said the attack hit Uchkuyevka, an area with sandy beaches and hotels.

The investigative committee, which probes major crimes, said it was opening an investigation into "a terrorist act".

## Former Bangladesh PM Khaleda Zia is on her 'deathbed', says BNP leader

Press Trust of India  
DHAKA

Accusing Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina of a "personal political vendetta" against her predecessor and political rival Khaleda Zia, a senior leader from her party on Sunday said she was on her "deathbed" as she had been deprived of advanced medical treatment abroad.

A report in *The Daily Star* said that Khaleda Zia, 78, was rushed to Evercare Hospital here in an ambulance around 3.30 a.m. on Saturday as she suddenly fell ill at her residence, 'Fi-



Khaleda Zia

roza', in Gulshan.

Ms. Hasina's action is a result of "personal political vendetta," Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) secretary-general Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir alleged and

said, "It's our misfortune that our leader Khaleda Zia is now in critical condition on her deathbed without receiving any (necessary) medical treatment (abroad)." She was quickly admitted to the CCU, where her medical treatment began under the supervision of a medical board.

The BNP leader further alleged that Ms. Zia has been imprisoned for a long period due to the vindictiveness of the current "oppressive fascist" government, the news portal said.

Ms. Khaleda, who was the Prime Minister from

1991 to 1996 and then again from 2001 to 2006, fell ill while staying in Old Dhaka Central Jail, but no medical treatment was provided to her there, he said.

"Although she was allowed to stay at home, she is actually under complete confinement and remains imprisoned," he said.

"The BNP chief complained repeatedly, but the government did not pay heed and did not provide her with medical care. Later, when she was taken to the hospital (by the jail authorities), she did not receive any proper treatment there either," Alamgir said.

## Poll shows France's far-right National Rally is still leading ahead of election

Reuters  
PARIS

France's far-right National Rally (RN) party and its allies are seen leading the first round of the country's parliamentary elections with 35.5% of the vote, according to a poll published on Sunday.

The Ipsos survey - conducted for *Le Parisien* newspaper and Radio France on June 19-20 - showed the left-wing New Popular Front (NPF) alliance in second place with 29.5% of the vote.

French President Emmanuel Macron's centrist



Popular choice: In a separate survey, Marine Le Pen's RN is seen as the most trustworthy when it comes to managing the economy. AFP

alliance was seen in third place, winning 19.5% of votes.

The turnout rate is seen at between 60% and 64%,

ahead of the election that will take place in two rounds, on June 30 and July 7, is unlikely to win the party an absolute majority. Mr. Macron called the ballot after his alliance's crushing defeat at EU elections earlier this month.

In a separate Ipsos survey, published by the *Financial Times*, the National Rally is seen as the most trustworthy when it comes to managing the economy and public finances.

According to the survey, 25% of respondents trust Marine Le Pen's RN the most to take the right decisions on economic issues.

## Sport

## Smriti falls short of a third successive century as India sweeps series

## SA IN INDIA

N. Sudarshan  
BENGALURU

India handed South Africa a six-wicket thrashing to complete a 3-0 sweep of the ODI series, at the M. Chinnaswamy Stadium here on Sunday.

Chasing 216, the host romped home with more than nine overs to spare, with Smriti Mandhana adding another glorious chapter (90, 83b, 11x4) to her famed book of batting art. If not for a top-edge that landed in the hands of the short-fine fielder, it would have brought a third consecutive century, a stand-out achievement even in a trail-blazing career as hers.

Even 10 runs short, the knock was just as dazzling,

as Smriti drove, clipped and steered the ball effortlessly, ensuring that for the 15,000 adoring fans who had gathered to watch her, there would be no falsification of expectations.

**Sizeable contribution** Priya Punia, in for D. Hemalatha, made a sizeable contribution (28, 40b, 3x4, 1x6), and so did skipper Harmanpreet Kaur (42, 48b, 2x4). But for a second straight match, opener Shafali Verma got a start (25, 39b, 4x4), but did not make it count, with her penchant for hitting on the up proving fatal.

Earlier, South Africa, which opted to bat, began splendidly, with captain Laura Wolvaardt (61, 57b, 7x4) and Tazmin Brits (38, 66b, 2x4, 1x6) putting on 102 runs, a big upgrade



Scintillating: Smriti was at her fluent best again. K. MURALI KUMAR

from the highest of 14 this series. But Wolvaardt's dismissal, via a sharp catch by speedster Arundhati Reddy off her own bowling, triggered a collapse.

Brits sprinted for a non-

existent single and was run out, while Anneke Bosch fell to another excellent caught-and-bowled effort by Arundhati (two for 36), with the latter's palm seeming as big as a baseball mitt.

And when Shreyanka Patil - who replaced leggie Asha Sobhana - sent back star batter Marizanne Kapp, the Proteas were reduced to 120 for four. There were small pockets of resistance

The way our bowlers bowled in this series, credit goes to them. These conditions aren't the easiest. They were outstanding

I think we've played good cricket in patches. We need to be a lot more consistent with the bat and the ball

from the likes of Nadine de Klerk (26, 46b) and Mieke de Ridder (26 n.o., 31b) that helped South Africa bat out the full quota of overs and add nearly 100 more runs. But they did nothing other than prolong the inevitable.

## SCOREBOARD

**SOUTH AFRICA**  
Laura Wolvaardt c & b Arundhati 61 (57b, 7x4), Tazmin Brits run out 38 (66b, 2x4, 1x6), Marizanne Kapp c & b Shreyanka 7 (20b), Anneke Bosch c & b Arundhati 5 (9b, 1x4), Sune Luus b Pooja 13 (23b, 1x4), Nadine de Klerk b Deepti 26 (46b, 2x4), Nondumiso Shangase run out 16 (29b, 2x4), Meike de Ridder (not out) 26 (31b, 2x4), Nonkululeko Mlaba b Deepti 0 (1b), Tumi Sekhukhune (not out) 6 (18b); Extras (b-6, lb-1, w-10): 17; Total (for eight wkts. in 50 overs): 215.

**FALL OF WICKETS**  
1-102 (Wolvaardt, 19.5 overs), 2-104 (Brits, 20.6), 3-114 (Bosch, 23.5), 4-120 (Kapp, 26.4), 5-143 (Luus, 31.6), 6-174 (Shangase, 41.2), 7-178 (de Klerk, 42.3), 8-178 (Mlaba, 42.4).

**INDIA BOWLING**  
Shreyanka 10-0-35-1, Arundhati 10-0-36-2, Pooja 9-0-54-1, Deepti 10-0-27-2, Radha 10-0-46-0, Smriti 1-0-10-0.

**INDIA**  
Smriti Mandhana c Khaka b Mlaba 90 (83b, 11x4), Shafali Verma c Bosch b Sekhukhune 25 (39b, 4x4), Priya Punia c Bosch b Khaka 28 (40b, 3x4, 1x6), Harmanpreet Kaur run out 42 (48b, 2x4), Jemimah Rodrigues (not out) 19 (31b, 1x4), Richa Ghosh (not out) 6 (3b, 1x6); Extras (lb-2, w-8): 10; Total (for four wkts. in 40.4 overs): 220.

**FALL OF WICKETS**  
1-61 (Shafali, 11.5), 2-123 (Priya, 22.5), 3-171 (Smriti, 30.4), 4-214 (Harmanpreet, 40.1).

**SOUTH AFRICA BOWLING**  
Khaka 9-0-38-1, de Klerk 8-0-45-0, Sekhukhune 8.4-0-43-1, Mlaba 10-1-55-1, Shangase 5-0-37-0.

**South:** South Africa.  
**PoM:** Deepti.  
**PoS:** Smriti.  
India won by six wickets with 56 balls remaining to sweep series 3-0.

**AGONY TO ECSTASY**

**Couldn't sleep in Mumbai then and can't sleep here now: Rashid**



Afghanistan skipper Rashid Khan said he could not sleep after the loss against Australia in the 2023 ODI World Cup. "That was a night which didn't let me sleep. The game kept coming into my mind. I feel like I won't be able to sleep because of happiness tonight. That's how happy the whole team is," said Rashid.

**MAKING IT A HABIT**

**Cummins claims back-to-back hat-tricks at T20 World Cup**



Australia pacer Pat Cummins became the first bowler to register back-to-back hat-tricks in T20 World Cup [his first came against Bangladesh] during his team's Super 8 fixture against Afghanistan. "Crazy to get two in a row after playing 100-plus games for Australia," Cummins said.

**RARING TO GO**

**Australia up for crucial India challenge, says skipper Marsh**



Skipper Mitchell Marsh feels Australia tends to perform best with its back against the wall. "It will be against India and it's a must-win game. I think if you look back at the short history of this team, I know for a fact that it brings out the best in our guys. So, the boys will certainly be up and about for it," Marsh said.

**LEGEND'S SUPPORT**

**If the Men in Maroon falter, I'm backing India, says Richards**



Sir Viv Richards visited the Indian team's dressing room and expressed his support for Rohit Sharma's side. "If the Men in Maroon falter, I'm backing you... Pant, it's great to see you back here after what you have been through," Richards said after presenting the fielding medal to Suryakumar Yadav.

# Afghanistan humbles Australia, stays alive

The 118-run opening stand between Gurbaz and Zadran, Naveen's early strikes and Naib's four-for the highlight of Rashid & Co.'s 21-run victory over the 2021 champion; Group 1 race wide open



**Buoyant:** Afghanistan will now believe it can progress past the Super 8 stage. PTI

**T20 WORLD CUP**

**Agence France-Presse**  
KINGSTOWN

Gulbadin Naib was Afghanistan's man with the golden arm, bowling his team to a tense 21-run victory over previously unbeaten Australia in a T20 World Cup Super 8 Group 1 encounter here on Saturday.

Set a target of 149, Glenn Maxwell (59 off 41 balls) kept Australia on course until he became Naib's third wicket in the 15th over, opening the door to a result which keeps the duel for semifinal spots alive going into the final two

**Super 8 table**

**GROUP 1**

	M	W	L	PTS	NRR
India	2	2	0	4	2.425
Australia	2	1	1	2	0.223
Afghanistan	2	1	1	2	-0.650
Bangladesh	2	0	2	0	-2.489

**GROUP 2**

	M	W	L	PTS	NRR
England (Q)	3	2	1	4	1.992
South Africa	2	2	0	4	0.625
West Indies	2	1	1	2	1.814
USA	3	0	3	0	-3.906

fixtures in the group. Naib finished with four for 20 to turn the match as Australia suffered its first-

ever defeat to the Afghans in a senior international encounter, being dismissed for 127.

Earlier, Pat Cummins claimed his second hat-trick in as many matches as Afghanistan lost momentum after another 100-plus opening stand from Rahmanullah Gurbaz and Ibrahim Zadran, settling for a total of 148 for six.

Both teams are on two points - with Australia facing India in its final match while Afghanistan plays Bangladesh.

**The scores:** Afghanistan 148/6 in 20 overs (Gurbaz 60, Ibrahim Zadran 51, Cummins 3/28, Zampa 2/28) bt Australia 127 in 19.2 overs (Maxwell 59, Naveen 3/20, Naib 4/20).  
**Toss:** Australia.  
**PoM:** Naib.

# India takes on familiar foe Australia in a high-stakes match for both sides

**Ayan Acharya**  
GROS ISLET (ST. LUCIA)

India will face old rival Australia in a crucial Super 8 match at the windswept Daren Sammy ground on Sunday. Australia needs a win after a historic defeat to Afghanistan in Saint Vincent. India is in a better position after defeating Bangladesh in Antigua, but its qualification isn't guaranteed yet. If both Australia and Afghanistan win, three teams will tie with four points, and net run rate will decide the standings.

However, a win against Australia will secure India's place in the next round. Australia can go through even if it loses to India. For that to happen, it would need Bangladesh to beat Afghanistan, which would create a three-way tie on two points. With the Aussies currently holding a better net run rate (0.223), they would just have to not lose big.

Permutations and combinations aside, the conditions in Gros Islet will be closely monitored. England played South Africa in a day game here on a fresh centre wicket that slowed down as the innings progressed. The 10:30 am start time might affect the moisture level, making bowling first an appealing option. However, batting first and taking advantage of field restrictions could significantly influence the outcome.

As far as India is concerned, there's little reason to tweak its combination, which includes three



**K-factor:** India will look to Kuldeep and Kohli to deliver in the big game against the Aussies. K.R. DEEPAK

spinners. Mohammed Siraj is likely to remain on the bench.

Rohit Sharma has been dismissed three times by left-arm fast bowlers in this T20 World Cup. Australia will likely aim to exploit this weakness with Mitchell Starc, who could use the windy conditions to swing the ball into the right-hander. However, if there's no movement in the air, Rohit could take advantage of the short square boundaries, which are less than 70 meters long.

In the last match, England's spinners conceded 6.42 runs per over, while its pacers went at 8.84. Keshav Maharaj's 2 for 25 was crucial in preventing England from dominating the middle overs. Australia will rely on leggie Adam Zampa for control during overs 7 to 16, where he has taken 11 wickets at less than six runs per over in this edition and maintained a high dot-ball percentage. However, Suryakumar Yadav, with his medley of inside-out drives, sweeps

**Today's matches**

<p><b>Antigua, 6.00 a.m.</b> <b>HEAD-TO-HEAD T20is</b> Played: <b>22</b> West Indies <b>11</b>   South Africa <b>11</b></p>	<p><b>St. Lucia, 8.00 p.m.</b> <b>HEAD-TO-HEAD T20is</b> Played: <b>31</b> Australia <b>11</b>   India <b>19</b>   NR <b>1</b></p>
---	--

and reverse sweeps, could be a challenge for Zampa, having scored 54 runs off 27 balls against him in four T20 innings, with only one dismissal.

If Ashton Agar's left-arm spin is deemed essential, deciding which fast bowler to drop will be a headache. Dropping Mitchell Starc against Afghanistan left Australia without its primary new-ball threat, although Agar's four-over spell was economical. However, Zampa and Maxwell are likely to provide spin in St Lucia, given India's left-hand heavy top eight.

Australia needs to improve its fielding after a poor showing against Afghanistan. For India, Jas-

priit Bumrah and Arshdeep Singh are expected to stick to their unwavering consistency at the top using the wind to their advantage.

Group 1 is heading for a tense finale.

**The teams (from):**  
**India:** Rohit Sharma (Capt.), Hardik Pandya, Yashasvi Jaiswal, Virat Kohli, Suryakumar Yadav, Rishabh Pant, Sanju Samson, Shivam Dube, Ravindra Jadeja, Axar Patel, Kuldeep Yadav, Yuzvendra Chahal, Arshdeep Singh, Jasprit Bumrah, and Mohammed Siraj.  
**Australia:** Mitchell Marsh (Capt.), Ashton Agar, Pat Cummins, Tim David, Nathan Ellis, Cameron Green, Josh Hazlewood, Travis Head, Josh Inglis, Glenn Maxwell, Mitchell Starc, Marcus Stoinis, Matthew Wade, David Warner, and Adam Zampa.

# Jordan's 'trick, Buttler's blitz seal England's semifinal spot

**Agence France-Presse**  
BRIDGETOWN (BARBADOS)

Skipper Jos Buttler led the way with a 38-ball unbeaten 83 after Chris Jordan's four-wicket burst, including a hat-trick, as defending champion England stormed into the ICC T20 World Cup semifinals with a 10-wicket rout of USA here on Sunday.

Buttler smashed six fours and seven sixes, five of them off left-arm spinner Harmeet Singh in the ninth over, as England cruised past the 116-run target in just 9.4 overs.

Earlier, pacer Jordan grabbed a hat-trick in an incisive spell of four for 10 as the Englishmen skittled out tournament co-hosts USA for 115.

Returning to the side in place of Mark Wood, Jordan took his four wickets off five balls in the penultimate over.

Off the first ball of the over, Jordan saw Corey Anderson hit a fast and low full toss to Harry Brook at long-on. Two deliveries la-



**Unprecedented:** Jordan became the first bowler to perform a hat-trick in a men's T20I for England. PTI

ter, he castled Ali-Khan for a duck. Nosthush Kenjige was adjudged leg-before wicket despite a desperate review, and Jordan completed a hat-trick by bowling Saurabh Netravalkar between bat and pad.

The Englishman became the second bowler to perform a hat-trick in this edition, with Australia's Pat Cummins achieving the feat against Bangladesh and Afghanistan in back-to-back matches.

Jordan's hat-trick was

the first for England in a men's T20 international. Nat Sciver-Brunt and Anya Shrubsole have taken three-in-three for the women's side.

Earlier, Adil Rashid delivered a miserly spell (two for 13) while Sam Curran also picked up two wickets.

**The scores:** USA 115 in 18.5 overs (Nitish 30, Anderson 29, Curran 2/23, Adil Rashid 2/13, Jordan 4/10) lost to England 117/0 in 9.4 overs (Salt 25 n.o., Buttler 83 n.o.); **Toss:** England; **PoM:** Adil Rashid.

# Wounded Australia has to stop spearhead Bumrah more than any other Indian player



**Sunil Gavaskar**

Afghanistan's stunning win over Australia means that for the Aussies the game against India becomes a must win game.

Afghanistan play Bangladesh in the evening after the India and Australia match and will know the result. And if Australia have lost, then all they have to do is beat Bangladesh to qualify for the semis. If India have been beaten, then Rashid will know what margin his team needs to beat Bangladesh to get into the semis. Afghanistan will be ruining the scale of their loss to India, for that doesn't help their net run-rate. The way some of their batters threw their wickets away was indicative of a lack of thinking and appreciation of what was needed to stay in the hunt for a place in the semis. They now have a splendid opportunity to do so. The pitch at St. Vincent is certainly helping the spinners and Bangladesh has got a clutch of them too so it won't be easy against them.

Australia know that India will not make it easy. Having beaten Afghanistan quite easily, the Indians would definitely want the Afghans to be in the knockout stages. They showed that they were not going to let up and beat Bangladesh comfortably too. Bangladesh may have erred in opting to field first for after India set them a near 200 target they needed to get a good start. How could they get that against an attack led by Jasprit Bumrah? This man is a phenomenon, pure and simple. He has a run-up and action that is impossible to copy. Added to that is the priceless ability to suss a batter and almost read his mind and bowl accordingly making the batter look utterly silly.

His humility is seen by how he tries to learn by watching how other teams new ball bowlers operate and to see if he can bring any of that and add to his repertoire. Always the student and not the master and so keeping his eyes and ears open to learn as much as possible and get better at his craft. And craft it definitely is for to be able to land the ball unnervingly where he wants to is a skill that is rare and given to few.

India is lucky to have Bumrah in its ranks. He must be celebrated

with equal if not more fervour than our brilliant batters. See how he and his bowling partners saved the batters blushes against Pakistan defending a paltry total.

Yes sir, Australia know that if

they want to beat India and qualify for the semifinal they have to stop Bumrah more than any other Indian player.

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## IN BRIEF



## UEFA fines Croatia for fan trouble at Euro 2024

UEFA has fined the Croatian Football Federation (HNS) for the incidents that occurred in the stands during Croatia's 2-2 draw with Albania at Euro 2024, the national federation said on Saturday. The HNS published a statement on its website saying that it will have to pay a fine of €28,000 due to the "lighting of flares and throwing of objects by some Croatian fans during the match played on June 19 in Hamburg". "The Croatian Football Federation thanks the Croatian fans for their excellent support and once again calls on them to refrain from lighting and throwing flares", the statement said.

## Sahaja Yamalapalli loses in the semifinals

Sahaja Yamalapalli lost 4-6, 6-0, 5-7 to Victoria Hu in the semifinals of the \$25,000 ITF women's tennis tournament in Wichita, USA. In a three-hour battle, Sahaja won more points 104-98, and broke serve seven times to six by her opponent, but failed to convert a game point that would have forced the tie-break in the decider.



## Swimming bulletin presented on Sunday

The 44th edition of the VK Pahuja Swimming bulletin, compiled by Dr. Meenakshi Pahuja, was released by former Air Force officer, Air Commodore Dr. Ashminder Singh Bahal, at the India International Centre. The first copy was presented to senior diving official, PD Dutta. Commending the work done, Dr. Ashminder emphasised the power of sports in character building and appreciated swimming as a sport for health. The exemplary work of VK Pahuja who had started the bulletin, and his tremendous contribution in various capacities for Indian swimming and the international fraternity was fondly remembered by many, including the members of the Swimming Federation of India, Balraj Sharma and Raj Kumar, apart from Arjuna awardees, Col. RS Bhanwala and Bhanu Sachdeva. The latest bulletin, spanning 460 pages has a number of articles on diet, injury management, health advice, etc., from doctors, lecturers and swimmers. It has a series of interviews of prominent and promising swimmers and coaches. Most importantly, the book has a list of all Indian participation in swimming in the international arena, over the last 90 years. The bulletin also includes a section on the upcoming Paris Olympics.

## LIVE TELECAST

**T20 World Cup:** India vs Australia, Star Sports 1 (SD & HD) & Hotstar, 8 p.m. & 6 a.m. (Tuesday)  
**Football:** Euro 2024, Sony Sports Ten 2, 3, 5 (SD & HD) & LIV, 12.30 a.m. (Tuesday)

## Belgium breathes new life into its title challenge

Smarting from the loss in the first game against Slovakia, Tielemans put the Belgians ahead in the second minute while De Bruyne added another late in the second half against Romania



Agence France-Presse  
COLOGNE

Youri Tielemans breathed new life into Belgium's Euro 2024 campaign as the Aston Villa midfielder's goal after just 73 seconds inspired a vital 2-0 win against Romania on Saturday.

Domenico Tedesco's side would have been on the brink of elimination if it had suffered a second successive Group E defeat.

But Tielemans' second-minute strike eased fears of yet another major tournament flop from star-studded Belgium.

## Wrapping it up

Kevin De Bruyne wrapped up the points in the closing stages to leave all four teams in the group level on three points.

The stage is set for a dramatic final round of fixtures in the battle to reach the last 16.



Sliding strike: De Bruyne scores Belgium's second against Romania. AP

Belgium faces Ukraine and Romania plays Slovakia on June 26.

With 45 rungs separating the two nations in FIFA's rankings, third-placed Belgium's 1-0 loss to Slovakia on Monday was the biggest upset in European Championship history.

## Competing gamely

Romania, ranked in 47th place, competed gamely as it chased its own shock, but this time Belgium's superior class proved

decisive.

"I have the same feeling as against Slovakia: we played well but the difference is that we scored and won today," said Belgium captain De Bruyne.

"We made a few mistakes and gave away a few chances, but we can be satisfied with our performance, both offensively and defensively."

Having bowed out at the group stage of the 2022 World Cup and lost in the quarterfinals of the last two Euros, Belgium's golden generation has given

itself fresh hope of finally delivering on its vast potential.

Romania had powered to a 3-0 win against Ukraine on Monday – its first victory in a major tournament since beating England at Euro 2000.

Despite this loss, Edward Iordanescu's team is still in contention to make the Euro knockout stage for the first time in 24 years.

**The results: Group E:** Belgium 2 (Tielemans 2, De Bruyne 79) bt Romania 0.

## Italy and Croatia clash with survival at stake

Associated Press  
LEIPZIG

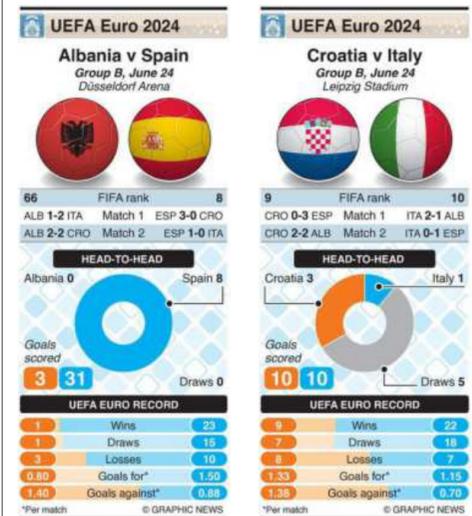
Defending champion Italy needs to avoid defeat against Croatia in its final group game to ensure progress at the European Championship. Croatia can progress with a win, or by avoiding defeat as long as Albania does not beat group-winner Spain in the other Group B game at the same time.

## The standings

Italy has three points while Croatia and Albania have one point each. Albania has the better goal difference.

Luciano Spalletti's team will be keen to impress after being thoroughly outclassed by Spain. Italy only lost by a goal, but the Italian players spent most of the game chasing Spanish shadows and were saved embarrassment by captain and goalkeeper Gianluigi Donnarumma.

Italy left-back Federico Dimarco is expected to miss the game with a right calf injury. Croatia will be without midfielder Nikola Vlasic, who is no longer with the squad because of an injury, while veteran defender Domagoj Vida missed Saturday's training session with an ankle injury.



## Nayana wins long jump in Almaty

## Sports Bureau

Former Asian bronze medallist Nayana James won the women's long jump title with 6.39m at the Qosonov memorial athletics meet, a World Athletics Continental Tour-bronze event, in Almaty, Kazakhstan, on Saturday.

Sarvesh Kushare, the joint Indian season-leader with national record holder Tejaswin Shankar (2.29m), won the men's high jump gold with 2.23m.

Meanwhile, Commonwealth Games champion Eldhose Paul finished fifth in the men's triple jump on Sunday with 15.51m. Uzbekistan's Ivan Denisov, the indoor Asian bronze medallist, won the gold with 16.26m. In Switzerland Tejas Shirse was second in the men's 110m hurdles at the Atleticageneve, a WA Continental Tour-bronze event, in Geneva in 13.60s while Shailli Singh was fourth in women's long jump with 6.33m.

## Super subs do it for Venezuela

## COPA AMERICA

Agence France-Presse  
SANTA CLARA

Goals from substitutes Jhonder Cadiz and Eduard Bello gave Venezuela a 2-1 win over 10-man Ecuador in their Copa America Group B match on Saturday.

In the group's other game, Mexico made a winning start to its campaign with a 1-0 victory over Jamaica in Houston but lost its captain Edson Alvarez to injury. Ecuador was forced to play with 10 men from the 22nd minute of the game at Levi Stadium.

Ecuador responded well and went ahead in the 40th minute when Venezuela failed to clear a free-kick and Jeremy Sarmiento pounced on the loose ball. Venezuela coach Fernando Batista made two changes at the break, bringing on Cadiz and Bello and both were to make a decisive impact.



Cadiz. AP

"Vinotinto" striker Salomon Rondon laid the ball off to Cadiz, whose low side-footed shot flashed past Ecuador keeper Alexander Dominguez.

Then, in the 74th minute, Alexander Gonzalez whipped in a cross from the right, met with a diving header from Rondon which was parried by Dominguez but Bello reacted to fire home the loose ball.

**The results:** Ecuador 1 (Sarmiento 40) lost to Venezuela 2 (Cadiz 64, Bello 74); Mexico 1 (Arteaga 69) bt Jamaica 0.

## Dhiraj's showing leads India to two recurve bronze medals

## ARCHERY

## Sports Bureau

B. Dhiraj led India to two bronze medals in recurve competitions on the final day of the Archery World Cup Stage-3 in Antalya, Turkey, on Sunday.

Dhiraj combined with Bhajan Kaur to deliver the mixed team bronze before securing the men's individual bronze.

The Indians rallied from a set down to beat the Mexican pair of Matias Grande and Alejandra Valencia 5-3 (35-38, 40-39, 38-37, 38-38) to take the third place.

Dhiraj and Bhajan, who could not hit a 10 in the opening set, improved their game to score at least two 10s in the next three sets to ensure a podium finish.

Dhiraj, who landed an individual bronze in Stage-1 in Antalya in April last year, collected another

individual bronze at one of his favourite venues.

The Indian lost his semifinal match to Korean World and Olympic gold medallist Kim Woojin 6-2 (29-29, 27-30, 29-29, 27-29), but bounced back to defeat Italian Mauro Nespoli 7-3 (28-27, 29-28, 27-28, 28-28, 29-30) for the bronze.

## Fight back

After taking two sets, Dhiraj, who is the only archer from the country to qualify for Paris 2024 so far, saw Nespoli fight back and close the gap to 4-2 and share the honours in the fourth to make it 5-3.

But the Indian held his nerve to shoot three perfect shots in the final set and claim a morale-boosting medal ahead of the Olympics.

Ankita Bhakat lost her semifinal and bronze medal contests to China's Yang Xiaolei (6-2) and Mexico's Alejandra (7-3) respectively.

## NADA re-imposes provisional suspension on Bajrang

## WRESTLING

Sports Bureau  
KOLKATA

World and Olympic medal winning wrestler Bajrang Punia has been provisionally suspended again after the National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA) formally issued the 'notice of charge' to the athlete.

Bajrang, who was earlier provisionally suspended by NADA for allegedly refusing to give his urine sample at the National selection trials at Sonapat on March 10, had got a reprieve after a disciplinary panel revoked his suspension on the procedural ground that the athlete had not been served the notice of charge.

Bajrang's counsel Vidushpat Singhania confirmed the reimposition of the suspension on the ace wrestler.

## Verstappen makes it three in a row in Spain

## FORMULA ONE

Reuters  
BARCELONA

Red Bull's Max Verstappen won the Spanish Formula One Grand Prix for the third year in a row on Sunday after McLaren's pole-sitter Lando Norris lost out at the start and finished 2.2 seconds behind.

## First podium

Seven-time world champion Lewis Hamilton was third, his first podium appearance of the season, with Mercedes teammate George Russell fourth on a sunny afternoon at Barcelona's Circuit de Catalunya.

The Dutch driver extended his championship lead to a hefty 69 points, with Norris moving up to



On the podium: Verstappen, the winner, is flanked by second-placed Norris and Hamilton. REUTERS

become the triple world champion's closest rival and also taking a bonus point for the fastest lap.

Norris paid the price for a slow start, dropping to third into the first corner after squeezing Verstappen onto the grass while Rus-

sell rocketed past from the second row to take them both and lead the field.

"I did a bit of rallying. I think we slowed each other down," commented Verstappen afterwards.

Verstappen, who started alongside Norris in the

front row, was leading by lap three, and then built a buffer to take control.

"I think what made the race was the beginning," he said.

"I took the lead... and made that first stint where I could eke out a gap a little

bit. After that we had to drive kind of a defensive race.

"Lando and McLaren were very quick today... I think we did everything well, we had quite an aggressive strategy but luckily it played out to the end."

Ferrari's Charles Leclerc was fifth, after taking the chequered flag just 0.3 behind Russell, and teammate Carlos Sainz sixth in front of his home crowd. McLaren's Oscar Piastri was seventh, Red Bull's Sergio Perez eighth, with Alpine duo Pierre Gasly and Esteban Ocon taking the final points.

The win was Verstappen's seventh in 10 races so far this season, and 61st of his career.

He now has 219 points to Norris' 150 and Leclerc's 148.

**THE HINDU POWERPLAY T20 TRIVIA QUIZ**

- Which USA cricketer in the T20 World Cup squad is also currently a software engineer working at Oracle?
- Australia's victory over Namibia marked the second instance in the T20 World Cup where a team chased a target within the powerplay. Which team achieved this feat first?
- Which bowler recently became the first Australian to take 100 wickets in T20 Internationals?

Scan the code, to participate in the quiz and win exciting gift vouchers

Answer to yesterday's quiz:  
1. Dinesh Karthik  
2. 2  
3. Mohammed Rizwan

# An agonising green meltdown in a cold and damp USA

Amir, experienced Amir, nerveless Amir, incredibly gifted Amir. By the time he was done with a super over that seemed to last an eternity, he had conceded 18, but only one boundary, a four. Incredible? Indeed. Seven runs came through wides and overthrow wides. Was this an impostor?



K.R. DEEPAK

**R. Kaushik**  
BRIDGETOWN (BARBADOS)

**A**fter smashing two successive fours off Arshdeep Singh, Naseem Shah put his head down and dejectedly, reluctantly completed a single, off the last ball of the contest. As he looked up, the tears streaming down his cheeks were visible. A familiar, unwelcome foe - cold, cruel defeat - had wrapped him in its embrace; it was all just too much for Pakistan's express fast bowler.

The setting was the Nassau County International Cricket Stadium, but it might well have been SuperSport Park in Centurion or Old Trafford in Manchester, the MCG in Melbourne or the Wanderers in Johannesburg, venues where Pakistan has tilted at Indian windmills in cricket World Cups - of the 50- and 20-over varieties - and come off second best.

India holds a perfect 8-0 record in the 50-over format, while last fortnight's six-run heist in New York was its seventh win in eight face-offs in T20 World Cups. Pakistan's sole victory, by a commanding ten wickets in Dubai in October 2021, is an aberration, no matter how comprehensive it might be, no matter that it catalysed the end of the management era of Virat Kohli and Ravi Shastri in a depressing morass of doom and gloom.

The New York loss was especially galling for multifarious reasons. Pakistan's target was 120, numerically minuscule but worth several more on a treacherous surface. It was still well within reach of a good batting line-up against an inarguably fantastic bowling attack led expertly by Jasprit Bumrah. No matter the conditions, top teams would expect, and be expected, to get the job done even against other top teams eight times out of ten, if not more. This was one that got away, India's stranglehold that took it home helped along by tameness, timidity and lameness, traits one doesn't always associate with Pakistan cricket.

**A red, white, and blue humbling**  
What made the defeat even more depressing, if that was possible, was the tournament context. It was Pakistan's second consecutive loss and, even with two matches still to play, the Men in Green's future was no longer in their own hands. How could it be, when they had allowed their nerves to get the better of them and been schooled by novices United States in their opening fixture?

As far as upsets go, this must rank as among the most famous in sporting history. A team of part-timers, as an

American with no more than passing interest in cricket put it, felling the former champions. David coming swinging and connecting with hefty punches to send Goliath sprawling. A software engineer coding the impossible, a local talent honed overseas shaking up the established order. It was unforgettable drama staged in the theatre that is the T20 landscape on the greatest stage there is in the cricket world. How could it not exhilarate? How could it not sting?

The two Super Overs showcased the best and worst of 20-over cricket. Each was sent down by a left-arm seamer. In the green corner was Mohammad Amir, a former teenage prodigy whose career path took an unexpectedly dark turn owing to indiscretions that were only partially excused because of his influential age at the time of his infractions. In the red, blue and white corner was Saurabh Netravalkar, an international when also in his teens, but at the junior level. At an age when Amir was counting the damage of his spot-fixing follies, Netravalkar was playing for India's Under-19 side, including under KL Rahul at the World Cup in New Zealand in 2010. After a solitary Ranji Trophy appearance for Mumbai, Netravalkar realised that cricketing ambition might not be matched by commensurate climbs up the ladder, so he made the move west in search of greener professional pastures. Until destiny, and the US, gave him what India couldn't - an international cap.

Amir went first in the Super Over after USA had taken 11 off the last three balls of regulation play, delivered by Haris Rauf, to push the match into the decider in Dallas. Amir, experienced Amir, nerveless Amir, incredibly gifted Amir. By the time he was done with an over that seemed to last an eternity, he had conceded 18, but only one boundary, a four. Incredible? Indeed. Seven runs came through wides and overthrow wides. Was this an impostor?

United States turned to Netravalkar for a miracle, and he obliged. Without any show of pressure or anxiety. Maybe he didn't feel the pressure because no one expected anything other than a Pakistan victory, but how could he not feel the pressure stemming from pride in performance? In an admirable show of control and courage, he kept Pakistan at bay. Comfortably, at that. No stutter to the crease, no nervy half-tracker, no sweaty palms. This was sensational stuff. Was he an impostor, too?

The genesis of Pakistan's first-round elimination from the T20 World Cup lies

in that fateful night in Dallas. Now, it's time to apply salve, hope the wounds heal in quick time, and somehow find the wherewithal and resilience to address and overcome the mental scarring. After all, that will determine how the future unravels.

**More ebb than flow**  
Such has been Pakistan's lot - and yo-yoing performances - over the years that they have forever been adjectivised with 'explosive', 'unpredictable', 'mercurial'. Not all these are used charitably or complimentarily. Pakistan has often been its worst enemy, though the Men in Green have also found ways and means to rouse themselves when it came to the crunch because they were blessed with strong leaders, none more so than the incomparable Imran Khan. Now, there is a massive leadership vacuum, even if Babar Azam is the designated captain.

Babar is an exceptional batter, especially in the two longer formats, but he is no inspirational leader or a tactical genius. From all accounts, he is a very nice person, and being nice and aggressive don't have to be mutually exclusive, but he doesn't command attention on the field, he doesn't have the swagger of a general, he doesn't stride around like a colossus. He may not so much be a captain by consensus, and one might be doing him gross disservice by basing assumption on appearances if not for the fact that those closely associated with Pakistan cricket confirm that he isn't the brown trousers sort of leader.

It hasn't helped Pakistan's cause, at least at this World Cup, that heading into the competition, the team swapped captains like an ambidextrous shooter switching hands at a circus. Babar made way for Shaheen Shah Afridi made way for Babar in the months leading into the World Cup. The blame for that must lie at the feet of the decision-making group, those that pick and sack captains. It's hardly the most encouraging development when the team's best bowler is stripped of the captaincy not long before the biggest T20 competition in the universe though to his credit, Afridi has been nothing but the ultimate team man even if he hasn't had the returns to show for his efforts.

**Wildcard picks**  
Pakistan brought Amir and Imad Wasim out of the wilderness for the World Cup because of their exploits in the Caribbean Premier League and their familiarity with the conditions here, perhaps taking safe

passage to the Super Eights from Group A for granted. As it turned out, they didn't even make the trip to the Caribbean; their campaign was restricted to Dallas, New York and Fort Lauderdale. Had Amir and Imad delivered in the event of Pakistan progressing deep in the tournament, their recalls would have assumed proportions of a masterstroke. Now, they appear presumptuous and disrespectful of oppositions, even if that wasn't the intention.

In the aftermath of their humbling exit, question marks have been raised over other selection calls, including those involving Iftikhar Ahmad and Azam Khan, son of former skipper and wicketkeeper Moin. These are inevitable fallouts of a doomed campaign. Fingers are also being pointed at the conservative approach of Pakistan's batters, not least their openers, Babar and wicketkeeper Mohammad Rizwan. Conveniently overlooked is the fact that with much the same personnel and approach, Pakistan made it to the final of the last edition before losing a tight final to England at the MCG. But public memory is generally short, and nowhere is it shorter than in Pakistan, where a failed campaign is shrouded in an even more diabolical hue when it is accompanied by a loss to India.

Insiders whisper about fissures in the unit, but that's nothing new when it comes to Pakistan cricket, is it? At the best of times, they have been a house divided but somehow united in the common pursuit of cricketing glory. In Imran, Javed Miandad, Wasim Akram during his early days in that role, Inzamam-ul-Haq and Misbah-ul-Haq, they had strong and inspirational leaders -- some quiet and others outlandishly outspoken - who knew what it took to keep an outfit together and how to get their colleagues to set personal differences aside.

Pakistan team players' obsession with social media, and their compulsive reactions to the venom spewed therein, hasn't helped either. Several decisions are influenced, it is said off-handedly by those who claim to be in the know, by popular opinion, which can't be a healthy development if it is true. Pakistan is ranked seventh in the ICC T20I rankings, fourth in the ODI charts, sixth when it comes to Test cricket and currently occupy the fifth position in the World Test Championship points table. These don't necessarily point to a team in terminal decline, but remedial measures are required, immediately, if a gradual upward climb is to materialise.

## THE GIST

▼ The reverse against India was Pakistan's second consecutive loss in the tournament and, even with two matches to play, the Men in Green's future was no longer in their hands

▼ It hasn't helped Pakistan's cause, at least at this World Cup, that heading into the competition, the team swapped captains like an ambidextrous shooter switching hands at a circus

▼ Pakistan is ranked seventh in the ICC T20I rankings, fourth in the ODI charts, sixth in Tests and currently occupies the fifth spot in the World Test Championship table

# Nuclear study provides major update on plutonium isotope fission

Researchers have reported the results of the first attempt to measure the PFNS of induced fission in Pu-240 with neutrons of energy greater than 0.85 MeV. They found significant deviations from values predicted by models, with implications for reactor design, radiation shielding, and nuclear medicine

Vasudevan Mukunth

**I**n March 4 this year, India stepped on the threshold of the second stage of its nuclear power programme when engineers started the core-loading process of the prototype fast breeder reactor (PFBR) at the Madras Atomic Power Station, Kalpakkam. While the first stage used uranium isotopes as nuclear fuel in pressurised heavy-water reactors to produce plutonium-239 (Pu-239) and energy, the second stage is more concerned with plutonium fission.

When a Pu-239 nucleus captures a neutron, it has a 27-38% chance of becoming Pu-240 instead of undergoing fission. It is thus present in many nuclear reactors and in the fallout of nuclear weapon tests. When Pu-240 captures a neutron, it most often turns into Pu-241. On the off chance it does undergo fission, however, there is a significant amount of uncertainty about the energy carried away by its fission products. Researchers currently use models that incorporate several complicated calculations based on theory to estimate the output.

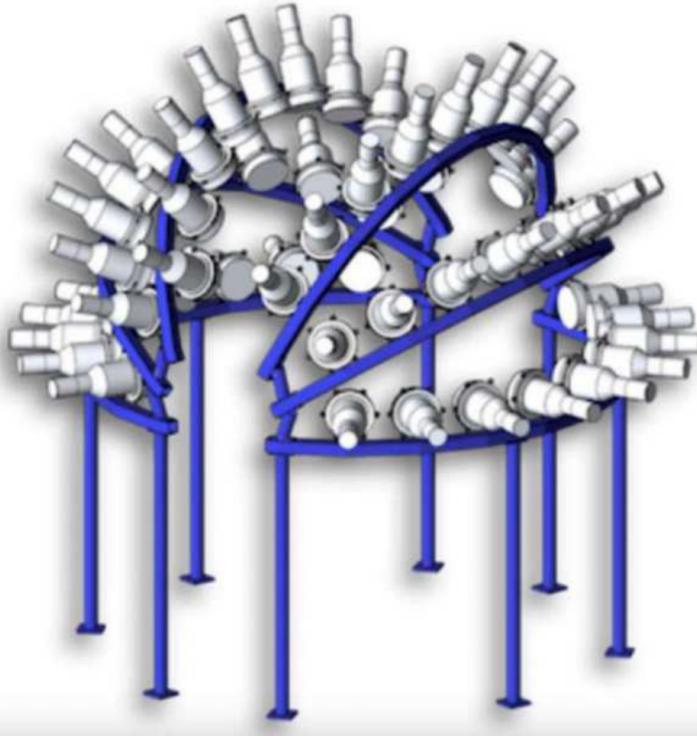
## Only the second time

A part of the fission energy carried away by neutrons is called the prompt fission neutron spectrum (PFNS). The 'prompt' stands for neutrons a Pu-240 nucleus might emit right after it has captured a neutron with enough energy to destabilise it, but before the nucleus has reached a stable (or equilibrium) state.

So far there has only been one study that attempted to study the PFNS of induced fission in Pu-240, where neutrons that bombarded the Pu-240 nuclei had an energy of 0.85 mega-electron-volt (MeV). Recently, researchers in the U.S. reported only the second attempt ever to measure the PFNS of induced fission in Pu-240, and the first to use neutrons of energy greater than 0.85 MeV.

Their findings, reported in the journal *Physical Review C* on June 13, note significant differences between the predicted and the measured PFNS after induced fission. This information will be useful for researchers in various fields, from reactor designers to practitioners of nuclear medicine.

"The PFBR uses plutonium recovered from CANDU spent fuel and so will contain ample quantities of Pu-240. And if the spent fuel arising from the PFBR is reprocessed, that too will contain Pu-240," M.V. Ramana, a professor at the University of British Columbia, told *The Hindu*. "Therefore any new information



A computer-generated rendering of the liquid scintillator detector system at LANSCE. The Pu-240 sample is located at the centre and neutrons intended to bombard the sample enter from the bottom left side. U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

about how Pu-240 behaves will be relevant."

CANDU is a Canadian design for pressurised heavy-water reactors, such as those India uses for its first stage.

## A profile of Pu-240

Pu-239 is produced when U-238 is exposed to neutrons of certain energy in a reactor. Because Pu-239 captures neutrons to become Pu-240 at a fixed rate, Pu-239 left in the reactor for a certain duration will accumulate a predictable quantity of Pu-240. The two isotopes are hard to separate, so as Pu-240 builds up, the spent fuel is pulled out.

Pu-240 undergoes spontaneous fission, i.e. without 'external' neutrons striking it first, and emits alpha particles. For these reasons, the isotope is considered a contaminant of weapons-grade plutonium, where its composition by weight is restricted to under 7%. There are some ways to use higher quantities of Pu-240 to build a nuclear weapon, however.

Generally, if a mass of plutonium



When a Pu-239 nucleus captures a neutron, it has a 27-38% chance of becoming Pu-240 instead of undergoing fission. It is thus present in many nuclear reactors and in the fallout of nuclear weapon tests

contains more than 19% of Pu-240, it is considered to be reactor-grade rather than weapons-grade.

## The test setup

The new findings are based on a test conducted by researchers at the Los Alamos Neutron Science Centre (LANSCE) in the U.S. They struck a tungsten disc with pulses of protons, which produced neutrons of energy 0.01-800 MeV. Those neutrons moving 15 degrees to the left of the proton beam were redirected to a chamber containing 99.875% pure Pu-240.

An array of liquid scintillators –

substances that emit flashes of light when struck by energetic particles – arranged around the Pu-240 sample tracked its output. The Pu-240 weighed all of 20 milligrams; the researchers wrote in their paper that they used such a small sample to minimise the amount of alpha particles emitted.

With this setup, the researchers measured the energies of the neutrons emitted by the sample as well as of other fission products.

Because they were interested in particles of a specific origin (neutron-induced fission), extracting the corresponding PFNS data from the overall data required the researchers to carefully subtract contributions from spontaneous fission, alpha particles, and other sources. After doing so, they reported their analysis for incident neutrons of energies 1-20 MeV.

## Updating nuclear data libraries

In addition to deviations between PFNS predicted by models and those observed in the test, the researchers also reported a higher-than-expected rate of second-chance fission of Pu-240: when a nucleus isn't fissionable but becomes so after losing a neutron. They also reported finding signs of "a smaller contribution from third-chance fission" but added that this "was difficult to observe in the data directly".

Models that predict the outputs of nuclear reactions are based on data libraries pieced together from various experiments, reactor operation records, simulations, and other sources. For example, applications of the ENDF library prepared by the U.S. National Nuclear Data Centre include research on nuclear reactors, radiation shielding design, calculating radiation dose in nuclear medicine, investigating the trafficking of nuclear materials, and to understand the origins of elements in the universe. Other such libraries are JEFF-3.3, prepared by the OECD's Nuclear Energy Agency, and JENDL-5.0, by the Japan Atomic Energy Agency.

The PFNS paper concluded that only the JENDL-5.0 library included "both multi-chance fission and pre-equilibrium neutron emission processes" and that the ENDF/B-VIII.0 and JEFF-3.3 libraries "contain multi-chance fission but not pre-equilibrium". "However," it continued, "there are also clear differences observed in the [energy levels] relating to the magnitude of second-chance fission in the data, as well as a possible energy shift in the thresholds relating to the pre-equilibrium neutron emission process preceding fission."

## THE GIST

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## BIG SHOT



A Long March-2C rocket carrying the Space Variable Objects Monitor (SVOM), a satellite developed by China and France, takes off in Sichuan province of China on Saturday. SVOM will study gamma-ray bursts. Shortly after launch, a booster from the rocket dropped over a populated area in Guizhou province as people ran for cover. VIA REUTERS

## WHAT IS IT?

# Complex PTSD: When trauma persists...

Karthik Vinod

Around 4% of the world's population has suffered post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) at some point, according to the World Health Organisation (WHO).

PTSD is often associated with war veterans, survivors of sexual violence and typically anybody who has lived through a life-threatening situation. They often experience anxiety, flashbacks, and nightmares. But health workers have also recorded PTSD symptoms among people who have suffered repeated bullying, emotional abuse, and/or neglect. These individuals include children bullied or gaslighted since a young age and someone who has suffered domestic abuse for many years. They are said to have complex PTSD, or cPTSD.

For these individuals, flashbacks and nightmares are only the tip of the iceberg of symptoms. As a result of the lack of a nourishing living environment, they have been known to develop a crippled sense of self. Apart from anxiety issues rooted in a negative self-image and/or issues with self-confidence, they also display a difficulty trusting other people and trouble maintaining friendships or romantic relationships.

cPTSD was listed as a standalone



cPTSD was listed as a standalone diagnosis in the 11th edition of the International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems in 2018 ADRIAN SWANCAR/UNSPASH

diagnosis in the 11th edition of the International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems, or ICD-11, in 2018. In 2019, the WHO also recognised cPTSD as a separate mental health disorder.

We don't yet know how prevalent cPTSD is in the general population. Researchers have estimated it is 1-8%.

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