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**SBI**

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# Classifieds

## LIFE MADE SIMPLE

# Matrimonial

BRINGING PEOPLE TOGETHER

## BRIDEGROOMS WANTED

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#### BRIDEGROOMS WANTED

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#### BRIDES & GROOMS WANTED

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#### WEDDING ARRANGEMENTS

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IRELAND BASED Tamil SW Engr Google 35, Resident permit holder seeks suitable grooms IT/Software willing to relocate. Caste no bar. arivisun@gmail.com.

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ATTRACTIVE, FAMILY-ORIENTED, 28, 57", Manchester-educated, UAE-based, upper-middle-class Malayalee & Catholic. Seeking accomplished, open-minded, compatible groom. Religion & community no bar. Call 9345634365.

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**CHAMPIONS OF THE WORLD**

# India scripts incredible comeback, wins title

Rohit's men rise to the occasion in summit clash | South Africa loses the plot from the brink of victory | After Kohli-Axar's heroics, Bumrah & Hardik seal it



**Long wait ends:** India won an ICC title after a 11-year drought, its last triumph coming in the 2013 Champions Trophy. K.R. DEEPAK

**Ashwin Achal**  
BRIDGETOWN (BARBADOS)

For a brief moment, it looked like India would trip over at the final hurdle once again. Could it be another case of 'so near yet so far'?

In the summit clash of the ICC Men's T20 World Cup here on Saturday, South Africa was in cruise mode. The Proteas needed just 30 off 30 balls to win their maiden World crown. The Indians, however, were unwilling to give in. Hardik Pandya rose to the occasion with the crucial wicket of Heinrich Klaasen, who was threatening to run away with the game. Jasprit Bumrah choked the batters with a tight 18th over before Arshdeep Singh kept the batters on a leash in the penultimate over. With 16 required off the final over, Suryakumar Yadav took a sensational catch at long-off to leave David Miller and South Africa stunned. Hardik kept his cool to fashion a seven-run win. Emotions spilled over when the triumph was completed. Hardik couldn't hold back his tears nor could the Indian fans who thronged the Kensington Oval. At the other end of the emotional spectrum, the South Africans were shattered. The skies opened up almost immediately after India's incredible victory. Under the showers, Rohit Sharma's men soaked with pride.

**MORE REPORTS ON**  
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# CBI conducts searches in Gujarat in NEET leak case; one more arrested

**The Hindu Bureau**  
PATNA/DELHI

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) on Saturday searched multiple locations in Gujarat as part of its probe into an alleged conspiracy to help 30 students in the recently held National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test for undergraduate medical colleges at a Godhra examination centre. On Friday, the agency also arrested one more accused in the NEET question paper leak case in Jharkhand.

The searches were carried out in places linked to the accused persons and suspects in Godhra, Ahmedabad, Kheda, and Anand districts of Gujarat.

The accused arrested in the paper leak case on Friday evening was identified as Jamaluddin, a journalist working for a Hindi newspaper in Hazaribagh in Jharkhand. According to the agency, on the day of the examination, he assisted the Hazaribagh-based Oasis School principal Ahsanul Haque and vice-principal Imtiaz Alam, who were earlier arrested in the case. On Saturday, the CBI took the three, along with two other accused people, Manish Prakash and Ashutosh Kumar for a medical check-up.

It is alleged that Mr. Prakash and Mr. Kumar played a crucial role in arranging to rent the Learn Boys Hostel and Play School in Patna's Khemnichak locality, where the leaked question papers were allegedly distributed to the 20 to 25 candidates gathered there on the eve of the examination, so that they could memorise the answers overnight.

**Custody granted**  
The CBI has been granted the custody of the five accused for five days by a special court. Sources said that the agency may take all the accused to Delhi as part of the investigation.

The CBI team also visited several locations in Patna for spot verification along with Baldev Kumar alias Chintu and Mukesh Kumar, both residents of Nalanda in Bihar.

Mr. Baldev Kumar allegedly received the solved question paper of the NEET-UG exam on his mobile phone in PDF format, after which it was printed out using a wi-fi printer and distributed among the candidates to memorise the answers at the play school. Mr. Mukesh Kumar has been accused of facilitating the offence by picking up and dropping off the candidates after they memorised the answers.

The CBI is also on the lookout for Rocky, the nephew of the main accused Sanjiv Mukhiya.



**Arrested man identified as a journalist working for a Hindi newspaper in Jharkhand**



**Deputy Speaker poll: INDIA plans united front**

**NEW DELHI**  
The Opposition INDIA bloc is likely to field Faizabad MP Awadhesh Prasad for a possible election to the post of Deputy Speaker. The bloc has decided to present a united front to force a contest for the position. » Page 7



**Kejriwal sent to judicial custody till July 12**

**NEW DELHI**  
A Delhi court on Saturday sent CM Arvind Kejriwal to judicial custody till July 12 in a case filed by the CBI in connection with the excise policy of 2021-22. » Page 6



**Death toll in rain incidents rises to 11 in Capital**

**NEW DELHI**  
The number of those who died in rain-related incidents in the Capital rose to 11 on Saturday. » Page 2



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# JD(U) appoints Sanjay Jha as its working president, seeks special status for Bihar

**Amarnath Tewary**  
PATNA



The Janata Dal (United), Bihar's ruling party and a key National Democratic Alliance ally at the Centre, appointed party leader and Rajya Sabha member Sanjay Jha as its working president on Saturday at its national executive meet in Delhi. The party also passed a resolution reiterating its demand for special category status or a special package for Bihar.

Party sources told *The Hindu* that Mr. Jha was chosen as he "maintains a good relationship with the BJP and the JD(U)". He was earlier with the BJP before joining the JD(U) in 2012.

Known to be close to Bihar CM and JD(U) chief Nitish Kumar, Mr. Jha was instrumental in the party joining hands with the BJP again to form an NDA government in the State once more. "Our national party president has entrusted me with a big responsibility. We will try to work with ally BJP, maintaining more coordination," he told mediapersons in Delhi after his appointment.

**'Look into demand'**  
Mr. Jha, while crediting the Bihar CM for "no anti-incumbency" despite being at the helm for 19 years, hoped that the Central government would look into the JD(U)'s demand.

"Prime Minister Narendra Modi has always paid attention to Bihar and I do hope that the party's demand for special category status or a package for the State will be met," he said.

However, Congress leader Jairam Ramesh, in a post on X, wondered if the demand would be forceful enough. "Would (Bihar) Chief Minister dare to pass such a resolution from State's Cabinet as well? Would the Chief Minister of Bihar put this demand forcefully?" Mr. Ramesh said.

Hailing from Jhansi in Bihar's Madhubani district, Mr. Jha unsuccessfully contested the 2014 Lok Sabha election on a JD(U) ticket from Darbhanga against BJP's Kirti Azad.

Later, he was sent to the Bihar Legislative Council, and served thrice as Minister of State in the Water Resources Department in governments led by Mr. Kumar. He is widely regarded as the JD(U)'s Brahmin face in the State.

# Seeking reforms



Protesters attend a demonstration for a 'democratic, secular republic in Iran' in Berlin on Saturday, a day after the first round of the Islamic republic's presidential elections. The country is poised for a run-off between Masoud Pezeshkian and Saeed Jalili. AFP (REPORT ON PAGE 13)

# T.N. adopts Bill to enhance prison term, fine for illicit liquor crimes

**The Hindu Bureau**  
CHENNAI

The Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly on Saturday adopted a Bill that makes punishment more stringent for offences pertaining to prohibited liquor such as denatured spirits and methanol.

The Bill, which amends the Tamil Nadu Prohibition Act, 1937, was tabled in the House weeks after the Kallakurichi hooch tragedy in the State that claimed 65 lives.

**Life imprisonment**  
If there is a death due to consumption of illicit liquor or containing elements of prohibited liquor, the Bill proposes rigorous imprisonment for life with a fine of not less than ₹10 lakh for the accused.

The maximum term of rigorous imprisonment for certain other offences had been fixed at seven years with a penalty of ₹2 lakh to ₹3 lakh.

It had provided for confiscation of all movable assets that were used to commit the offences, and sealing of unlicensed places for liquor consumption.

Making the offences non-compoundable, the Bill's statement of objects and reasons said executive magistrates would be empowered to issue orders requiring those who "habitually commit" offences to execute bonds with sureties for a hefty amount.

The Bill explained the rationale behind the amendment, stating that the existing punishments "for heinous crimes, especially for offences related to manufacture, possession and sale of illicit liquor", were insufficient to put an end to the crimes and stop offenders.

State Minister for Finance Thangam Thennarasu suggested that the consent of the public prosecutor be obtained before granting bail to the accused in such offences. This was accepted by the members of the Assembly.

# Governor files defamation suit against Mamata

**The Hindu Bureau**  
KOLKATA

West Bengal Governor C.V. Ananda Bose on Friday moved the Calcutta High Court against Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, filing a defamation suit against her. The development came a day after Ms. Banerjee on Thursday said women do not feel safe visiting Raj Bhavan.

She made the remarks over the swearing-in of two newly elected Trinamool Congress MLAs who refused to go to Raj Bhavan for administration of oath.

**Row over oath-taking**  
"Why must everyone go to Raj Bhavan? The Governor can authorise the Speaker or Deputy Speaker, or attend the Assembly himself. Women have informed me that they do not feel safe visiting Raj Bhavan due to recent incidents reported there," the Chief Minister had said.

A woman employee had accused the Governor of harassment on May 2.

Addressing mediapersons at Raj Bhavan, Mr. Bose said Ms. Banerjee "has been hurting me, hurling abuses... I am suing her for defamation".

## AIIMS OTs damaged by downpour; Centre to blame, says Cong.

The Hindu Bureau  
NEW DELHI

Authorities of the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) on Saturday said they were working on a "war footing" to restore the services that were temporarily disrupted by the heavy downpour that lashed the Capital on Friday.

According to a notice released by the hospital, some operating theatres (OTs) were non-functional on Friday due to damage to the air conditioning and sewage in the walls. "...Hence, no case can be operated upon. Any patients coming to the emergency ward requiring surgery can be referred to Safdarjung Hospital or any other government hospital," Friday's notice read.

The Congress's Delhi unit had claimed that as many as nine OTs at the hospital had to be closed, resulting in the rescheduling of several surgeries. "The situation has exposed the lack of preparedness by the BJP government at the Centre in ensuring that a hospital as prestigious as AIIMS func-

**The hospital said it was working overtime to restore rain-affected services as soon as possible**

tions without any glitch," said Delhi Congress president Devender Yadav.

However, authorities said surgeries were only "temporarily shifted" to the Burn and Plastic ward on Saturday. "Surgeries have not been impacted. Neurosurgery was temporarily impacted because there was no electricity supply from the New Delhi Municipal Council, but it was functional by 6 p.m. on Friday and continued to function all night," said AIIMS media protocol in-charge Rima Dada.

Meanwhile, some OTs at the trauma centre were shut as the basement was flooded. "However, four life-threatening cases were taken up. The OTs were only shut over fears of a short-circuit, and will be reopened soon after electrical engineers give us the green signal," Ms. Dada said.

## Death toll in rain-linked incidents rises to 11 in monsoon-hit Capital

Bodies of three labourers pulled out of rubble of wall that collapsed at under-construction site in city's Vasant Vihar; four persons, including two boys, found drowned as rescuers look for trapped people; case lodged over electrocution death

Samridhi Tewari  
Satvika Mahajan  
NEW DELHI

The number of those who died in rain-related incidents in the Capital rose to 11 on Saturday, including three labourers whose bodies were pulled out from the debris of a wall that had collapsed at a construction site in Vasant Vihar.

According to officials, four deaths due to drowning were also reported from parts of the city.

The city had witnessed an unprecedented rainfall on Friday, the highest recorded in a span of 24 hours in June since 1936.

A Delhi Fire Services (DFS) official said those who died in the Vasant Vihar wall collapse were identified as Santosh Kumar Yadav, 19, Santosh Kumar, 20, and Dayaram, 45.

The official said cranes were used to clear the debris and water was pumped out of a foundation pit to recover the bo-



Rescuers removing debris of a wall that collapsed at an under-construction site in Delhi's Vasant Vihar, leading to the death of three labourers. SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

dies. The bodies were taken to Safdarjung Hospital.

A search operation was also conducted by teams of the National Disaster Response Force, Delhi Disaster Management Authority and civic agencies to ensure that no one else was trapped under the rubble.

Meanwhile, another official said among those who drowned was a 60-year-old resident of Badarpur. He drowned in a pool of water and the body was recovered from under the Okhla underpass.

Two young boys were also found drowned in a si-

milar way in Samaypur Badli near the Siraspur underpass, the police said. A senior police official said the boys seemed to have fallen into a pool of rainwater while taking a bath.

"We are checking all angles, including the electrocution angle. However, on-

ly a post-mortem could reveal the cause of the deaths," he said.

The fourth drowning incident was reported from Mahender Park near the Shalimar Bagh underpass, where a man was found dead.

Meanwhile, the police registered a case against unknown people under IPC Section 304A (death caused by negligence) over the death of a man who was electrocuted in Rohini's Prem Nagar.

Rajesh, 39, a resident of Shishmahal Enclave, was shifted to a hospital, where doctors declared him dead.

A friend of the deceased, Sandeep Kumar, said he had left for work at a factory in Bawana and since it was raining heavily, the roads were inundated.

"There are many shops covered with tin sheds. While walking in water, he tried to balance himself and held a pole connected to a bulb, leading to his death" he said.

## Delhi Metro saw increased footfall amid rain: DMRC

The Hindu Bureau  
NEW DELHI

The Delhi Metro ferried over 69 lakh passengers and operated without disruption at a punctuality rate of 99.95% on Friday despite the heavy rain in the Capital, said the Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) on Saturday.

On Friday, 69,36,425 passengers travelled on the metro. On Thursday, the figure stood at 62,58,072 passengers, a DMRC statement said.

"Therefore, on Friday, the Delhi Metro recorded an increase of almost seven lakh passengers, indicating that most people preferred to use the metro instead of their private vehicles or other modes of transport amid the heavy downpour," a DMRC spokesperson added.

Despite some hindrances caused by minor waterlogging outside station premises, the DMRC continued to provide regular services throughout the day even though road traffic was thrown completely out of gear, he said.

## Delhi govt. constitutes 3-member Ministers' panel to probe tree felling in Ridge area

The Hindu Bureau  
NEW DELHI

The Delhi government on Saturday formed a fact-finding committee of three Ministers over the felling of around 1,100 trees allegedly without permission by the Delhi Development Authority (DDA) in the Capital's Central Ridge area.

The committee comprising Ministers Atishi, Saurabh Bharadwaj and

Imran Hussain will submit its report to Forest Minister Gopal Rai, a statement said. It will further be submitted to the Supreme Court, which is seized of the matter and will be holding the next hearing over it on July 11.

Mr. Rai, in a statement, said, "A shocking incident has come to light from Chhatarpur, Satbari, that in February, the DDA violated all rules and cut 1,100 trees without permission

from any agency or government. The court is repeatedly asking the vice-chairperson of the DDA on whose orders 1,100 trees were cut illegally."

**'Notices ignored'**  
"The e-mails of DDA engineers reveal that the trees were cut on the verbal instructions of the Lieutenant-Governor," Mr. Rai claimed.

He said at a meeting of the Forest Department on

June 26, department officials told him that the DDA was issued notices on March 5 and 22 by them on whose orders 1,100 trees were cut illegally."

The Supreme Court had recently found the inability of the DDA to unearth information or official records to shed light on whether L-G V.K. Saxena ordered the cutting of trees in the protected area as sheer disingenuity. The L-G is the DDA Chairman.

## BJP, Cong. slam AAP over 'unpreparedness'

The Hindu Bureau  
NEW DELHI

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and Congress slammed the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) government on Saturday over its "failure to ensure a robust mechanism" to sufficiently equip the Capital for the ongoing monsoon.

"The AAP government is least bothered about the plight of Delhiites, who suffered an untold misery yesterday when the first monsoon downpour submerged the Capital and

caused many human casualties," said Delhi Congress president Devender Yadav, adding that the Congress had much earlier warned of waterlogging if drains weren't desilted on time.

Meanwhile, North West Delhi MP Yogender Chandoliya met the families of the two boys who drowned near Samaypur Badli, as well as the kin of the man who was electrocuted in Rohini.

"It is sad that at a time when Ministers need to work for the people, they

are busy giving statements supporting their jailed Chief Minister," he said.

Urban Development Minister Saurabh Bharadwaj visited waterlogged areas on Saturday, including East Kidwai Nagar and Golf Links, and coordinated with various departments to address the problems faced by residents. A team from Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's office was also sent to Golf Links, and the rainwater, which had entered people's homes, was removed by New Delhi Municipal Council staff by

4 a.m., said officials.

**'Desilt drains urgently'**  
Lieutenant-Governor V.K. Saxena on Saturday inspected some of the worst-affected areas in Delhi, including Taimur Nagar, Barapulla, Tilak Bridge, Bharti Nagar and Golf Links, and directed authorities to carry out the desilting of drains "on a war footing", said Raj Niwas officials. He also directed agencies to make the drainage system "foolproof" so as to avert the recurrence of such incidents in future.

**RANCHI MUNICIPAL CORPORATION**  
Kutchery, Ranchi 834001  
Contact No. : 0651-2211215, Fax: 06512211777  
email: support@ranchimunicipal.com, website: www.ranchimunicipal.com  
Letter No. : 926 Date: 29/06/2024  
**Notice for Cancellation of e-tender**  
Reference:- Tender notice No:-863, Date:- 20.06.2024  
Due to unavoidable reason very short notice inviting e-tender for "Plantation of tree plant along the road, water bodies and vacant land with maintenance for three years" is being cancelled.  
Sd/-  
**Additional Administrator,**  
Ranchi Municipal Corporation, Ranchi.  
PR NO- 327055  
PR 328197 Ranchi Municipal Corporation(24-25)D

**कार्यपालक अभियंता का कार्यालय, ग्रामीण कार्य विभाग कार्य प्रमंडल, लातेहार शुद्धि-पत्र**  
इस कार्यालय के द्वारा प्रकाशित ई-निविदा संख्या 02/2024-25/EE/RWD/LATEHAR जिसका PR No. - 326930REO (24-25)#D है, में कार्य समाप्ति की समयावधि 09 माह के स्थान पर 15 माह पढ़ा जाय। निविदा के शेष सभी शर्तें यथावत रहेगी।  
कार्यपालक अभियंता, ग्रामीण कार्य विभाग, कार्य प्रमंडल, लातेहार।  
PR.NO.328165 REO(24-25):D

**WESTERN RAILWAY**  
**E-AUCTION FOR THE CONTRACT OF LEASING OF PARCEL SLR**  
E-auction for the contract to lease out parcel SLR in trains originating from Mumbai Division has been invited. The catalogue has already been published on IREPS website, the details are furnished as under:  
**Type of contract: Parcel, Category: Parcel SLR, Contract period: 2 years.**  
1. Auction catalogue no.: MMCT-PLS-24-21  
Lot No.  
22945-SLR-R1-MMCT-OKHA-24-1 22921-SLR-R1-BDTS-GKP-23-1  
22917-SLR-F1-BDTS-HW-24-2 19037-SLR-R1-BDTS-BJU-24-1  
22945-SLR-F1-MMCT-OKHA-24-1  
Date & Time of e-Auction: e-auction for lot will start at 12.00 hrs on 08.07.2024. Initial cooling period is 30 minutes.  
2. Auction catalogue no.: MMCT-PLS-24-22  
Lot No.  
12490-SLR-R1-DDR-BKN-24-1 14808-SLR-R1-DDR-JU-24-1  
12935-SLR-R1-BDTS-ST-24-1 12989-SLR-R1-DDR-AII-24-2  
19037-SLR-F1-BDTS-BJU-24-1  
Date & Time of e-Auction: e-auction for lot will start at 12.00 hrs on 09.07.2024. Initial cooling period is 30 minutes.  
Note: Prospective bidders are requested to visit e-Auction leasing module on IREPS website (www.ireps.gov.in).  
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**HIMACHAL PRADESH PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT**  
**INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB)**  
**(E-Procurement Module)**  
The Executive Engineer, Tissa Division, HPPWD Tissa H.P. on behalf of Governor of H.P. invites the percentage Rate bids, in electronic tendering system, from the eligible class of contractors registered with HPPWD for the works as detailed in the table.  

Sr. No.	Name of work	Estimated Cost (Rs.)	Earnest Money (Rs.)	Cost of tender form (Rs.)	Class	Completion period
1.	Construction of Lader to Cheeh road. (SH- Providing 4.00 mtr span culvert at Rd 6/390 alongwith wing walls.)	2023328.10	40000.00	500.00	C/D- Class	3 Months
2.	Restoration of damages due to laying of OFC on Chamba Tissa road Km 32/250 to 48/0 (SH- Improvement of curves by formation cutting between Rd 40/050 to 40/085 & 40/170 to 40/410)	2660557.36	53000.00	1500	C/D- Class	3 Months
3.	Construction of Shalwin to Padhroru road. (SH- Providing 4.00 mtr span culvert at Rd 0/195 alongwith wing walls)	2428733.00	49000.00	500	C/D- Class	3 Months
4.	MT & C/D work to Village Vediyali KM 0/0 to 1/600 (SH: C/o 900mm dia Hume Pipe culvert at RD 0/855 & 1/080 alongwith wings Walls)	990058.70	19810.00	350.00	D and C	3 Months

  
1.KEY DATES: 1.Starting Date for downloading 02-07-2024 at 10.00 AM. 2. Deadline for submission of Bid 10-07-2024 at 11.00 AM. 3. Date of Technical bid opening 10-07-2024 at 11.30 AM. The undersigned has right to extend or cancel the bids without declaring any reasons there-of. The Bidders are advised to note other details of tenders from the department website www.hptenders.gov.in  
Tissa Division, HPPWD Tissa, Pin-176316Email:ee@tissadiv.hppwd.gov.in  
On behalf of Governor of Himachal Pradesh  
HP / 0471/24-25

**HIMACHAL PRADESH PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT**  
**e-mail ee-roh-hp@nic.in E-Procurement Notice**  
**INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB)**  
The Executive Engineer HPPWD Rohru Distt Shimla H.P. on behalf of Governor of H.P. invites item rate, bids, in electronic tendering system, in 2 cover system for the under mentioned work from the eligible and approved contractors/firms registered with H.P.PWD Department.  

Sr. No.	Name of work	Estimated Cost (Rs)	Starting date for downloading Bid	Earnest money	Deadline for submission of Bid.
1.	C/o Govt I.T.I building at Chirgaon in tehsil Chirgaon (65646345/- [01.07.2024 1312927/08.07.2024 Distt Shimla H.P. (SH- C/o Building Portion with WS & SI rain Harvesting tank, site development etc)				

  
The Bidders are advised to note other details for tenders and letter No.PWD(B/A/3) 1/2020 dated 12.01.2023 issued by secretary (PW) to the Govt. of himachal Pradesh Public Works Department from the department website www.hptenders.gov.in, and any corrigendum will be uploaded on the website only. Executive Engineer HPPWD Division Rohru, Distt Shimla HP  
HP / 0472/24-25

**उत्तर प्रदेश आयुर्विज्ञान विश्वविद्यालय, सैफई, इटावा (उ.प्र.)**  
**Uttar Pradesh University of Medical Sciences, Saifai, Etawah - 206130 (U.P.)**  
Phone: 05688-276591 Website: www.upums.ac.in  
Ref 773/E/UPUMS/Recruitment Cell/(944-CD)/2024-25 Date: 28 June, 2024  
**Advertisement No. 38/UPUMS/Recruitment Cell/2024-25**  
**Computer Based Examination Through Online Medium 2024-25**  
विश्वविद्यालय के निम्नलिखित शैक्षणिक पदों हेतु भारतीय नागरिकों से आवेदन आमंत्रित किये जाते हैं—  
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www.upums.ac.in पर देखा जा सकता है।  
कुलसचिव

## Airport canopy collapse: victim's family considers legal action

Samridhi Tewari  
NEW DELHI

The family of a 45-year-old cab driver, who died after a portion of a canopy at Indira Gandhi International Airport collapsed amid heavy rainfall, said they are planning to file a case against those responsible for the incident.

On Friday, six persons had sustained injuries while Ramesh Kumar was killed. He was cremated at the Naharpur crematorium on Saturday.

The victim's son, Ravinder, said, "Criminal negligence is what killed him. Now even airports aren't safe. My father was at the airport after dropping a person. He was a hard-working man, who ensured there was enough for the family, but this kind of infrastructure at the airport killed him."

He said the family received his father's body around 12.30 p.m. on Saturday after a post-mortem.

"Our family is saddened

by the death and we are discussing whether we should file a case against those who have been involved in this kind of criminal negligence. It could have led to the death of many more people," Mr. Ravinder said.

**'Probe initiated'**  
Earlier, the police had registered a case under sections pertaining to death by negligence after the canopy collapse. Officials said a probe has been initiated into it.

## Police rescue siblings from kidnapper after 3-hour-long car chase

The Hindu Bureau  
NEW DELHI

Two siblings, who were kidnapped from a restaurant in east Delhi's Laxmi Nagar for a ransom of ₹50 lakh, were rescued safely after the Delhi police pursued the kidnapper for three hours, said officials on Saturday. However, the accused is yet to be arrested, said the police.

DCP (East) Apoorva Gupta said that they were informed of the incident late Friday night. A man pretending to be working at the parking lot had kidnapped the children – an

11-year-old girl and three-year-old boy – after their parents had gone to a sweets shop in Vikas Marg at Shakarpur for a few minutes. "He called the couple while driving the vehicle and demanded a ransom of ₹50 lakh," she added.

Two teams were formed and several police cars were deployed to nab the accused, and after a three-hour chase, the kidnapper abandoned the car with the children near Samaypur Badli and escaped. The police rescued the siblings and reunited them with their parents, said the DCP.

**CBI registers cases against 14 PSK officials in Mumbai**

**The Hindu Bureau**  
MUMBAI

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) registered 12 cases against 32 people accused of "collusive corruption" in Passport Seva Kendra centres in Mumbai. The CBI conducted search operations at 33 different locations in Mumbai and Nashik, according to a statement issued by the agency on Saturday.

Of the 32 against whom cases have been registered, there are 14 officials, including passport assistants and senior passport assistants, posted at PSKs in Lower Parel and Malad in Mumbai. The remaining 18 include passport facilitation agents and touts who are alleged to have corroborated with the accused officials.

The CBI has alleged that these officers were in regular contact with passport facilitation agents and conspired with them to obtain "undue advantage" in lieu of issuing passport based on inadequate and incomplete documents or by manipulating the personal particulars of the applicants.

The CBI searches led to recovery of several incriminating documents and digital evidence pertaining to passport documents.

The accused officers are alleged to have received lakhs of rupees in their own bank accounts or in the accounts of their family and friends from the accused passport facilitation agents. Further investigations are on, the CBI said.

**BJP will be wiped out from Jharkhand after the Assembly election, says Hemant Soren**

After his release from jail, the JMM leader addressed workers at his residence and alleged that he was falsely implicated by the BJP; he claimed that the Union government is afraid of the support that the JMM-led alliance enjoyed in the State

**Press Trust of India**  
RANCHI

Former Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren on Saturday slammed the BJP for allegedly hatching a conspiracy against him. He claimed that the BJP would be wiped out from the State after the Assembly election which is due later this year.

Addressing JMM workers at his residence, Mr. Soren said there would be a "revolt against those who plotted the conspiracy" to confine him in jail and "the people of Jharkhand would not spare the BJP".

Mr. Soren was released on Friday from the Birsa Munda Jail after the High Court granted him bail in a money laundering case, where he was *prima facie* not guilty, and there was no likelihood of the petitioner committing an offence on bail.

The JMM leader was arrested by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) on January 31 in connection with its investigation into the money laundering case linked to the illegal possession of 8.36 acres of land.

Mr. Soren alleged that the BJP has controlled all constitutional establish-



Former Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren meets Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM) supporters in Ranchi on Saturday. ANI

ments but people taught them a lesson in the recently concluded Lok Sabha election.

"It has come to my knowledge that they are making plans to prepone Assembly elections ... I dare them to conduct the elections any day they wish to...the BJP's dream of winning Assembly election in Jharkhand will be 'Mungerial ke hasen sapne'...the BJP is naming tribals as CMs in States but they are just rubber stamps," the JMM leader said.

Mr. Soren claimed that the pace of Jharkhand's progress was "deliberately slowed down" in the last five months as the BJP was

"afraid" of the popularity of the JMM-led alliance which had taken welfare measures for the tribals, the poor people and the downtrodden.

"The BJP has expertise in destroying the social fabric of India. It has divided people on the basis of caste, creed, religion and rich and poor," he alleged.

The JMM leader garlanded the statue of tribal icon Birsa Munda at Birsa Chowk after he was released from jail.

Mr. Soren said that the entire nation saw the way he was arrested by the ED and people are now reading the court order.

The court order read, "Though the conduct of

the petitioner has been sought to be highlighted by the Enforcement Directorate on account of the First Information Report instituted by the petitioner (Soren) against the officials of the ED but on an overall conspectus of the case, there is no likelihood of the petitioner committing a similar nature of the offence."

The order also mentions that the consequence of the findings recorded by the court "satisfies the condition as at section 45 of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002 to the effect that there is reason to believe that the petitioner is not guilty of the offence as alleged".

It also mentioned, "The overall conspectus of the case based on broad possibilities does not specifically or indirectly assign the petitioner to be involved in the acquisition and possession as well as concealment of 8.36 acres of land at Shantinagar, Bargain, Ranchi connected to the proceeds of crime."

Mr. Soren, soon after his release from jail, had said, "I was falsely implicated. A conspiracy was hatched against me and I was forced to spend five months in jail." He alleged

that those who raised their voice against the Central government were being suppressed.

"I will complete the task that I had undertaken, the war I waged," Mr. Soren said.

The JMM leader had been summoned multiple times by the ED before he was questioned at his residence and subsequently arrested on January 31.

**Cong-JMM meet**  
Senior Congress leader Ajoy Kumar met former Jharkhand CM Hemant Soren on Saturday in Ranchi and held deliberations on various issues, including the Assembly election in the State, slated to be held later this year.

Mr. Kumar, the Congress in-charge for Odisha, Tamil Nadu and Puducherry, said the focus of the INDIA bloc was to defeat the BJP in the Assembly election.

According to a statement, he said the alliance was working in a coordinated manner in the State and assured that it will be strengthened further.

He said he was hopeful that the people of the country would give a proper response to the BJP at an appropriate time.

**Talk of changing Karnataka CM will invite action: DKS**

**The Hindu Bureau**  
BENGALURU

Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar on Saturday warned that notices would be issued and disciplinary action taken against those party leaders who publicly speak about the change of the Chief Minister or creation of additional posts of Deputy Chief Minister.

Speaking to reporters at his residence, Mr. Shivakumar, who is also Karnataka Pradesh Congress Committee (KPCC) president, said, "Anyone issuing public statements on the change of Chief Minister or Deputy Chief Minister will face disciplinary action from the AICC and the KPCC."

"Discipline is paramount for the party. We have worked hard to bring the party to power, no one should shoot their mouth off on this issue," he added.

Soon after returning from Delhi, Mr. Shivakumar said, "AICC president Mallikarjun Kharge, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, and I held a meeting in Delhi and decided that everyone has to work for the party. Ministers, MLAs, and swamijis should not speak about party matters."

This statement comes in the backdrop of Vishwa Vokkaligara Mahasamsthana Math seer Chandrashekhara Swami publicly asking Mr. Siddaramaiah to



Deputy CM D.K. Shivakumar addressing the media in front of his house in Bengaluru.

give up his post to Mr. Shivakumar, during Kempe Gowda Jayanti celebrations recently.

Prior to this, a few Ministers, particularly K.N. Rajanna had been demanding the creation of additional posts of Deputy Chief Minister to give representation to other communities, in a move to undermine Mr. Shivakumar, who is currently the only one in the post and belongs to the Vokkaliga community.

On Saturday, when asked if there was a discussion with the high command on the issue of the change of Chief Minister or creation of more Deputy Chief Minister posts, Mr. Shivakumar said, "There were no discussions with the high command on the matter. The high command will evaluate my performance and take a suitable decision. Let's put an end to these speculations."

**In letter to govt., BATL asks not to take over missile unit's land**

**The Hindu Bureau**  
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

The management and trade unions of the BrahMos Aerospace Thiruvananthapuram Ltd (BATL) has expressed concern over the move to take over the missile unit's land for the expansion of the Thiruvananthapuram international airport.

The BATL management and the unions have urged the State government to seek other options for the airport's development without disturbing the Chakka-based BATL, a wholly owned subsidiary of the Indo-Russian JV BrahMos Aerospace Pvt Ltd (BAPL) under the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).

The proposal to cleave off 4.557 acres of BATL land will adversely impact

critical manufacturing and integration facilities in use for "significant national programmes for defence, aerospace and nuclear sectors," BATL Managing Director A. Joseph observed in a May 20 letter to Biju Prabhakar, Secretary, Transport (Aviation), Government of Kerala.

Further, it would impact the jobs of close to 1,000 employees and their families, he said. "Large extent of land is mentioned in the sketch from BrahMos side for airport, which will impact the very existence and functioning of the company. The above requirement will disturb the operations of the company drastically," he had noted.

Both Left and Congress-backed unions at BATL have echoed the sentiment, pointing out that the land take over would hobble the company's plans.

**Seven die in car crash**

**The Hindu Bureau**  
MUMBAI

Seven people were killed on the spot after two cars collided on the Samruddhi Maharamarg, also called Mumbai-Nagpur Expressway in Maharashtra's Jalna district late on Friday night. The mishap happened after one car entered the Expressway from the wrong side. Four of the victims are from Malad in Mumbai.

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Sr. No : 1, Tender No. : 04244731, Brief Description: Primary Brake Beam Assy Escorts, Quantity : 285 Nos, Published on/ time : 24.06.24/11:55:13, Closing on : 25.07.24

Sr. No : 2, Tender No. : 06245056, Brief Description: Supply, installation wiring, testing & commissioning of dual redundant arrangement of UFSBI, Quantity : 36 Pairs, Published on / time : 24.06.24/17:52:14, Closing on : 22.07.24

Sr. No : 3, Tender No. : 04244838, Brief Description: Axle Box Pivot Bush, Quantity : 14345 Nos, Published on / time : 24.06.24/17:34:33, Closing on : 22.07.24

Sr. No : 4, Tender No. : 04244396, Brief Description: Wheel Set Earthing Equipment, Quantity : 1862 Set, Published on / time : 24.06.24/17:35:52, Closing on : 29.07.24

Sr. No : 5, Tender No. : 07245042, Brief Description: Manufacture & Supply of 60 kg Special Fish Plate Glued insulated Rail Joint, Quantity : 2396 Nos, Published on / time : 25.06.24/16:47:20, Closing on : 22.07.24

Sr. No : 6, Tender No. : 06242403, Brief Description: Magneto Telephone, Quantity : 5240 Nos, Published on / time : 24.06.24/17:49:37, Closing on : 22.07.24

Sr. No : 7, Tender No. : 11230003, Brief Description: Inhibited Mineral Insulating Oil shall, Quantity : 46167 Ltrs, Published on / time : 25.06.24/16:50:32, Closing on : 22.07.24

Sr. No : 8, Tender No. : 04240429, Brief Description: Inter car Gangway Mounting to RCF's, Quantity : 345 Nos, Published on / time : 25.06.24/16:41:46, Closing on : 25.07.24

Sr. No : 9, Tender No. : 04240209, Brief Description: Secondary Vertical Damper for LHB Non-AC coaches, Quantity : 2002 Nos, Published on / time : 25.06.24/16:16:14, Closing on : 05.08.24

Sr. No : 10, Tender No. : 04244851A, Brief Description: Secondary Lateral Damper, Quantity : 2299 Nos, Published on / time : 25.06.24/16:41:13, Closing on : 12.08.24

Sr. No : 11, Tender No. : 04244661, Brief Description: L-Type Non-asbestos Composition Brake Block, Quantity : 101924 Nos, Published on / time : 26.06.24/13:32:27, Closing on : 05.08.24

Sr. No : 12, Tender No. : 04244712, Brief Description: Air Brake Hose Coupling Feed Pipe, Quantity : 14865 Nos, Published on / time : 26.06.24/16:57:24, Closing on : 23.09.24

Sr. No : 13, Tender No. : 03243213, Brief Description: Gear case assy for WAG7 loco, Quantity : 284 Set, Published on / time : 27.06.24/15:45:41, Closing on : 05.08.24

Sr. No : 14, Tender No. : 03240118, Brief Description: Axle box assly, Complete with Roller Bearing for WAG7 loco, Quantity : 07 Set, Published on / time : 27.06.24/15:43:23, Closing on : 05.08.24

Sr. No : 15, Tender No. : 03244955, Brief Description: Overhauling kit for Control Portion, Quantity : 35 Set, Published on / time : 27.06.24/15:55:23, Closing on : 22.07.24

Participants are required to submit their offer only on-line through the web Portal of IREPS- www.ireps.gov.in before the closing date and time. Other details regarding Consignee and detailed description of stores are available in tender document in tender notice on the above portal. SMM-HQ PR/00599/HQ/STORE/IT/24-25/104

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E-tender are invited by Assistant Inspector General of Police, Special Branch (G) M.P., Bhopal on behalf of DGP MP Bhopal for the following item on website <https://mptenders.gov.in/nicgep/app/>-

S. No.	Name of Item(s)	Qty.	Tender Fees (Rs.)	EMD (Rs.)	Tender No.
1	Photo Identity Card Making System	02	3,000/-	1,50,000/-	1st Tender

- Cost of tender document (Tender Fee) is non refundable and cannot be exempted in any condition & must submit online through website <https://mptenders.gov.in/nicgep/app/>.
- Tender document can be download from the website of MP Police ([www.mppolice.gov.in](http://www.mppolice.gov.in))
- Bids shall be submitted online only at MP Tenders website: <https://mptenders.gov.in/nicgep/app/>
- Tender Schedule :

No.	Tender Activity	Tentative Date & Time
i	Submission of written queries -through e-mail: <a href="mailto:sec25-sb@mppolice.gov.in">sec25-sb@mppolice.gov.in</a>	07/07/2024 up to 1700 hrs.
ii	Pre Bid Meeting along with written queries	02/07/2024 at 1100 hrs.
iii	Bid Submission Start Date	10/07/2024 at 1000 hrs.
iv	Last date of online e-Tender submission	23/07/2024 up to 1600 hrs.
v	Bid will be opened on	24/07/2024 up to 1600 hrs.
vi	Demonstration from	31/07/2024 at 11.00 hrs.

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Sub : Recruitment to the backlog posts of Teachers in the University of Agricultural Sciences, Dharwad.  
Ref : University Notification No./R/Rectt/Adv.63/2024 dated 29.06.2024.  
The backlog posts of Teachers in the University of Agricultural Sciences, Dharwad are advertised for recruitment, vide University Notification referred above. The said notification along with all necessary information is accessible in the University's official website ([www.uasd.edu](http://www.uasd.edu)). Interested candidates may refer the University website for further details.  
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SUNDAY, JUN. 30  
RISE 05:27 SET 19:24  
RISE 00:43 SET 13:53  
MONDAY, JUL. 01  
RISE 05:28 SET 19:24  
RISE 01:18 SET 14:59  
TUESDAY, JUL. 02  
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Date: 24.06.2024  
Tender notice for the supplies to Chief Minister Breakfast Scheme was published in The Hindu on 23.06.2024. The last date and time of submission of tender document shall be read as 09.07.2024 upto 10.30 A.M. instead of 06.07.2024, 10.30 A.M. Interested parties in this tender shall login the tender portal for viewing the Corrigendum.  
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**NOTICE**  
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\*This is applicable to all Open (Domestic/Global) Tenders issued through e-procurement portal of CIL.

## IN BRIEF



## Waterlogging, cave-ins on Ram Path: six suspended

The Uttar Pradesh government has suspended six officials of civic agencies for gross negligence following road cave-ins and waterlogging at several sections of the newly built Ram Path in Ayodhya. About 15 bylanes and streets along the Ram Path were flooded after rain on June 23 and June 25. Even homes along the road went under water. Portions of the 14-km road stretch also caved in at more than a dozen places. The State government has also issued a notice to Ahmedabad-based contractor Bhuvan Infracom Pvt. Ltd. in this connection. PTI

## Cong. team in Bhopal to review defeat in LS polls in M.P.

A three-member fact-finding committee, headed by former Maharashtra CM Prithviraj Chavan, reached Bhopal on Saturday to review the causes for the defeat of the Congress in the Lok Sabha elections in Madhya Pradesh. The committee, comprising Saptagiri Ulaka and Jignesh Mevani also, is holding the first round of meetings on Saturday and Sunday. The team members will hold interactions with the party's LS candidates. State Congress president Jitu Patwari said the Congress performed poorly in four Lok Sabha elections and as many Assembly polls, except during 2018 when the party won more seats. "Until the disease is diagnosed and accepted, it cannot be cured honestly," he said. He added there will be changes on the basis of these findings to strengthen the organisation. The meetings will be held again on July 5 and 6 when the candidates and MLAs will be called. PTI

## Shinde govt. announces pilgrimage scheme for senior citizens of all faiths

The policy would help senior citizens who cannot undertake the journeys independently achieve their spiritual aspirations, announced the CM in response to a Shiv Sena legislator's request

Abhinav Deshpande  
MUMBAI

**M**aharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde on Saturday announced the *Mukhya Mantri Teerth Darshan Yojana*, a new pilgrimage scheme designed for senior citizens of all religions.

The scheme aims at helping elderly people who cannot visit pilgrimage sites on their own. "The *yojana* will serve senior citizens of all faiths. Maharashtra is the land of saints and every year many people visit the shrines. For this, a comprehensive policy will be framed for the scheme, and the government will facilitate pilgrimages for senior citizens from all religions who cannot undertake the journeys independently," Mr. Shinde said in the Assembly.

He announced the scheme in response to a calling attention notice by Shiv Sena legislator Pratap Sarnaik, who said many senior citizens are unable to fulfil their pilgrimage dreams due to financial constraints, lack of companionship, or lack of infor-



Women tie rakhi to Maharashtra CM Eknath Shinde after the launch of Mukhya Mantri Majhi Ladki Bahin scheme at Vidhan Bhavan in Mumbai on Saturday. ANI

mation on how to proceed. "I urge the State government to launch a scheme that includes pilgrimage sites of all religions for senior citizens," he said.

Mr. Shinde said the scheme will be implemented through online applications.

Similar schemes exist in Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand, and Delhi. In Madhya Pradesh, the government provides one-time assistance to senior citizens above 60 years (with a 2-year relaxation for women) to visit a prescribed pilgrimage outside the State. Under this scheme,

and Thursdays – when the session is on. He said the decision was made to reduce crowding in the complex and alleviate the strain on the security and those ensuring the safety of the Chief Minister and the Council of Ministers.

## GR issued

Meanwhile, the government on Saturday issued a Government Resolution stating that beneficiaries of the *Mukhya Mantri Majhi Ladki Bahin Yojana*, a scheme to provide a monthly allowance of ₹1,500 to married, divorced and destitute women in the 21 to 60 age group, must have an annual family income not exceeding ₹2.5 lakh.

The scheme with an annual budgetary allocation of ₹46,000 crore, was announced by Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar, who also holds the Finance portfolio, during the additional Budget presented on Friday. It will be implemented from July 1. According to the GR, eligible women must have a bank account in their name, along with an Aadhaar or ration card and proof of domicile in the State.

Meanwhile, Speaker Rahul Narwekar announced that visitors would be allowed inside the Vidhan Bhavan premises only two days a week – Tuesdays

## BJP will contest Haryana election on its own: Shah

The Hindu Bureau  
CHANDIGARH

Stepping up its effort to retain power for the third consecutive time in Haryana, the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) on Saturday sounded the poll bugle with Union Home Minister Amit Shah chairing a meeting of State unit leaders and workers to chalk out the strategy for the count-down to the election.

Mr. Shah made it clear that the BJP will have no tie-up for the State Assembly polls which are due before October this year. The party, he added, would contest the election under the leadership of Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini, who earlier this year replaced then Chief Minister Manohar Lal.

Addressing party workers and leaders at the State unit's executive meeting in Panchkula, Mr. Shah asserted that the BJP will form the next government in Haryana with full majority on its own under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Mr. Saini.

He exhorted the party workers to make people aware of the work done by the BJP government in the last 10 years at the Centre as well as in the State. "The BJP government has carried out development works worth ₹2,70,000



Union Home Minister Amit Shah in Panchkula. ANI

crore in Haryana. The Modi government has made many impossible things possible in the country, including the construction of the Ram Temple in Ayodhya, abrogation of Article 370 and 35 in Jammu and Kashmir, sending a message to Pakistan by conducting surgical strikes, and implementing the new education policy in the country," Mr. Shah said.

Termining the Congress as a party of "cut, commission and corruption", Mr. Shah said that the Congress was incapable of driving the development in Haryana, even as he asked the BJP cadres to work towards ensuring the party's victory in the Assembly election with a two-third majority.

Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan, who is also the election in-charge for Haryana, was among other senior leaders who were present at the meeting.

## AAP stages nationwide stir against BJP, Central agencies over Kejriwal arrest

Satvika Mahajan  
NEW DELHI

The Aam Aadmi Party on Saturday staged a nationwide protest on Saturday against the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and Central investigative agencies against the "illegal" arrest of party national convener and Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal even as a Delhi court sent him to judicial custody till July 12 in the case filed by the CBI related to alleged corruption in the now-scrapped 2021-22 excise policy.

Condemning the Central government for "misusing" investigative agencies, AAP members and supporters attempted to march towards BJP offices in 21 States.

However, they were stopped by the police and detained in several States



AAP workers protesting near the BJP headquarters in New Delhi on Saturday. SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

including Telangana, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh and Jammu and Kashmir.

In the national capital, protesters hit the road raising slogans against the BJP and Prime Minister Narendra Modi, and carrying placards demanding a stop to the 'misuse' of CBI and ED, and seeking Mr. Kejriwal's release.

Party leaders, including national general secretary

(organisation) Sandeep Pathak, national general secretary Pankaj Gupta, Delhi unit convener Gopal Rai and Ministers Atishi and Imran Hussain, attended the protest. However, their plan to march to the BJP headquarters on Pandit Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Marg was foiled by the police.

In Mumbai, protesters were detained and an FIR

was registered for unlawful assembly against AAP workers, but they were let off later. In Ahmedabad, AAP workers sat on a dharna after the police prevented them from taking out a protest march.

"Until now, no sitting CM was ever incarcerated. But they picked up a CM elected with a huge majority and put him in jail," said Mr. Rai.

Blaming the Narendra Modi-led government at the Centre, Delhi Assembly Deputy Speaker Rakhi Birla said, "Delhi's son Arvind Kejriwal is in jail only because of the dirty and deep conspiracy of the Modi government."

Delhi BJP president Vinendra Sachdeva said the decision of a court to send Mr. Kejriwal to 14 days of judicial custody shows that the law is doing its work.

## 4 workers killed in accident at fireworks factory near Sattur in Tamil Nadu

The Hindu Bureau  
SATTUR

With the death of four persons in an explosion at a fireworks' manufacturing unit here on Saturday, there are now renewed demands to regulate the fireworks units and ensure that there is no further loss of life due to such accidents.

Virudhunagar Superintendent of Police, K. Ferozekhan Abdullah, said friction while mixing chemicals at the DRO-licensed unit could have triggered the explosion. All the four workers, including the manager of the unit, were killed on the spot. They have been identified as M. Rajkumar, 43, of Achchankulam; K. Marichamy, 40, of Nadu Soorangudi; M. Selvakumar, 35, and M. Mohan, 30,



A working shed of the fireworks' unit in Sattur that was razed in the explosion on Saturday. THE HINDU

from Chathrapatti.

Meanwhile, the watchman of the unit, K. Ramachandran, 60, was injured after debris, which were blown away in the explosion, hit him. Three working sheds of the unit were razed.

Sattur taluk police have booked the unit's license holder, Sahadevan, under different sections of the In-

dian Penal Code, including culpable homicide not amounting to murder, and provisions of the Indian Explosives Act. His son, Gurusamy Pandian, has been picked up for an inquiry.

Chief Minister M.K. Stalin has announced a compensation of ₹3 lakh each to the family of the deceased. Collector V.P. Jeya-

seelan handed over the compensation from the CM's Public Relief Fund.

Various precautionary measures were being taken by the district administration to avert such accidents. Four special teams have been formed to inspect fireworks units, and action is being taken against the violators, the Collector said.

## Licenses suspended

The licenses of 86 units, out of 439, that were found violating safety norms were suspended during the inspections in the last three months. Similarly, action has been initiated against 56 units found to be flouting safety measures during the inspection. Petroleum and Explosives Safety Organisation has ordered suspension of license of 12 units.

## PUCL demands release of its executive committee member, tribal activists, innocent villagers

The Hindu Bureau  
NEW DELHI

The People's Union For Civil Liberties (PUCL) on Saturday demanded the release of all tribal activists who have been arrested in Chhattisgarh's Bastar, including PUCL executive committee member Suneeta Pottam.

"Release all tribal activists and innocent villagers arrested in the last few years, including Sunita Pottam, Surju Tekam, and other Moolvasi Bahao Manch activists at the earliest. FIRs be lodged and police investigation be undertaken against the false

cases filed against all tribals including activists," it said.

It also demanding that FIRs be filed regarding several recent encounters with security forces listed by the organisation.

## Demands commission

It has also sought a judicial commission headed by a Supreme Court judge to enquire into those encounters; the creation of conditions for peace and security talks with the local population, Adivasi community, and the Communist Party of India (Maoist); an end to the targeting of democratic rights activists;

and the lifting of all restrictions on democratic movements.

In a statement, PUCL alleged that over the past six months, more than 150 people in Bastar were killed in counter insurgency operations by security forces. "We also are concerned at the indiscriminate arrests of activists, in particular 26-year-old Suneeta Pottam, a young Tribal activist associated with the PUCL, and Moolvasi Bachao Manch senior activist Surju Tekam and others who are raising their voice against the unchecked human rights violation in Bastar," it said.

## Coop bank scam: no ED notice yet arraigning CPI(M) as accused in Kerala, says Govindan

The Hindu Bureau  
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Communist Party of India (Marxist) Kerala secretary M.V. Govindan said in New Delhi that he was yet to receive any notice from the Enforcement Directorate (ED) about the agency's purported move to arraign the political outfit as an accused in the Karuvannur Service Cooperative Bank loan scam.

Mr. Govindan said anti-Left forces and the right-wing media attempted to lay down a smokescreen of lies to put the CPI(M) on the defence. He said the Central government ruthlessly used the ED to silence dissent. The CPI(M)



M.V. Govindan

was the latest victim of the Bharatiya Janata Party's political witch-hunt using Central enforcement agencies.

However, Mr. Govindan said the Central government would fail in its bid to

intimidate the CPI(M) into silence. He said the party had legal and political clarity in the Karuvannur case. Mr. Govindan said the CPI (M) would emerge unblemished and stronger.

He slammed the ED for acting as a law unto itself. The agency's actions were capricious, arbitrary, and devoid of any legal substance, Mr. Govindan said adding that the ED's intention was propaganda, not prosecution.

Party's Thrissur district committee secretary M.M. Varghese said he was unaware of the ED's move to name the party as an accused in the case. "I cannot take questions on developments still in the

realm of fiction," he added.

The CPI(M) seemed wary that the ED had earlier arraigned the Aam Aadmi Party as an accused in the Delhi liquor policy case.

## Under agency's scanner

The agency had already frozen several CPI(M) bank accounts and impounded a few of its properties in Thrissur. It also froze the bank account of CPI(M) legislator and party's State committee member A.C. Moideen and questioned him several times.

Other CPI(M) leaders, including P.K. Biju, were also under the agency's scanner.

The CPI(M) was also conscious of the political

fallout of the ED's efforts to cast the party leadership at the centre of the cooperative bank fraud. For one, the Left Democratic Front had emerged a distant third in the Irinjalakuda Assembly segment in the recently concluded Lok Sabha polls.

The Congress and the BJP exploited the alleged cooperative bank loan fraud to assail the CPI(M) and mar its public image in the State. Prime Minister Narendra Modi had used the scam as a major campaigning platform against the CPI(M) in Kerala and promised not to let the "perpetrators of the fraud on unsuspecting and poor depositors" go scot-free.



Govt. of Haryana

“दीनदयाल उपाध्याय जी ने हमें अंत्योदय का मार्ग दिखाया था। यानि जो समाज की आखिरी पंक्ति में हैं, उनका उदय। 21वीं सदी का भारत इसी विचार से प्रेरणा लेते हुए अंत्योदय के लिए काम कर रहा है। जो विकास के आखिरी पायदान पर है, उसे विकास के पहले पायदान पर लाने के लिए काम हो रहा है।”

- नरेन्द्र मोदी



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- Adhikaar Patras will also be distributed in 17 other districts **Ambala, Bhiwani, Charkhi Dadri, Faridabad, Fatehabad, Gurugram, Hisar, Jind, Jhajjar, Karnal, Kaithal, Kurukshetra, Mahendragarh, Rewari, Sirsa, Sonipat and Yamunanagar**

### Benefits distribution

to Beneficiaries  
under  
**Dr. B.R. Ambedkar  
Awas Navinikarn  
Yojana**

### State Level Program

Chief Guest

## Sh. Nayab Singh

Chief Minister, Haryana

August Presence

### Sh. Bishamber Singh

Minister of State (I.C.)  
for SEWA, Haryana

### Sh. Subhash Sudha

Minister of State (I.C.),  
Housing for All, Haryana

### Sh. Mahipal Dhanda

Minister of State (I.C.)  
Development & Panchayats, HaryanaFor more information  
regarding Adhikaar PatraContact : **0172-3520001**

or

Visit the website [www.hfa.haryana.gov.in](http://www.hfa.haryana.gov.in)

Date - June 30, 2024 | Time - 2 PM

Venue - Anaj Mandi, Panipat

To join the programme  
Scan the QR code



## Om Birla's comments on Emergency not apt: Pawar

Press Trust of India  
KOLHAPUR

Nationalist Congress Party (SP) president Sharad Pawar on Saturday said the reference to the Emergency made by Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla in his speech was not apt and did not suit the stature of his post. Soon after his election as Lok Sabha Speaker, Om Birla on Wednesday set off a firestorm by reading out a resolution condemning the imposition of the Emergency as an attack on the Constitution by the then-Prime Minister Indira Gandhi.

Mr. Pawar said, "The Speaker's reference to the Emergency in his address did not suit the stature of the post. It has been 50 years since the Emergency, Indira Gandhi is no longer alive. So why is the Speaker bringing up this issue now?" "The President's speech also had a brief mention of this issue. That was also not necessary," he said.

# INDIA bloc plans a united front for a possible Deputy Speaker election

It is still uncertain if the Modi government will fill the post in the current Lok Sabha; Opposition is likely to field Faizabad MP Awadhesh Prasad in case an election is held, though traditionally, the post goes to the single largest Opposition party

Sobhana K. Nair  
NEW DELHI

The Opposition is likely to field Faizabad MP and Samajwadi Party leader Awadhesh Prasad for a likely election to the post of Deputy Speaker. Learning from their experience during the Speaker's election, where differences between the Congress and the Trinamool Congress came to the fore, the Opposition has decided to present a united front to force a contest for the position.

Though constitutionally mandated, the 17th Lok Sabha functioned without a Deputy Speaker. Besides speculation, there has been no formal indication from the government that the position will be filled in the 18th Lok Sabha either.

Article 93 of the Constitution mandates that the Lok Sabha shall, "as soon



Awadhesh Prasad at the Parliament House complex during the first session of the 18th Lok Sabha on Wednesday. PTI

as may be", choose a member to be the Deputy Speaker. However, it does not provide a specific time frame.

**Consensus candidate**  
According to sources, the top leadership of the Congress, Trinamool and SP — the three leading parties of

the Opposition INDIA bloc — had informal talks to pick a consensus candidate who could send a strong message.

The leaders narrowed down their choice to Mr. Prasad, a nine-time MLA and first-time MP who hit the headlines for defeating the BJP's two-time MP Lal-

lu Singh in the Faizabad Lok Sabha constituency. The recently consecrated Ram Temple in Ayodhya, which the BJP had hoped would see them through to an easy majority, falls within this constituency.

"Mr. Prasad's victory symbolises the defeat of the BJP's Hindutva agenda. As a Dalit leader, his victory from a general seat was also an extremely significant moment in Indian political history," a top Opposition leader said. If the government does not make a move to appoint a Deputy Speaker before the first session of Parliament ends on July 3, the Opposition will write to the Lok Sabha Speaker on the issue, sources said.

A Deputy Speaker enjoys the same legislative powers as a Speaker. And in the absence of the Speaker due to death, illnesses or any other rea-

son, the Deputy Speaker assumes the administrative powers. It is parliamentary convention to elect a Deputy Speaker of the Lok Sabha from a party other than the ruling party to run an accountable democratic Parliament.

Traditionally, the position is reserved for the single largest Opposition party but not all governments have followed this norm. In 2014, in the first term of the Narendra Modi government, the post was accorded to Thambi Durai of the the BJP ally All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam. In 2004 and 2009, when the Congress-led UPA government was in power, Shiromani Akali Dal MP Charanjit Singh Atwal and BJP MP Kariya Munda held the position. During the Atal Bihari Vajpayee government, the Congress's P.M. Sayeed held the position.

## T.N. passes Bill to increase age limit of chief of SC/ST panel

The Hindu Bureau  
CHENNAI

The Tamil Nadu Assembly on Saturday approved an amendment to the State Commission for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Act, enhancing the age limit for the Chief of the Commission from 70 to 75 years.

Minister for Adi Dravidar and Tribal Welfare N. Kayalvizhi Selvaraj tabled the Bill. The change had been proposed to utilise the services of experienced former judges of the High Court. M. Senthil Selvan of the VCK demanded that the government consider including eminent persons from fields other than the judiciary for the post of chief of the panel.

The House passed a Bill to amend the Land Reforms (Fixation of Ceiling on Land) Act to promote gender equality, providing rights to unmarried women on a par with those of



Minister for Adi Dravidar and Tribal Welfare N. Kayalvizhi Selvaraj tabled the Bill. FILE PHOTO

unmarried men.

On the merger of village panchayats with urban local bodies, Minister for Municipal Administration K.N. Nehru told the House that a committee, comprising secretaries of his department and Rural Development, would hold public hearings. Later, the House adopted two Bills concerning urban local bodies. Ten other Bills were also passed and the Assembly adjourned *sine die*.

## BJP finalises plan to contest Maharashtra Assembly polls with Shiv Sena and NCP

Abhinav Deshpande  
MUMBAI

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) will contest the Maharashtra Assembly election with its allies, the Shiv Sena and the Nationalist Congress Party, and a road map for the same was outlined by the top leaders, said the party's Mumbai unit chief Ashish Shelar on Saturday.

The election for the 288-member State Assembly is scheduled for later this year. Union Ministers Bhupender Yadav and Ashwini Vaishnaw on Saturday met the party functionaries to discuss the road map for the polls, seat-sharing, strategies to strengthen the party, and how to address distress among Maratha

**Union Ministers met local leaders to discuss a road map on seat sharing, other key strategies**

and OBC communities, which significantly contributed to their loss in the Lok Sabha election. In the recent Lok Sabha election, the BJP's representation in Maharashtra decreased from 23 seats to nine. The ruling *Mahayuti* alliance bagged only 17 seats, way below its expectations. While the Opposition bloc Maha Vikas Aghadi, which has the Congress, the Uddhav Thackeray led Shiv Sena (UBT), and the NCP (SP) led by Sharad Pawar as partners, won 30 seats.

This meeting marked the first since Mr. Yadav and Mr. Vaishnaw were appointed incharge and co-incharge, respectively, for the State election. Union Minister Piyush Goyal, Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnis, the party's State unit chief Chandrashekhar Bawankule, Mr. Shelar and other key leaders from the State attended the meeting.

Mr. Shelar said that the budget, presented by Finance Minister Ajit Pawar on Friday, received widespread approval for its focus on women, farmers and youth. "We are confident of victory in the Assembly election alongside our allies. A road map for the same was discussed and finalised," he said, affirming

that no organisational changes were planned within the State unit.

He said that a proposal was passed appreciating the budget, which covers the welfare of all segments of society.

**Shah to visit Pune**  
Union Home Minister and senior BJP leader Amit Shah is expected to address a party meeting in Pune on July 14. According to Mr. Bawankule, nearly 4,500 party functionaries would attend the meeting.

"We have requested Amit Shah to address the meeting, and he has agreed to come to Pune. This meeting will be crucial ahead of the Maharashtra Assembly election," he said.

## Quota posts cannot be unreserved, U.P. government replies to Anupriya's letter

Ishita Mishra  
NEW DELHI

Days after Union Minister of State for Health and Family Welfare Anupriya Patel alleged bias against applicants from the Other Backward Classes (OBCs), Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs) in government jobs in Uttar Pradesh (U.P.), the Yogi Adityanath government in the State sent a detailed reply to her, explaining that re-

reservation posts remaining vacant after the selection process could not be converted to unreserved posts, as claimed by her.

Ms. Patel is the national president of the Apna Dal (Soneylal), an ally of the ruling BJP in U.P.

**'No personal details'**  
The government also said that applicants were given grades; no one was rejected with "not suitable" remarks; and the candidates' personal details were not shown to interviewers.

Sources said the government had taken the allegation seriously, and the Chief Minister's Office asked the department concerned to reply to the Union Minister.

In the reply sent to Ms. Patel, it was said that if candidates of the given categories did not clear the exam, then the UPPSC did not have the right to convert the resulting unfilled vacancies to any other category.

## Congress targets Modi over Adani Group's ties with Chinese firms

The Hindu Bureau  
NEW DELHI

The Congress on Saturday, citing a news report about the Adani Group selecting eight Chinese companies to assist its solar manufacturing project, questioned if the taxpayers' money should benefit the Chinese firms.

Slamming Prime Minister Narendra Modi in a post on X, Congress general secretary (organisation) Jairam Ramesh called for a strategy "to wean India of its dependence on China".

"The non-biological Prime Minister infamously

told the nation on June 19, 2020, after the Galwan clashes that *Na koi hamari seema mein ghus aaya hai, na hi koi ghusa hua hai* (Neither has anyone entered our borders, nor has anyone occupied territories). However, he shows no hesitation in liberally issuing visas to Chinese workers to help one of his *tempowallah* buddies," Mr. Ramesh said, tagging the newspaper report about Adani Solar trying to bring engineers from China.

Mr. Ramesh said these collaborations are happening in the name of *Atmanirbharata* (self-reliance).

**TIRUMALA TIRUPATI DEVASTHANAMS : TIRUPATI**  
O/o Chief Vigilance & Security Officer  
e-TENDER NOTICE  
Date: 28/06/2024

Sl. No.	Name of the work	Schedule Download	Last Date for bid submission
1.	Refilling of 611 Nos. Fire Fighting Extinguishers to Certain TTD Buildings at Tirumala along with Hydraulic Pressure Test, Refilling, Painting & Supply of spares for a period of one (01) year.	01-07-2024 @ 03.00 p.m.	22-07-2024 @ 12.00 p.m.

Tender Document can be downloaded from the website: <https://tenders.approcurement.gov.in>. For further details if any: (a) Contact Phone No. 0877-2264279 (b) E-mail ID: [cc2acvsott@gmail.com](mailto:cc2acvsott@gmail.com)  
TID-40021(31)/17/2024-PRO SEC (Adv.No.50) Date: 29-06-2024 EXECUTIVE OFFICER

**Government Of Gujarat**  
Naramada, Water Resource, Water Supply & Kalpsar Department Gandhinagar  
E-TENDER NOTICE NO. 4 OF 2024-25 (Tender ID-80307)

(1) Name of Work:	Dismantling old Existing Hydraulic Cylinder, power pack for Main Penstock gate and Dismantling Old Existing Hydraulic Cylinder, power pack for Canal Penstock gate with Provide New latest technology Hydraulic Cylinder, power pack and its Design with Supply, Fitting, Installation, and Testing with all necessary accessories & provide Sufficient hydraulic oil (Power pack & Hydraulic Cylinder) fitting on existing Structure of Power pack & hydraulic cylinder as per Specification @ Ukai Dam, Dist-Tapi, Near-Surat, State-Gujarat.
(2) Estimated Cost:	Rs. 8,04,46,500.00
(3) Pre-Bid Meeting (Off Line)	Dt. 12/07/2024 at 12.00 hrs.
(4) Last Date/Time for receipt of tender (ON LINE)	Dt. 29/07/2024 up to 16.00 Hrs.
(5) Name & Address of the Executive Engineer Concerned	Executive Engineer Irrigation Mechanical Gate & Store Division No. 1, Room No.703, 7th Floor, "C" Block Naramad Bhavan, Jail Road, Vadodara - 390001 Phone: 0265-2425149 Fax No: 0265-2429170
(6) Further details can be downloaded from the website: <a href="http://www.tender.nprocure.com">www.tender.nprocure.com</a> and also seen on Information & Broadcasting Department's website <a href="http://www.statetenders.gujarat.gov.in">www.statetenders.gujarat.gov.in</a> . Any kind of amendments will be published only online & it will be considered final & binding to all bidders	

INF-VAD-214-24-25

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

**TENDER NOTICE**

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

No	TENDER ID	ITEMS
1	2024_KMML_676801_1	For supply of 81 MT Potassium Chloride
2	2024_KMML_676055_1	For the supply of Roaster Discharge Grating Assembly
3	2024_KMML_676589_1	For the supply of 60,000 Nos of Polythene Product Bags

Chavara 29.06.2024 Sd/- Managing Director for The Kerala Minerals and Metals Ltd

**KSEB KERALA STATE ELECTRICITY BOARD LIMITED - TENDER NOTICE**

**Tender Extension Notice**  
O/o the Deputy Chief Engineer, Transmission Circle, Alappuzha  
E-Tender ID: 2024\_KSEB\_673957.1, PAC: Rs. 3,79,27,787/-, Last Date- 11.07.2024 03.00 pm

**Re-Tender Notice**  
O/o the Deputy Chief Engineer, Electrical Circle, Manjeri, Malappuram  
E-Tender ID: 2024\_KSEB\_676529.1, PAC: 7,36,49,720/-, Last Date- 19.07.2024 03.00pm  
E-Tender ID: 2024\_KSEB\_676681.1, PAC: 7,42,52,122/-, Last Date- 19.07.2024 03.00pm  
Visit [www.etenders.kerala.gov.in](http://www.etenders.kerala.gov.in) and [www.kseb.in](http://www.kseb.in)  
Ref: PR/MCI/E503/E-tender/2024

**STATE HEALTH AGENCY (SHA KERALA)**  
5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> Floor, Artech Meenakshi Plaza  
Opp. Govt. W & C Hospital, Thycaud,  
Thiruvananthapuram - 695 014  
E mail - [statehealthagencykerala@gmail.com](mailto:statehealthagencykerala@gmail.com)  
web : [www.sha.kerala.gov.in](http://www.sha.kerala.gov.in)  
Ph. No. 0471 4063121

**INVITATION TO PROPOSAL**

The State Health Agency Kerala invites qualified agencies for Medical Audits (Direct Audit and Desk Audit), Field investigations & Verification under AB PMJAY KASP scheme. The agencies shall be selected on basis of the evaluation criteria as provided in this RFP.

All eligible agencies / bidders are mandated to get enrolled on the e-Procurement portal (<http://www.etenders.kerala.gov.in>) in order to download the tender documents and participate in the subsequent bidding process. All communications with the State Health Agency shall be through Registered AD, Speed Post AD or e-mail with the authorized representative of the Bidder.

Interested bidders are requested to submit their proposals to the "RFP" on or before 17.00 hours, 17 July 2024.

Date : 29.06.2024 Sd/- Executive Director (SHA)

**BRUHAT BENGALURU MAHANAGARA PALIKE**  
Office of the Executive Engineer, Infra Division-RI,  
N.R. Square, Bengaluru - 560 002

No: EE/RI/TEND/05/2024-25 Date: 29.06.2024

**INVITATION FOR TENDER (IFT)**

(TWO COVER SYSTEM)  
(Through GOK KPP Portal <https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in> only)  
The Executive Engineer, Infra Division-RI, Room No.307, 3rd Floor, Annexure-03, N.R. Square, Bengaluru - 560 002, BBMP, Bengaluru invites tenders from eligible Tenderers on Turnkey, Lump Sum, Fixed Price, No Variation and No Escalation basis for the Construction of work detailed in the table below.

Sl. No.	Name of Works
1.	Providing Junction improvement works under SURAKSHA-75 in arterial and sub arterial roads at Dommaluru-HAL Old Airport Junction, Anil Kumble Circle, Hosuru Road Junction, Ashwath Nagara Bus Stop Junction (Dr. Rajkumar Road) Swami Vivekananda Metro Station Junction, Suranjan Das Road Junction-NGEF Signal and Nagawara Junction in East Zone. Cost of work proposed : Rs.882.70 Lakhs (including GST), EMD:Rs.13.25 Lakhs
2.	Providing Junction improvement works under SURAKSHA-75 in arterial and sub arterial roads at K R Market, Forum Mall, Makkalakoota Circle, Devegowda Petrol Bunk & Magadi Road Toll Gate Junction in South Zone. Cost of work proposed : Rs.490.39 Lakhs (including GST), EMD:Rs.7.40 Lakhs

**Calendar of Events :** (1) Availability of Tender documents in e-Procurement Portal on 01.07.2024 onwards. (2) Last date for Receipt of Queries is 10.07.2024 upto 13:00 Hrs. (3) Pre-Bid Meeting will be held at the Office of the Engineer in Chief, BBMP 1st Floor, Annex Building-2, N.R. Square, Bengaluru-560 002 on 10.07.2024 at 16:00 Hrs. (4) Last date for submission of Tenders is 16.07.2024 upto 16:00 Hrs. (5) Date of Opening of Technical Bid is 18.07.2024 Upto 11:00 Hrs. (6) Date of Opening of Financial Bid will be intimated to qualified tenders. Sd/- Executive Engineer, Infra Division - RI

उ. प्र. अकादमी, लखनऊ  
(उ. प्र. सरकार)

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U.P. Urdu Akademi, Gomti Nagar, Lucknow  
Contact No. 9415179698, 0522-4022924

Last Date for Online Form Submission : 20.08.2024  
Date of Admission Test : 08.09.2024  
Please Contact Between 10:00 am to 05:00 pm

S.M. ADIL HASAN SECRETARY  
M. SHAFQAT KAMAL (Retired IAS) DIRECTOR

By E-Mail/Despatch: E-Mail ID: [serw\\_balasure@yahoo.in](mailto:serw_balasure@yahoo.in); Ph-No-06782/260318, Balla, Balasure

**OFFICE OF THE CHIEF CONSTRUCTION ENGINEER, RURAL WORKS CIRCLE, BALASURE**

**"e" - Procurement Notice for Road Work**

Identification No.- Online Tender- Road N.C.B. No.01 of 2024-25  
Letter No: - 2494 Date: 27/06/24

- Name of the Work : SDMF Road
- Total No. of Work : 1 No. of Work.
- Estimated Cost : Rs.430.88 (Approximately)
- Eligible Class of Contractor : As per annexure
- Period of Completion : As per annexure
- Other Details :-

Procurement Officer	Bid Identification No.	Availability of Tender On-line for bidding		Last Date & Time of seeking Tender Clarification	Date & Time of Opening of Tender in O/S E., R.W. Circle, Balasure	
		From	To		Technical Bid	Financial Bid
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Chief Construction Engineer, Rural Works Circle, Balasure.	NCB No.- 01	04.07.2024 at 11.00 A.M.	19.07.2024 at 5.00 P.M.	18.07.2024 at 5.00 P.M.	20.07.2024 at 11.00 A.M.	Will be intimated later

Further details can be seen from the website : [www.tendersodisha.gov.in](http://www.tendersodisha.gov.in)  
Chief Engineer, R.W.Circle, Balasure.  
O-69: OIPR-25105/11/0001/2425

**DIRECTORATE OF ECONOMICS & STATISTICS, ODISHA, BHUBANESWAR**

**CORRIGENDUM No.3569, dtd.29.06.2024**

The detailed **Corrigendum** of Request for Proposal (RFP) issued vide file No.DES-WB-OSCRGPP-0005-2023/dt.23.05.2024 on Hiring of Project Management Consultancy for Strengthening of State Statistical System in Odisha under Odisha State Capability and Resilient Growth Policy Programme are available in the official website of DE&S, <http://www.desorissa.nic.in/> and Planning and Convergence Department, <https://pc.odisha.gov.in/>. Besides, the last date of submission of the proposals has been extended up to 06.07.2024 by 5.00 PM.

Sd/- DIRECTOR  
OIPR-21002/11/0005/2425

## INBRIEF



## Canopy of new Rajkot airport collapses in heavy rain

A day after a portion of a canopy of the Delhi airport's Terminal-1 collapsed, a part of the canopy at a terminal in Rajkot (Hirasar) International Airport collapsed following heavy rain in Gujarat on Saturday. A video shows the canopy collapsing at the passenger pick-up/drop area outside the airport terminal. No injury or death has been reported. The new greenfield airport, built by the Airports Authority of India (AAI) at Hirasar village was inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in July 2023. This is the third incident of infrastructure failure at Indian airports in under a week.

## Officer suspended in J&amp;K for 'sabotaging' Amarnath Yatra

A local officer was suspended in Anantnag district of Jammu & Kashmir on allegations of "sabotaging" the Amarnath Yatra by remaining absent from duty. Syeed Fakhruddin Hamid, Deputy Commissioner, Anantnag, in an order, suspended Pahalgam Naib Tehsildar Ovais Amir for "leaving the station without permission and sabotaging the ongoing Amarnath yatra". A Sub-Divisional Magistrate-level officer was appointed to "inquire into the matter of non compliance of the Naib Tehsildar". "The suspended officer shall remain attached with his office during the period of his suspension," the order read.

## Nine arrested in Gauhati University marksheet scam

The Assam Police arrested nine persons, including the prime accused, in an alleged marksheet scam involving officials of Gauhati University. It came to light after Azizul Haque, an undergraduate student at the Ganesh Lal Choudhury College in Barpeta, was found to have possessed a forged marksheet. An official probing the case said the arrests were made from various locations in Guwahati, Barpeta, Kalgachia, and Dhubri. Among the arrested were Krishan Krishnamurti, an employee of Gauhati University, Shivtosh Mahato, an employee of Dhubri Law College, and Aminul Islam, a librarian of a college in Dhubri.

## 5 policemen injured during demolition drive in Kathua

Five policemen, including an officer, were injured in a clash with protesters opposing the J&K authorities' demolition drive, including a mosque, in Kathua district on Saturday. Tensions gripped the Kalyanpur Padri area in tehsil Nagri when a mob attacked and chased a joint team of the J&K Police and revenue officials carrying out an anti-encroachment drive against a mosque. A Deputy Superintendent of Police-rank officer was hit in the head and four others also sustained minor injuries when a stone-throwing mob, which was also carrying lathis, chased the policemen from the demolition spot. Several vehicles were damaged in the clash.

## SUDOKU

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

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

## Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

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

## Congress attacks BJP over NEET paper leak

The Hindu Bureau  
NEW DELHI

The Congress on Saturday alleged that the Narendra Modi-led government is not keen on allowing a parliamentary debate on the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (NEET) for undergraduate medical college admissions as it will "expose" the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party's (BJP) links with those involved in the alleged NEET paper leak scam.

At a press conference, Gujarat Congress chief Shaktisinh Gohil claimed that one of the key accused, Arif Vohra, who has now been arrested by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), is an office-bearer of the BJP.

Mr. Gohil also questioned why the National Testing Agency (NTA) had selected the Jay Jalaram (Gujarati) school in Godhra as an examination centre, despite the fact that the Gujarat HC had previously imposed a penalty of ₹35 lakh on the organisation that runs these schools.

"If you go Google a little bit, then you will find Jai Jalaram Education Trust among those who donated to the BJP. I have found it myself," Mr. Gohil said.

## 'Dengue may have helped stem COVID-19 wave severity'

A study was published in *Journal of Medical Virology* this week; results of the research suggest that the antibodies following a dengue infection were able to 'neutralise' the coronavirus

Jacob Koshy  
NEW DELHI

Can the dengue virus beat the coronavirus and is it why the early wave of the pandemic in 2020 resulted in fewer COVID deaths or severe infections in India than in Europe or North America where dengue is not endemic? Research from the CSIR-Indian Institute of Chemical Biology, Kolkata hints at these intriguing possibilities following an analysis of antibodies from people infected with dengue and testing them against a kind of coronavirus called murine hepatitis virus (mouse coronavirus). In research settings, this virus — being part of the same family of human coronaviruses — is considered a good surrogate to study the behaviour of the coronavirus strains that infected people during the pandemic.

Their results, published in the peer-reviewed *Journal of Medical Virology* this week, suggest that the antibodies following a dengue infection were able to 'neutralise' this coronavirus. For their analysis, the



**Masking effect:** Antibodies in the blood after a dengue infection were able to engulf and bind to coronavirus proteins. AP

scientists relied on a combination of computer-modelling studies as well as cell-culture studies, the latter demonstrating how antibodies from dengue were able to engulf and bind the coronavirus proteins.

These latest studies build on the lab's work from 2020 that blood tests specific to check for dengue sometimes led to a positive SARS-CoV-2 test.

"We experimentally demonstrated that serum samples from dengue patients have the potential to bind to and 'mask' the surface of several coronaviruses, including SARS-CoV-2. We performed 'virus neutralisation' tests in cell cultures and showed that such

involving a different strain can be more dangerous — a phenomenon called antibody-dependent enhancement (ADE) in dengue. Whether the prevalence of dengue in dengue-endemic countries of Southeast Asia may be triggering newer mutations in the coronavirus is a factor that needs to be investigated more extensively, the authors suggest.

That the early stages of the pandemic saw a decline in dengue in India has been independently reported. The National Vector Borne Disease Control Programme of India reported a sharp decline of 75% (39,419 versus 1,57,315) in dengue incidence during 2020 as compared with 2019.

"The possible reasons for this reduction could be lower transmission of the vector, less exposure due to lockdown, and, potentially, a disparity in the reported data possibly due to underdiagnosis or underreporting because of increased attention to the pandemic," said a 2021 study in the *American Journal of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene*.

## NEET-PG dates will be announced soon: Minister

The Hindu Bureau  
NEW DELHI

Union Minister for Education Dharmendra Pradhan said that the new schedule for NEET-PG will be announced by the National Board of Examinations (NBE) in the next two days.

Mr. Pradhan was speaking in Panchkula, Haryana ahead of a BJP event where Union Home Minister Amit Shah addressed party workers.

The NEET-PG exams were cancelled last week because of the controversy raging over irregularities in the conduct of NEET-UG.

"The date of National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test, Postgraduate will be announced by the NBE in one or two days," Mr. Pradhan said.

The comments by Mr. Pradhan come a day after the National Testing Agency (NTA) announced revised dates for three exams that were cancelled.

The University Grants Commission-National Eligibility Test (UGC-NET) which was cancelled a day after being conducted on June 18 will now be conducted from August 21 to September 4, the National Testing Agency said. (With agency inputs)

## NTA's plan to add more online exam centres yet to take off

Maitri Porecha  
NEW DELHI

The National Testing Agency (NTA), which is under scrutiny for multiple question paper leak controversies, failed to amp up its infrastructure for conducting tests in online mode in 2024, as its tender to multiply testing centres failed to take off, *The Hindu* has learnt.

The NTA had floated a tender in January, in order to increase its capacity of computer labs, which could house 'nodes', or seating spaces for candidates, in as many as 378 cities. "The work has not progressed as the tenders have not been finalised," a top NTA official told *The Hindu*. If the tender had gone through, the NTA had aimed to conduct exams across India in a standardised format by establishing online exam centres without any possibility of malpractice, officials added.

Currently, the NTA conducts at least six of its en-



Currently, the NTA conducts at least six of its entrance exams through online or computer based test mode. PTI

trance exams through the relatively safer online or computer-based test (CBT) mode. While the Joint Entrance Examination (JEE-Main) is conducted by the NTA through the CBT mode, the National Eligibility-Cum-Entrance Test (NEET-UG) for medical aspirants is conducted in a pen-and-paper, or offline, mode. Offline tests are more vulnerable to paper leaks and other types of malpractice.

According to official data, the NTA currently has the infrastructure capabili-

ty for approximately 600 CBT examination centres across India. "It conducts CBT exams in multiple shifts with multiple sets of question papers owing to the limited infrastructure availability as per the defined standards for conducting online exams," another NTA official said.

## Boosting capacity

"Currently, India does not have the capacity to conduct online exams for more than three lakh candidates in a single shift due to resource constraints," V.

Kamakoti, Director of IIT-Madras, told *The Hindu*.

Aware of its restraints, the NTA had envisioned setting up more exam centres for online exams, first for 40,000 candidates per shift and then to increase the capacity to 2,00,000 candidates per shift, with a capacity of 275 computer nodes in each centre. Each node would seat one candidate.

This would mean gradually doubling the existing strength of 600 centres, by adding anywhere between 145 and 700 more centres. But the tender never took off, officials said.

"The NTA had planned to start with a provision of approximately 40,000 computer nodes per shift and will increase the nodes on mutual discussion or as per industry requirement. At present candidates from remote areas need to travel a long distance from their residence to reach the exam centres," the tender floated by the NTA said.

Multiple proposals to

administer NEET-UG through online mode were sent to the Ministry of Education but in vain, officials at the NTA told *The Hindu*. "Talks for administering the NEET-UG in CBT mode, similar to JEE (Main), have been ongoing for at least five years now. The recent paper leak fiasco should serve as an eye-opener to change the format of the exams," an official quoted above said.

In the tender floated in January, the NTA had sought proposals from profitable private companies or central PSUs, who have had an average annual turnover of ₹100 crore for the last five years, and who have handled projects ranging from ₹20 crore to ₹40 crore, to bid for setting up and maintaining online exam centres.

In the tender, the NTA said that it wanted to set up this infrastructure in private and government higher education institutions and schools, government and semi-government buildings which would offer

areas in their campuses for the development of new IT infrastructure by outsourcing it to a private company or a PSU.

## Outsourced centres

The NTA wanted to outsource the work to bidders for end-to-end execution and running of online examination centres, including arranging infrastructure such as furniture, electrification, air-conditioning, power backup, network cabling, Internet with minimum 10 Mbps speed, CCTV, and even arrange a pool of invigilators which will be maintained by the bidders in individual cities.

The tender floated in January never took off, and is currently facing a delay of nearly six months. Had it been awarded, the NTA would have expected the online centres to be live and running within three months of awarding the contract. It had said that successful bidders were expected to run the online exam centres for five years.

## TISS terminates nearly 100 teaching, non-teaching staff across various campuses

Maitri Porecha  
NEW DELHI

In what came as a shock to nearly 100 teaching and non-teaching staff on various campuses of Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS) across India, they were informed that their contracts will not be renewed and their services will end on Sunday. The TISS administration sent termination letters to the staff on June 28.

"Nearly a hundred institute staff members which were previously funded by the Tata Education Trust will become unemployed after years of service at TISS. It is completely a failure of the current leadership of TISS administration in running the institute

and apathy of the Union government," said a statement by Progressive Students' Forum of TISS.

"After repeatedly targeting its students and curbing the campus democracy, the present TISS administration, under the BJP-led Union government, has unleashed an attack on its employees as well," the statement further said.

"As students, we express our concern about this decision. The previous years' NIRF data show that the student-faculty ratio is being impacted negatively. This means that the currently employed faculty is insufficient in terms of the number of students admitted to TISS each year," it said. While the termination of a hundred such posi-

tions will directly impact the futures of the students, it might also allow for politically motivated appointments in the near future, the students feared.

Last year, the BJP-led Centre took over TISS, making it a fully "public-funded institute".

"The result has been that students are facing delays in receiving student aid and are being threatened in the name of fee payment. While becoming a public institute should have relieved the pressure from students coming from economically and socially marginalised backgrounds, the Central government takeover has resulted in added monetary pressures," the statement added.

## NCPCR to felicitate 30 district officials for containing drug abuse among school children

The Hindu Bureau  
NEW DELHI

The National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) will felicitate 30 top performing districts in the country for the successful implementation of a Joint Action Plan to contain substance abuse among schoolchildren.

The recognition will be awarded here on Sunday to the respective District Magistrates and Collectors by Union Minister of State for Home Nityanand Rai. The event will be held on the sidelines of a national review and consultation organised jointly by the NCPCR and the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) on the 'Joint Action Plan on Prevention of Drugs and Substance



A new portal called 'Prahari' (sentry) will also be launched by the Union MoS.

Abuse and Illicit Trafficking'.

The Joint Action Plan (JAP) was developed by the NCPCR and the NCB based on deliberations with the Ministries concerned in 2021. It streamlines efforts made by different agencies to bring paradigm shifts in prevention.

Representatives of the Commission for Protection of Child Rights of States

and Union Territories, as well as the Departments of Women and Child Welfare, Health, Education, Police, Drugs Controller, Excise, Pharmacy Councils, and State AIDS Control Societies will participate in the consultation.

## New portal

A new portal called 'Prahari' (sentry) will also be launched by Mr. Rai. "Through this portal, quarterly activities for awareness on drugs and substance abuse in schools will be conducted by children and teachers nominated by special 'Prahari' clubs," a senior official said. 'Prahari' clubs are associations managed and run by children to achieve common goals.



## Specific PET scan for TB for more effective treatment

The Hindu Bureau

A more accurate way to scan for tuberculosis has been developed by researcher based in the U.K. and the U.S. using positron emission tomography (PET).

The team has developed a new radiotracer, which is taken up by live TB bacteria in the body. Radiotracers are radioactive compounds which give off

radiation that can be detected by scanners and turned into a 3D image. The new radiotracer, called FDT, enables PET scans to be used for the first time to accurately pinpoint when and where the disease is still active in a patient's lungs.

The researchers have put the new radiotracer through extensive pre-clinical trials with no adverse effects and it is now ready

to go into Phase I trials in humans. The study has been published in the journal *Nature Communications*.

Currently, two methods exist for TB diagnosis: testing for the TB bacteria in a patient's sputum using smear microscopy or a molecular test. The other is the use of a PET scan to look for signs of inflammation in the lung, using the common radiotracer FDG.

While a sputum test can show a negative long before the disease has been fully treated in the lungs, which could result in patients finishing treatment too early, scanning for inflammation can be helpful in seeing the extent of the disease, but it is not specific to TB, as inflammation can be caused by other conditions. Inflammation can also persist in the lung after the TB bacteria has

been eliminated, leading to treatment continuing longer than necessary.

The new approach developed by the researchers is more specific as it uses a carbohydrate that is only processed by the TB bacteria. A key advantage of the new approach is that it only requires a hospital to have standard radiation control and PET scanners, which are becoming more available throughout the

world. The new molecule is created from FDG using a simple process involving enzymes developed by the research team. This means it can be produced without specialist expertise or laboratories and so would be a viable option in low- and middle-income countries with less developed healthcare systems. These countries currently see over 80% of global TB cases and deaths from the disease.

## SNAPSHOTS



### Anti-measles antibody prevents viral fusion: study

Cryo-electron microscopy (cryo-EM) structures of an anti-measles antibody reveal its therapeutic potential by blocking the virus's fusion process, a new study reports. The work paves the way for the next generation of measles virus therapeutics and illuminates a mechanism that may be shared by antibodies against other viral pathogens. The structures generated by the researchers also revealed an important epitope that may provide a new druggable target for MeV as well as other paramyxoviruses like mumps.



### Proteins in cerebrospinal fluid offer markers of Alzheimer's

By mapping out the landscape of proteins in cerebrospinal fluid, researchers have discovered potential markers of Alzheimer's disease that appear as many as 20 years before symptoms. The scientists generated a robust map of protein activity, consisting of 34 "modules". They identified three that correlated with disease and with the genetic risk factor APOE-ε4. Also, shifts in these modules in blood samples were linked to a risk of dementia more than 20 years before the patient was diagnosed.



### Antibody shields hamsters from SARS-CoV-2 variants

Scientists show that a new antibody therapy for COVID-19 can neutralise the Omicron strain of SARS-CoV-2 in hamsters and is safe in humans, according to their research. The antibody (AZD3152) could provide an additional layer of protection to vulnerable groups at risk of severe COVID-19. The antibody binds to the back "left shoulder" of the receptor binding domain on the SARS-CoV-2 spike protein, and is designed to be more potent against emerging variants.

# India lacks diagnostic tests for emerging infectious diseases

Zika virus is a mosquito-borne pathogen belonging to the flavivirus family of viruses which also includes dengue; India's lack of significant Zika surveillance means we might never fully understand its spread

Bani Jolly  
Vinod Scaria

A recent case of Zika virus infection in Pune has renewed concerns about India's preparedness for diagnosing emerging infectious diseases. After experiencing symptoms like fever and rashes, the 46-year-old doctor was hospitalised and diagnosed with Zika virus infection after his samples were sent for testing to the apex virology institute. Subsequent testing of his family members revealed that his 15-year-old daughter was also infected. This is not the first time Zika has been identified in India. Cases have been identified in multiple States in India in the past, with larger outbreaks occurring in Kerala and Uttar Pradesh as recently as 2021.

Zika virus is a mosquito-borne pathogen belonging to the flavivirus family of viruses which also includes dengue. Clinical symptoms of Zika infection in many cases could be mild and indistinguishable from other infectious diseases including dengue. However, for pregnant women, the Zika virus poses a significant risk as it can be transmitted from mother to child, potentially leading to microcephaly in the offspring.

Due to climate change, it is not surprising that multiple dengue outbreaks are making headlines. The same vectors that spread dengue could also spread Zika. However, India's lack of significant Zika surveillance means we might never fully understand its

## Flying blind without diagnostic tests

There is over-reliance on apex institutes for diagnosis of Zika, Nipha and avian influenza due to lack of widely available diagnostic tests

Zika cases have been identified from multiple States in the past. Largest outbreaks occurred in Kerala and Uttar Pradesh in 2021

Since India lacks significant Zika surveillance, the actual spread might never fully understood

In March 2023, the drug regulator confirmed that there is no approved diagnostic test for Zika

Multiple avian influenza outbreaks in poultry have been reported this year. Human testing and surveillance have remained limited partly due to lack of diagnostic tests and over-reliance on apex institutes

Kerala has had Nipah outbreaks in 2018, 2021, and 2023. Each time, virus identification relied heavily on clinical suspicion. Some cases were missed initially as diagnostic facilities were not readily available

For the rapid development of diagnostics, whole genome sequences should be made available in the public domain soon after outbreaks



**Dangerous vector:** *Aedes aegypti* mosquito that spreads dengue can also spread Zika virus

spread. In March 2023, CDSCO, India's apex organisation for diagnostic approvals, confirmed that there is no approved diagnostic test for Zika. This limitation hinders our ability to diagnose Zika, relying only on classical symptoms and high clinical suspicion, making it complex as we see a concurrent upsurge in dengue cases across the country. Surveillance by ICMR on *Aedes* mosquitoes showed Zika virus positivity following human cases, indicating that many cases are likely being missed. Zika is not an isolated case. A case of avian influenza A/H5N1 was recently reported from Australia in a child who had traveled to India, hinting at more undetected infections. Despite multiple avian influenza outbreaks

in India this year affecting poultry, and an ongoing outbreak in Kerala, human testing and surveillance have remained limited. This is partially compounded by the lack of widely available diagnostic tests and over-reliance on a few apex institutes.

Consider the case of the Nipah virus, which has seen multiple outbreaks in Kerala. India has experienced several Nipah virus outbreaks, notably in West Bengal (2001 and 2007) and Kerala (2018, 2021, and 2023). In Kerala, identification of the virus relied heavily on clinical suspicion. Some cases were indeed missed during initial admissions due to the lack of routine testing. Rapid identification and isolation of cases, contact tracing, and targeted screening of con-

tacts are key to the effective containment of Nipah outbreaks.

While many countries grant emergency approvals for diagnostics based on synthetic genomic material, India requires validation on clinical samples, which are not readily accessible. These limitations hamper rapid development. Although there have been multiple publications on Zika and Nipah outbreaks over many years now, the genomes from these outbreaks are still not rapidly released in public repositories. For example, the Nipah virus genome from the 2023 outbreak in Kerala was only released last month. Even with ongoing avian influenza outbreaks in multiple States, we do not yet have the whole genome

## inStem's fabric offers protection from pesticides

R. Prasad

Researchers at the Institute for Stem Cell Science and Regenerative Medicine (inStem), in Bengaluru have developed an anti-insecticide fabric that effectively neutralises organophosphate-based pesticides. In an earlier work published about six years ago, the team had developed a gel for topical dermal application to deactivate the pesticides. But considering that compliance might be poor, the researchers looked at another alternative that is as effective in deactivating the insecticide but at the same time does not reduce compliance.

When esters present in organophosphate-based pesticides enter the body they bind and inhibit an enzyme (acetylcholinesterase or AChE) critical for neuromuscular function from working. Therefore, inhibition of this important

enzyme is implicated in learning deficits, suffocation, paralysis, muscle weakness among others.

In a paper published recently in *Nature Communications*, the team led by Dr. Praveen Kumar Vemula from inStem coated the cotton fabric with small molecules, rendering the final product the ability to deactivate the insecticide. "The small molecules are covalently bonded with the cellulose of the fabric making the cloth not only breathable but also durable," says Dr. Vemula. The small molecules that are covalently bonded with the fabric are nucleophile in nature, and can detoxify the pesticides upon contact through nucleophile-mediated hydrolysis, says Dr. Vemula. "The fabric attacks the pesticide molecule and breaks it into non-toxic products. The pesticide is deactivated even before it reaches the skin



**Right way:** The fabric deactivates the pesticide and breaks it down into non-toxic products. AP

surface," he says. The fabric with covalently-bonded small molecules was developed in collaboration with Sepio Health Pvt Ltd, a spin-off company from inStem.

"The fabric retains the anti-insecticide property even after washing 150 times." Though the reusability after 50 cycles was reported in the paper, the researchers continued the reusability testing and found the effectiveness to last up to 150 cycles of

washing. "Unlike the gel, the reusability will make the fabric an affordable solution to prevent insecticide-induced toxicity to farmers. It will also increase compliance," he says.

According to Dr. Vemula, the small molecule-coated fabric does not act as a physical barrier to organophosphate-based insecticide. Instead, the fabric hydrolytically deactivates the insecticides, causing the preven-

tion of insecticide-induced AChE inhibition.

To investigate the efficiency of the fabric containing the small molecules, the active AChE in the blood before and three days after exposure to the insecticide was measured in rats. While direct exposure or when normal cloth did little to halt the drop in active AChE in blood, no reduction in blood active AChE level was observed in the presence of the fabric coated with small molecules. Several organs from the exposed and unexposed rats were studied and compared, and the researchers found that the active AChE levels in the organs did not drop in the case of rats that were exposed to the insecticide in the presence of the fabric coated with small molecules. Also, while rats that were repeatedly and directly exposed to ethyl paraoxon (an activated orga-

nophosphate insecticide) or through the normal fabric died within four days, none of the rats exposed to the insecticide in the presence of the special fabric died.

Farmers get repeatedly exposed to the insecticide due to frequent usage, and this can cause chronic toxicity and severe adverse health effects. The animal study results show promise that the fabric containing the small molecules can prevent chronic toxicity in farmers, he says.

"The design of one nucleophile that can deactivate a wide range of organophosphates and carbamates was challenging. Subsequently, optimising the industry-friendly chemistry to covalently attach on the fabric was the key in developing anti-pesticide fabric," says Dr. Ketan Thorat, a former research student at inStem and coauthor of the paper.



## Question Corner

### Marsquakes

Can meteorite strikes cause quakes on Mars?

Using seismic data, researchers have derived the first estimate of global meteorite impacts on Mars. Their findings indicate that 280 to 360 meteorites strike the planet each year, forming impact craters greater than 26 feet across. Using data from the seismometer deployed during the NASA InSight Mission to Mars, researchers found that six seismic events recorded near the station had been previously identified as meteoric impacts. Now, researchers have found that these six seismic events belong to a much larger group of

marsquakes, so called very high frequency events. The source process of these quakes occurs much faster than for a tectonic marsquake of similar size. Where a normal magnitude 3-quake on Mars takes several seconds, an impact-generated event of the same size takes only 0.2 seconds or less, due to the hypervelocity of the collision. By analysing marsquake spectra, a further 80 marsquakes were identified that are now thought to be caused by meteoroid strikes.

Readers may send their questions / answers to questioncorner@thehindu.co.in

# FAQ

## What was the tussle over Covaxin IPR?

What are the rules for patenting the intellectual property rights of a vaccine? Why was the ICMR not included?

Jacob Koshy

**The story so far:**  
The maker of the indigenous coronavirus vaccine, Covaxin, Bharat Biotech International Limited (BBIL), has admitted to an "inadvertent error" in patent filings to protect the vaccine's Intellectual Property Rights (IPR). One of India's leading biotechnology companies, it had failed to include scientists from the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) as co-inventors in the Covaxin patent filings.

### What kind of rights govern vaccine patents?

India's patent laws govern both product and process patents. Product patents grant an inventor a monopoly over, say, a drug. Process patents bar competitors from making a similar drug using the same sequence of steps. In response to queries from *The Hindu*, Bharat Biotech said it had patented the process, namely of making a batch of vaccines from the virus strains that were provided by the ICMR-NIV (National Institute of Virology). This is the lab that has expertise in extracting viruses from blood samples, identifying its characteristics, conducting various tests to gauge its infectiousness and qualify it in comparison to related strains. However, preparing a vaccine out of this at an industrial scale is beyond the capabilities of a lab and requires a different

Bharat Biotech International Limited had collaborated with the Indian Council of Medical Research-National Institute of Virology for all the steps in developing a vaccine

order of facilities that only established vaccine manufacturers have. Covaxin is an inactivated version of COVID-causing coronavirus; once injected into the body it coaxes it into producing antibodies that can

potentially protect against severe disease from a coronavirus infection. To do this effectively, an 'adjuvant' is added which increases the vaccine's potency. Vaccine makers may have their own ways of bringing all of these steps together and, given the competitive nature of the field, strive to ward off competitors from imitating these processes to gain a temporary monopoly in the market and rake profits.

To be sure, while companies are free to file for a product or process patent in as many countries as they can afford, a patent is only granted after regulatory authorities grant them one or are convinced that this process is indeed novel or inventive. BBIL, as far as publicly known, hasn't yet been granted these patents.

### What were the roles of BBIL and ICMR?

BBIL had collaborated with the ICMR-NIV for all the steps in developing a vaccine. The two organisations had signed an agreement that spelt out each entity's responsibilities. As ICMR is a public entity and because of the scale of the COVID crisis, there were Right To Information requests to make this agreement public.

However, it was only in July 2021, that parts of the agreement were made public in Rajya Sabha.

Beyond transferring the strains and making vaccines, the agreement said, ICMR would also test these vaccines on animals – rodents to monkeys – and then on people to establish that the vaccine worked as intended. The ICMR also funded these clinical trials – ₹35 crore – and incurred costs in developing Covaxin. In return it was to get 5% of royalties that BBIL earned from the sale of Covaxin. Since the announcement of the BBIL and ICMR collaboration, it was generally accepted that both entities would contribute to the vaccine and would therefore hold "joint intellectual property rights," as was stated in Parliament.

However, BBIL first told *The Hindu* that it made a distinction between the rights governing the making of the vaccine and the rights over the data generated from clinical trials. The ICMR hadn't invested in the actual making of the vaccine and so wasn't included in patent applications. However, a day after the matter became public, BBIL said it had made a mistake, and that it would be making amends by filing fresh applications that listed ICMR personnel as inventors. It is unclear what prompted this.

### Why does being cited as an inventor matter?

IPR is a vast, complex domain and spans the minutest parts of the product invention process. As the development of pharmaceutical products involves a wide range of expertise, it is hard for single firms or entities to develop everything in-house. Just like the BBIL-ICMR collaboration, companies may enter into several licensing agreements – BBIL for instance had a technology licensing agreement with Virovax for the adjuvant – with other companies. If a single product thus involves multiple entities and collaborators, being listed as an inventor has a bearing on the sharing of intellectual property rights, royalties and even determining how a product can be used. There is no field of human activity that is untouched by disputes over IPR. In patent filings, not listing out all the inventors – in the U.S especially – could even lead to patent applications being rejected.

## Why has the NTA failed to deliver?

How many examinations are under the charge of the National Testing Agency? Is it equipped to handle the large number of students and centres? What are the challenges? What are the loopholes in the system that can be manipulated by unscrupulous players?

Priscilla Jebaraj

### The story so far:

The National Testing Agency (NTA) has come under intense fire over the past few weeks, with widespread allegations of cheating, paper leaks and other irregularities impacting flagship examinations such as the NEET (National Eligibility cum Entrance Test) for undergraduate medical college admissions and the UGC-NET for Ph.D and assistant professor appointments. The agency's director general, Subodh Kumar Singh, has been removed, the CBI is probing irregularities, and a high-level panel has been set up to create a roadmap for a systemic overhaul.

### What is the NTA?

The NTA was set up in 2017 as a specialist, self-sustaining and autonomous organisation under the aegis of the Union Education Ministry. Its director general and governing body are appointed by the Union government. However, it is registered as a society and is a separate legal entity, which raises questions about the government's legal liability for the NTA's actions. Its main mandate is to conduct efficient, transparent and international standard tests to assess the competency of candidates for admission, and recruitment purposes. Soon after it was established, the NTA took over the conduct of major all-India examinations, such as the JEE for engineering college admissions, NEET-UG, and UGC-NET (both of which had previously been conducted by the Central Board for Secondary Education or CBSE), as well as the entrance tests for Jawaharlal Nehru University and Delhi University. The National Education Policy of 2020 envisaged a broader role,

Educationists propose broader pathways like equipping NTA better or dismantling the centralisation process

recommending that the NTA conduct an entrance or aptitude test for all universities across the country. In all, the NTA now has charge for more than 20 examinations.

### Why have there been so many problems?

One of the main problems is that the NTA was originally intended to conduct computer-based tests only. "This will ensure that high volume can be processed in a short period of time," says the agency's website, claiming that such online testing will "eliminate the possibility of leakage of questions and question papers, post-test malpractice of filling in the OMR sheets, late entry of students to cheat in the test, subjectivity errors on descriptive testing, etc..In a short period of three years, all the tests administered by NTA will be computer adaptive. This will completely eliminate the problem of cheating," it declares. Thus, when the NTA took over conduct of the UGC-NET examination from the CBSE six years ago, it was converted from a pen-and-paper examination to a computer-adaptive test. This year, however, for reasons that are unclear, UGC-NET shifted back to the pen-and-paper mode. The day after it was conducted for over 11 lakh aspirants, the government cancelled the examination, citing inputs from the cyber crime unit. "Pen-and-paper is a heaven for scammers," said one former official, noting that the printing process is particularly vulnerable to leaks. It is interesting that when the government announced fresh dates for UGC-NET 2024 to be held again, it also stipulated that it would be a computer-adaptive test this time.

However, when the conduct of NEET-UG was taken over by the NTA, the Health Ministry flatly refused to allow it to shift to a computer-based exam, citing concerns about students in rural areas who would not be prepared for an online exam, as well as Supreme Court rulings on how the examination should be conducted. Hence, the NTA has been forced to run a major examination in a mode that it was never intended to implement by design.

Officials and educationists note that the agency is severely understaffed for the role it is currently being asked to undertake. According to a senior official, the agency was set up with only about 25 permanent staff positions. A number of its functions have also been outsourced to technical partners from the very beginning. Given that NEET-UG alone had more than 23 lakh candidates writing the examination in almost 5,000 centres across the country and abroad, this has left the agency stretched thin, according to some officials. "The NTA was set up to be a lean, professional organisation. The

more people, the higher risks. The NIC [National Informatics Centre] simply does not have the capacity or IT infrastructure needed, so it was always meant to engage third-party technical partners which have the robust cyber security expertise needed to run large-scale computer based examinations," said R. Subrahmanyam, former Higher Education Secretary who was in charge at the time the NTA was set up. However, some educationists have complained that engaging third-party players takes accountability out of the government's hands and leaves loopholes in the system which can be exploited by unscrupulous players.

Officials say the NTA has also failed to develop robust mechanisms needed to handle a large-scale pen-and-paper examination, including the setting of the question paper and its encryption, selection of external printing presses and exam centres, transportation to printing presses, storage and distribution to examinees at examination centres and then the collection and transportation of answer sheets to evaluation centres. Each of these is a stage where malpractice can occur without robust security mechanisms.

### What is the way ahead?

The high-level panel headed by former ISRO chief K. Radhakrishnan has been given two months to recommend reforms in the examination process, improve data security protocols, and overhaul the NTA's functioning.

Educationists, however, propose starkly different pathways for the future. One option is to add manpower and infrastructure to the NTA to equip it to take on large-scale pen-and-paper examinations in an improvement to the CBSE system that preceded it. Those recommending this return to the past point out that pen-and-paper examinations are more equitable, especially for students in rural and remote areas with little access to technology.

Another option is to dismantle the centralisation process that seeks to move all testing in the country under the NTA. Some State governments, and professors from individual universities, notably JNU, have called for entrance tests for their institutions to be removed from the NTA and handed back to the institutions themselves, arguing that more decentralised structures are needed to meet the vastly differing needs of institutions.

However, others seek a more radical reform of the assessment system. They suggest systemic changes to remove the single, high-stakes entrance examination which results in extreme pressure on students, encourages an inequitable coaching industry, and incentivises malpractice. Instead, periodic assessments of knowledge, concept-based understanding, and aptitude can be conducted in the final years of school education as the precursor to the admission process, using online testing, and AI-based proctoring which can be overseen by the NTA.



Outrage and uproar: Members of the Students' Federation of India staging a protest in Vijayawada on June 22. G.N. RAO

## What is holding up the Teesta treaty?

What has the Indian government told Bangladesh? What is the technical team going to look into? Why is Bengal Chief Minister protesting this development? What about the Ganga water sharing agreement? When does it come up for renewal? What is the state of both the rivers?

Shiv Sahay Singh

### The story so far:

During the recent state visit of Sheikh Hasina, Prime Minister of Bangladesh, to India, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on June 22 said: "A technical team will soon visit Bangladesh to discuss conservation and management of the Teesta river in Bangladesh." The remark triggered fresh speculation about the Teesta water sharing treaty with Bangladesh, a key bilateral agreement that has been pending between the two countries for over a decade.

### What is India's stand?

After Mr. Modi's comment, Foreign Secretary Vinay Kwatra told the media that the discussion "between the two leaders was less about water sharing per se, and more about the management of the water flows within Teesta". West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee took issue with the Centre's stand. On June 24, she wrote a letter to Mr. Modi conveying her strong reservation that no discussion on the sharing of Teesta waters should be taken up with Bangladesh without the involvement of the State.

### Why is Bengal upset?

Ms. Banerjee pointed out that if Teesta's water is

Bengal claims if Teesta water is shared with Bangladesh, lakhs of people in north Bengal will get severely impacted

shared with Bangladesh, lakhs of people in north Bengal will get severely impacted. This is not the first time she has voiced her opposition to the proposed water sharing agreement of India with Bangladesh. In July 2019, the Trinamool Congress chairperson admitted that Bangladesh is hurt because the Teesta waters could not be shared and added, "If I had the ability, I would have definitely shared Teesta waters with them." In 2017, the Chief Minister had also referred to an alternative proposal of sharing waters of the Torsa, Manshai, Sankosh and Dhansai rivers but not Teesta.

In all, 54 rivers flow between India and Bangladesh and sharing of river waters has been a key bilateral issue. India and Bangladesh agreed on the sharing of waters of the Ganga in 1996 after the construction of the Farakka Barrage and by the 2010s the issue of sharing of the Teesta came up for negotiation. In 2011, during the United Progressive Alliance-II government, India and Bangladesh were close to signing an agreement on the Teesta but Ms. Banerjee walked out of the deal, and since then, the agreement has been pending.

### What is the proposal?

In 2011, when the proposal for sharing Teesta water was drawn up, it was said India would get 42.5% and Bangladesh 37.5% of the river water from December to March.

A tributary of the Brahmaputra, the Teesta river originates from the Tso Lhamo Lake at an elevation of about 5,280 metres in north Sikkim. The river travels for about 150 km in Sikkim and 123 km in West Bengal, before entering Bangladesh from Mekhlignj in Cooch Behar district; it flows another 140 km in Bangladesh and joins the Bay of Bengal. Teesta is Bangladesh's fourth largest trans-boundary river and its floodplain covers an area of 2,750 square kilometres in Bangladesh. But 83% of the river's catchment area lies in India and the remaining 17% is in Bangladesh, supporting 8.5% of its population and 14% of its crop production.

### What are the political considerations?

While the Awami League government in Bangladesh is facing questions from the

Opposition about the delay in inking an agreement on the Teesta, the dams for hydro-electric power generation in Sikkim and the Teesta Barrage Project at Gazoldoba in West Bengal is making the flow of the river erratic in Bangladesh, leading to either floods or scarcity of water. The visit of a technical team from India to discuss conservation of the Teesta in Bangladesh also comes amid the backdrop of China proposing major dredging work on the river and building reservoirs and embankments in 2020. The Bangladesh government has put the proposal on hold for the past four years.

Soon after returning to Bangladesh, Prime Minister Hasina announced that her country would accept India's proposal to develop the Teesta River basin. Ms. Banerjee raised questions about the health of the Teesta river after the construction of a series of hydropower projects in Sikkim, deforestation in upper catchment areas and impact of climate change. She expressed surprise that no concrete steps have been taken by the Ministry of Jal Shakti to restore the river to its original form and health on the Indian side when a bilateral cooperation between India and Bangladesh for restoration of Teesta in Bangladesh is being proposed.

Environmental activists have also been raising questions on the ecological impact of hydro-electric projects on the river. In October 2023, a glacial lake outburst triggered floods in the Teesta basin that claimed hundred lives and destroyed the Teesta III hydroelectric dam.

Sharing of waters of transboundary rivers have been mandated by international laws including The Helsinki Rules on the Uses of the Waters of International Rivers in 1966. Article 253 of the Indian Constitution gives powers to the government to enter any transboundary river water-related treaty with a riparian state.

### Why is Bengal talking about Ganga treaty?

The Ganga water sharing treaty with Bangladesh completes 30 years in 2026 and a renewal of the agreement is on the cards. The Trinamool Congress chairperson has pointed out that water sharing with Bangladesh has changed the Ganga's morphology and affected lakhs of people in West Bengal owing to river erosion.

"Lakhs of people have been displaced from their habitation rendering them homeless and also leading to their loss of livelihood. The reduced silt load in Hooghly has impeded the nourishment of the Sundarban delta," she wrote in the letter to the Prime Minister.



Extreme weather: The flooded bank of the Teesta river following heavy downpour, in Siliguri, West Bengal, on June 14. PTI



**BELGRADE**

**Attacker with crossbow killed outside Israeli embassy in Serbia**



A Serbian police officer on Saturday killed a man who shot him in the neck with a crossbow in front of the Israeli embassy in Belgrade, the Serbian Interior Minister said. Some arrests were made and a number of people known to the security services were suspected of being linked to the attack. AFP

**KYIV**

**Russian attacks on south and east regions of Ukraine kill 10 persons**



Russian strikes on a southern Ukrainian town and villages in the embattled Donetsk region killed 10 persons on Saturday. An attack on Vilniensk in south Ukraine killed six civilians and wounded eight. Three persons were killed in an attack on Zarichne in Donetsk while another was killed in the frontline village of New York. AFP

**ULAANBAATAR**

**Mongolia's ruling People's Party wins parliamentary elections**



Mongolia's ruling party, the People's Party (MPP), emerged from this week's polls with its parliamentary majority reduced on Saturday, after a campaign dominated by graft fears and the state of the economy. Prime Minister Luvsannamsrain Oyun-Erdene's MPP won 68 seats, giving it a majority of four in the 126 member House. AFP

**BEIRUT**

**IS killed more than 4,000 since Syria territorial defeat: monitor**



Islamic State fighters have killed nearly 4,100 people in Syria since 2019 when the jihadists lost their last stronghold in the country, a war monitor said on Saturday. IS overran large swathes of Syria and Iraq in 2014, proclaiming a so-called caliphate and launching a reign of terror in June of that year. AFP

**Iran warns of full-blown war if Hezbollah is attacked**

Agence France-Presse  
TEHRAN

Iran on Saturday warned that "all Resistance Fronts", a grouping of Iran and its regional allies, would confront Israel if it attacks Hezbollah. The comment from Iran's mission to New York comes with fears of a wider regional war involving Israel and Lebanon's Iran-backed Hezbollah movement. The two sides have engaged in near-daily exchanges of fire since the war in Gaza began. Israel's military said plans for a Lebanon offensive had been "approved and validated", prompting Hezbollah to respond that none of Israel would be spared in a full-blown conflict.

**Iran to have run-off between reformist and conservative**

Masoud Pezeshkian gets 42.4% of the vote while Saeed Jalili wins 38.6% votes; only slightly more than 40% of the 61 million electorate took part in the first round – a record low turnout

Agence France-Presse  
TEHRAN

The sole reformist in Iran's presidential election, Masoud Pezeshkian, will face the conservative Saeed Jalili in a run-off, authorities said on Saturday, following a vote marred by historically low turnout.

Mr. Pezeshkian, 69, secured 42.4% of the vote, while Mr. Jalili, a 58-year-old former nuclear negotiator, came second with 38.6%, according to voting figures announced by Mohsen Eslami, spokesperson for Iran's elections authority.

Conservative parliament speaker Mohammad



Limited choice: Saeed Jalili is an ultraconservative former nuclear negotiator while Masoud Pezeshkian is a reformist candidate. AFP

Bagher Ghalibaf was next with 13.8% of the vote, while the only other candidate, conservative cleric Mostafa Pourmohammadi, received less than 1%. "None of the candidates

could garner the absolute majority of the votes," Mr. Eslami said, adding that those who finished first and second would face each other in a runoff next Friday.

Only slightly more than 40% of the 61 million electorate took part in Friday's first round – a record low turnout for the Islamic republic.

The electoral authority said more than one million ballots were spoiled.

Out of Iran's 13 previous presidential elections since the 1979 Islamic Revolution, only one has led to a run-off, which occurred in 2005.

**Raisi's death**

The poll had been scheduled to take place in 2025 but was brought forward by the death of conservative President Ebrahim Raisi in a helicopter crash last month.

**Women's rights is an internal issue, say Taliban before talks**

Agence France-Presse  
KABUL

Taliban authorities said on Saturday that demands over women's rights were "Afghanistan's issues" to solve, ahead of United Nations-led engagement talks where the exclusion of Afghan women has sparked outcry.

The Taliban, which has imposed restrictions on women since seizing power in 2021 that the UN has described as "gender apartheid", will send its first delegation to the third round of talks starting in Qatar on Sunday.

Civil society representatives, including from women's rights groups, will attend meetings with the international envoys and UN officials on Tuesday, after the official talks. Rights groups have condemned



Tough life: The United Nations has labelled the restrictions imposed on Afghan women by Taliban as gender apartheid. AFP

the exclusion of Afghan women from the main meetings and the lack of human rights issues on the agenda.

The Taliban authorities "acknowledge the issues about women", government spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid said in Kabul on the eve of the latest talks. "But these issues are Afghanistan's issues," said

Mujahid, who will lead the delegation.

He said the Taliban government would represent all of Afghanistan at the meetings and, given their authority, should be the only Afghans at the table.

"If Afghans participate through several channels, it means we are still scattered, our nation is still not unified," he said.

**'At least 30 killed in anti-government protests in Kenya'**

Agence France-Presse  
NAIROBI

At least 30 people died in protests in Kenya this week sparked by a government drive to substantially raise taxes in the East African country, Human Rights Watch said Saturday.

"Kenyan security forces shot directly into crowds of protesters on (Tuesday) June 25, 2024," the NGO said in a statement.

"Although there is no confirmation on the exact number of people killed in Nairobi and other towns,

Human Rights Watch found that at least 30 people had been killed on that day based on witness accounts, publicly available information, hospital and mortuary records in Nairobi as well as witness accounts," the statement said. "Shooting directly into crowds without justification, including as protesters try to flee, is completely unacceptable under Kenyan and international law," said Otsieno Namwaya, associate Africa director at Human Rights Watch.

**Gazans living in bombed-out buildings and camps near piles of trash: UNRWA**

Agence France-Presse  
GENEVA

Gazans are forced to live in bombed-out buildings or camp next to giant piles of trash, a United Nations spokeswoman said on Friday, denouncing the "unbearable" conditions in the besieged territory.

Louise Wateridge from UNRWA, the UN agency supporting Palestinian refugees, described the "extremely dire" living conditions in the Gaza Strip.

"It's really unbearable," she told reporters in Geneva, via video-link from central Gaza.



Piecing together: A man carries salvaged items following an Israeli raid in Rafah on the southern Gaza Strip on Saturday. AFP

Ms. Wateridge, who returned on Wednesday after four weeks outside the territory, said that even in

that time the situation had "significantly deteriorated". "Today, it has to be the

worst it's ever been. I don't doubt that tomorrow again will be the worst it's ever been," she said.

Nearly nine months into the war between Israel and Hamas, Ms. Wateridge said the Gaza Strip had been "destroyed".

She said she had been "shocked" on returning to Khan Yunis in central Gaza.

"The buildings are skeletons, if at all. Everything is rubble," she said. "And yet people are living there again. With no bathrooms, 'people are relieving themselves anywhere they can'.

**German far-right party AfD re-elects leaders at convention**

Associated Press  
BERLIN

The far-right Alternative for Germany or AfD, re-elected its leadership duo on Saturday after the party made gains in the recent European election, while thousands of people protested against its convention and some demonstrators tried to block roads or clashed with police.

The AfD took 15.9% of the vote to finish second in the European Parliament election which was held on June 9, despite recent scan-

dals and setbacks. At the regular two-day convention in the western city of Essen, co-leaders Alice Weidel and Tino Chrupalla were elected unopposed to new two-year terms. They were backed by 79.8% and 82.7% of delegates respectively – a display of harmony by the party's often-argumentative standards.

Ms. Weidel vowed to work to "tear down the unspeakable so-called firewalls" that other parties have set up against working with AfD.

**Sport**

**Vinicius special drives Brazil to big win over Paraguay**

**COPA AMERICA**

Reuters  
LAS VEGAS

Brazil's Vinicius Junior scored twice in his side's 4-1 Copa America victory over Paraguay in a Group D clash in Nevada on Friday, bouncing back from a lacklustre display in his first game of the tournament.

**Colombia advances**

Colombia cruised to a 3-0 win over Costa Rica in Group D and booked its spot in the quarterfinals thanks to strikes from Luis Diaz, Davinson Sanchez and Jhon Cordoba.

Colombia tops Group D with six points after two matches, with Brazil in second on four points.

Costa Rica is third with one point and Paraguay,



Influential: After largely being anonymous in Brazil's first match, Vinicius stepped up with a brace against Paraguay. AFP

bottom with zero after two defeats, has been eliminated.

From the whistle, Vinicius' pace and trickery posed a constant threat to

Paraguay down the left flank, a far cry from his performance in Brazil's

0-0 draw with Costa Rica in their opening group stage match, in which he was largely ineffectual.

Despite Brazil's strong start, it was Paraguay which almost went ahead in the 15th minute as Damian Bobadilla's goal-bound effort took a massive deflection off Eder Militao and nearly wrongfooted Brazil goalkeeper Alisson Becker, who showed quick reflexes to keep out the strike.

**Penalty miss**

Brazil earned a 28th-minute penalty for a handball, which was fired wide by Lucas Paqueta, but the midfielder made up for his miss seven minutes later as he set up Vinicius with a first-time pass to cap off a flowing team move.

Girona winger Savio doubled Brazil's advantage

after pouncing on a rebound inside the box, before Vinicius stuck out a boot to divert a clearance from Omar Alderete into the net for his second goal of the night in first half stoppage time.

Paraguay got a goal back after the break as Alderete netted a superb long-range, but any hopes of a comeback were swiftly dashed when Brazil was awarded a penalty in the 68th minute after a handball by Mathias Villasanti.

Despite his earlier miss, Paqueta stepped up and made no mistake at the second time of asking to send Brazil's fans at the Allegiant Stadium into delirium.

The results: Colombia 3 (Diaz 31-pen, Sanchez 59, Cordoba 62) bt Costa Rica 0; Paraguay 1 (Alderete 48) lost to Brazil 4 (Vinicius Jr 35, 45+5, Savio 43, Paqueta 65-pen).

**Malvika shocks Kristy, enters the semifinals**

**BADMINTON**

Press Trust of India  
FORT WORTH

India's Malvika Bansod stunned Scotland's Kristy Gilmour in a thrilling three-game match to advance to the women's singles semifinals of the US Open Super 300 badminton tournament here.

The 22-year-old, ranked 49th, registered a 10-21, 21-15, 21-10 win over Kristy, the 2014 Commonwealth Games silver medalist. Malvika had defeated Kristy at the Hylo Open in 2022 when the Scot had retired in the second game due to an injury. The Indian had lost twice to Kristy in the past.

The Indian, who had

won the Azerbaijan International Challenge this year, will face sixth-seeded Japanese Natsuki Nidaira.

In men's singles, Priyanshu Rajawat lost to fourth seed Lei Lan Xi of China 21-15, 11-21, 18-21 in a last-eight contest that lasted just over an hour.

Second seeds Treesa Jolly and Gayatri Gopichand went down 17-21, 21-17, 19-21 to Japanese sixth seeds Rui Hirokami and Yuna Kato in the quarterfinals.

The results: Men, pre-quarterfinals: Lei Lan Xi (Chn) bt Priyanshu Rajawat 15-21, 21-11, 21-18. Women, quarterfinals: Malvika Bansod bt Kristy Gilmour (Sco) 10-21, 21-15, 21-10. Doubles: Rui Hirokami/ Yuna Kato (Jpn) bt Treesa Jolly/ Gayatri Gopichand 21-17, 17-21, 21-19.

**NEW HIGH**

**India's 176 the highest team score in a T20 World Cup summit clash**



K.R. DEEPAK

India's score of 176 for seven against South Africa in Bridgetown (Barbados) on Saturday is the highest team score in a T20 World Cup final. The previous highest in a title clash belonged to Australia when it made 173 against New Zealand in Dubai in the 2021 summit clash while chasing 172.

**RECORD**

**Kohli-Axar partnership the biggest for India for any wicket in a final**



K.R. DEEPAK

Virat Kohli and Axar Patel broke the record for the highest partnership for India for any wicket in a T20 World Cup final. The duo added 72 for the fourth wicket after India had slipped to 34 for three, and bettered the record held by Gautam Gambhir and Yuvraj Singh who had added 63 during the final against Pakistan in 2007.

**DOING IT AGAIN**

**Kohli makes second-highest score by an Indian in a T20 WC final**



K.R. DEEPAK

Virat Kohli's 76 in the final of the T20 World Cup 2024 against South Africa is the second-highest individual score by an Indian batter in the title clash. Kohli holds the record (77 vs Sri Lanka in the 2014 final). The best in a final is West Indies batter Marlon Samuels, who struck an unbeaten 85 against England in 2016.

**JITTERS**

**'We never got comfortable, there was always scoreboard pressure'**



K.R. DEEPAK

A "gutted" South Africa captain Aiden Markram conceded that scoreboard pressure got to his team in the T20 World Cup final. "We never got comfortable and there was always scoreboard pressure. Having said that, this was a really good game which proves that we were worthy finalists," Markram said.

# Rohit's 'Miracle Men' conjure stunning title win

Kohli and Axar's stand helps India reach 176 for seven; South Africa comes within touching distance only for the Hardik-Bumrah-Arshdeep trio to wrest back control and deliver the knockout punch



**Masters of the globe:** India went unbeaten to clinch its second World T20 crown, 17 years after winning the inaugural edition in South Africa. The triumph should banish the painful memories of the ODI World Cup loss at home last year. K.R. DEEPAK

**T20 WORLD CUP**

**Ashwin Achal**  
BRIDGETOWN (BARBADOS)

The long wait is over. India is world champion again. In a classic ICC Men's T20 World Cup final sure to be remembered for years to come, India made history with a nail-biting seven-run win over South Africa.

And with it came the celebrations. There was an undeniable sense of relief as well, as India finally managed to cross the final hurdle after two heart-breaking falls in just the last year.

This time around, Rohit Sharma announced their retirements from T20Is after India's T20 World Cup win. "This is my last T20 game for India, the last [T20] World Cup I was going to play," Kohli said. "I wanted to make the most of it and this was our aim. We wanted to win an ICC tournament, we wanted to lift the cup. As I said, it was the occasion that helped me put my head down and respect the situation rather than try to force things out there."

Moments later, captain Rohit took everyone by surprise when he said he

Blue were unwilling to throw in the towel. Nothing could stop the Indians from wearing that coveted crown.

When the job was done, Virat Kohli looked up to the sky with hands aloft. Rohit was mobbed by his teammates, and the support staff ran on to the ground with the National flag. An emotional Hardik Pandya grabbed the tri-colour, and walked over to grab a piece of the pitch.

**Man for the moment**

It was sweet, sweet redemption for Kohli, who came good with the bat when it mattered. His 59-ball 76 may not have set the pulse racing, but it immensely helped the team's cause. India found two more heroes in Jasprit Bumrah and Suryakumar Yadav. With a miserly 18th over, Bumrah tightened the screws on South Africa.

The ace speedster conceded two runs and picked up a wicket in those six balls, which put the Proteas in a tight spot.

The final nail in the coffin was driven by Suryakumar, who pulled off a brilliant catch to dismiss David Miller in the last over. A juggling effort from Suryakumar at long-off sent the last recognised batter back. South Africa was knocked out cold.

After winning the toss, India made a challenging 176 for seven. There was concern among the Indian fans at the Kensington Oval when India slipped to 34 for three.

India was forced to rebuild. Axar Patel and Kohli calmed nerves with sensible batting. Using clean technique and shots along the ground, Kohli stuck in for the long haul. Axar knew his role well, having performed this task against

Pakistan earlier in the tournament.

A 72-run fourth-wicket partnership was exactly what India needed to stay afloat. There could have been more, if not for a lazy piece of running from Axar. Though halfway down the track, Axar had time to turn back and make the crease. Axar, however, stopped in his tracks for a moment. Wicketkeeper Quinton de Kock took full advantage, throwing down the stumps at the bowler's end to catch Axar short.

Kohli's desire to make it count was evident when he did not acknowledge cheers for his fifty.

The time to take it all in would come later. The evening ended with a lap of honour, with hugs and greetings from Chris Gayle and other past stalwarts.

And in spirit, millions of Indians around the world joined in the festivities.

**SCOREBOARD**

**INDIA**  
Rohit Sharma c Klaasen b Maharaj 9 (5b, 2x4), Virat Kohli c Rabada b Jansen 76 (59b, 6x4, 2x6), Rishabh Pant c de Kock b Maharaj 0 (2b), Suryakumar Yadav c Klaasen b Rabada 3 (4b), Axar Patel run out 47 (31b, 1x4, 4x6), Shivam Dube c Miller b Nortje 27 (16b, 3x4, 1x6), Hardik Pandya (not out) 5 (2b, 1x4), Ravindra Jadeja c Maharaj b Nortje 2 (2b); Extras (nb-1, w-6): 7; Total (for seven wkts. in 20 overs): 176.

**FALL OF WICKETS**  
1-23 (Rohit, 1.4 overs), 2-23 (Pant, 1.6), 3-34 (Suryakumar, 4.3), 4-106 (Axar, 13.3), 5-163 (Kohli, 18.5), 6-174 (Dube, 19.4), 7-176 (Jadeja, 19.6).

**SOUTH AFRICA BOWLING**  
Jansen 4-0-49-1, Maharaj 3-0-23-2, Rabada 4-0-36-1, Markram 2-0-16-0, Nortje 4-0-26-2, Shamsi 3-0-26-0.

**SOUTH AFRICA**  
Reeza Hendricks b Bumrah 4 (5b, 1x4), Quinton de Kock c Kuldeep b Arshdeep 39 (31b, 4x4, 1x6), Aiden Markram c Pant b

**Unbelievable turnaround**

South Africa needed 26 runs off 24 deliveries, with six wickets in hand and the well-set Klaasen and dangerous Miller at the crease, when this happened



Over	W	0	1	1	1	1
Over 17						
Hardik	Klaasen					
Over 18	0	0	1	W	0	1
Bumrah			Jansen			
Over 19	0	0	1	2	1	0
Arshdeep						
Over 20	W	4	1b	1lb	WD	W
Hardik	Miller					Rabada

# Golden sunset for Kohli and Rohit as stalwarts call time on T20I careers

**Ayan Acharya**  
BRIDGETOWN (BARBADOS)

Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma announced their retirements from T20Is after India's T20 World Cup win.

"This is my last T20 game for India, the last [T20] World Cup I was going to play," Kohli said. "I wanted to make the most of it and this was our aim. We wanted to win an ICC tournament, we wanted to lift the cup. As I said, it was the occasion that helped me put my head down and respect the situation rather than try to force things out there."

Moments later, captain Rohit took everyone by surprise when he said he



**Signing off in style:** Kohli's final T20I innings proved crucial in India's victory while Rohit led the side with aplomb. K.R. DEEPAK

too was bringing down the curtain on his T20I career. "This was my last [T20I] game as well," Rohit said in response to a question at the press conference after

the final. "No better time to say goodbye to this format. I've loved every moment of this. I started my India career playing this format. This is what I wanted, I

**Honours Board**

2007	India
2009	Pakistan
2010	England
2012	West Indies
2014	Sri Lanka
2016	West Indies
2021	Australia
2022	England
2024	India

wanted to win the cup." After the game, Rohit was effusive in his praise for Kohli. "No one doubted Virat's form. He's been on top of his game for the last 15 years. When the occasion calls, big players stand up."

**Nerves of steel**



**The catch that won the match:** With the contest in the balance, Suryakumar caught Miller spectacularly at long-off. K.R. DEEPAK



**IN BRIEF**



**Shiven, Aadya emerge boys' u-15 and girls' u-13 champs**

India's Shiven Agarwal and Aadya Budhia emerged the boys' u-15 and girls' u-13 champions in the 31st Asian junior individual squash championships which concluded in Islamabad on Saturday. Shiven got the better of Malaysian Muhammad Raziq Putra Mohd Fakhru Razi 11-7, 8-11, 11-5, 13-11 in the final, while Aadya put it past her compatriot Goushika 11-5, 11-5, 11-4. India won two gold medals in the championship after a gap of 12 years.

**Praggnanandhaa lets Gukesh off the hook**

Grandmaster R. Praggnanandhaa missed out on becoming a joint leader at the the Superbet Classic chess tournament after settling for a draw against compatriot D. Gukesh in the third round here. Praggnanandhaa had a great opportunity to equalise the score this year but could not find a winning continuation after Gukesh spoiled a drawn endgame.

**The results: (third round):** D. Gukesh (2) drew with R Praggnanandhaa (1.5); Maxime Vachier-Lagrave (Fra, 1.5) drew with Firoozza Alireza (Fra, 1.5); Anish Giri (Ned, 1.5) drew with Ian Nepomniachtchi (FID, 1.5); Nodirbek Abdusattorov (Uzb, 1) drew with Fabiano Caruana (Usa, 2); Wesley So (Usa, 1.5) drew with Deac Bogdan-Daniel (Rom, 1).



**Ducati's Bagnaia wins Dutch MotoGP sprint**

Two-time defending world champion Francesco Bagnaia won the Dutch MotoGP sprint at Assen on Saturday ahead of current championship leader Jorge Martin and fellow Spaniard Maverick Vinales.

**Verstappen wins sprint, takes pole**



**AUSTRIAN GP**

**Reuters**  
SPIELBERG

Max Verstappen is looking unbeatable again at the Austrian Grand Prix. The Formula 1 leader followed up his win in the sprint race on Saturday with another dominant performance in qualifying to take pole for the fourth straight year at the Red Bull Ring.

It ended a streak of three straight races where the three-time defending F1 champion failed to take pole position, and dealt a blow to his closest rivals who hoped to challenge him on Red Bull's home circuit this weekend.

"It's been a while that we've actually been on pole. So it's a great feeling," Verstappen said. "This is a great statement and hopefully we can also show that tomorrow in the race." After qualifying in the last three races was decided by narrow margins, this one wasn't even close as Verstappen's final lap in third qualifying beat McLaren's Lando Norris by 0.404s.

**Switzerland sends holder Italy packing from the Euro 2024**

**Agence France-Presse**  
BERLIN

Switzerland dumped reigning champion Italy out of Euro 2024 with a stunning 2-0 victory on Saturday to reach the quarter-finals for the second time in its history.

Murat Yakin's supremely well-drilled side outplayed the flat two-time winner in the last 16 clash and will face England or Slovakia in the next round.

Ruben Vargas teed up Remo Freuler for Switzerland's 37th minute opener before curling home superbly himself right at the start of the second half to deservedly double the lead.

A new-look Italy, short on star power and without many of the key figures that led it to Euro 2020 glory, offered little in res-



**Class act:** Vargas, who set up Switzerland's opener, curls in a stunner for the second. AFP

**South Africa fights back through Luus and Kapp**

The two batters score half-centuries with the Proteas' hopes resting on the latter's shoulders; Sneh (three for 61) is the pick of the Indian bowlers with her guile and extra bounce

**SA IN INDIA**

**S. Dipak Ragav**  
CHENNAI

Half-centuries from Sune Luus (65) and Marizanne Kapp (69 batting) helped South Africa hold its own against India on day two of the one-off Test at the MAC Stadium on Saturday. The Proteas ended the day at 232 for four after India declared at 603 for six – the highest total by a team in women's Tests.

Resuming on 525 for four, India went past Australia's record of 575, as skipper Harmanpreet Kaur (69) and Richa Ghosh (86) completed their half-centuries.

Richa entertained the crowd that had turned out early, essaying beautiful shots on both sides of the wicket. She reached her fifty with a flick to the leg-side and then pressed the accelerator.

Just when the two batters looked set for a ton, South Africa struck twice in three overs and forced the host to declare. Harmanpreet was out leg-before to pacer Tumi Sekhukhune, while Richa was trapped in front trying to sweep left-arm spinner Nonkululeko Mlaba.

When South Africa began its reply, skipper Laura Wolvaardt and Anneke Bosch started positively seeing off the half-hour session prior to lunch.

**Useful partnership**

After losing Wolvaardt early in the second session, Bosch and Luus steadied things with their 63-run partnership for the second wicket and kept the Indian spinners at bay for most of the second session. Just



**Picture of concentration:** Kapp showed her class with some exquisite boundaries through the off-side. B. JOTHI RAMALINGAM

**SCOREBOARD**

**INDIA — 1ST INNINGS**

Shafali Verma run out 205 (197b, 23x4, 8x6), Smriti Mandhana c Dercksen b Tucker 149 (161b, 27x4, 1x6), Shubha Sathesh c Jafta b de Klerk 15 (27b, 2x4), Jemimah Rodrigues c de Klerk b Tucker 55 (94b, 8x4), Harmanpreet Kaur lbw b Sekhukhune 69 (115b, 4x4), Richa Ghosh lbw b Mlaba 86 (90b, 16x4), Deepti Sharma (not out) 2 (7b); Extras (b-16, lb-6): 22; Total (for six wkts. decl. in 115.1 overs): 603.

**FALL OF WICKETS**

1-292 (Smriti, 51.6 overs), 2-325 (Shubha, 58.6), 3-411 (Shafali, 74.1), 4-450 (Jemimah, 86.6), 5-593 (Harmanpreet, 112.4), 6-603 (Richa, 115.1).

**SOUTH AFRICA BOWLING**

Klaas 17-2-74-0, Dercksen 17-0-80-0, de Klerk 12-1-79-1,

Sekhukhune 14-0-70-1, Mlaba 26.1-1-122-1, Tucker 26-1-141-2, Luus 3-0-15-0.

**SOUTH AFRICA — 1ST INNINGS**

Laura Wolvaardt lbw b Sneh 20 (36b, 3x4), Anneke Bosch c Deepti b Sneh 39 (73b, 4x4, 1x6), Sune Luus lbw b Deepti 65 (164b, 6x4, 1x6), Marizanne Kapp (batting) 69 (125b, 8x4), Delmi Tucker c Richa b Sneh 0 (8b), Nadine de Klerk (batting) 27 (28b, 5x4); Extras (b-14, nb-2): 16; Total (for four wkts. in 72 overs): 236.

**FALL OF WICKETS**

1-33 (Wolvaardt, 7.6), 2-96 (Bosch, 30.4), 3-189 (Luus, 59.5), 4-198 (Tucker, 62.4).

**INDIA BOWLING**

Renuka 7-0-22-0, Pooja 9-2-32-0, Sneh 20-2-61-3, Rajeshwari 16-3-50-0, Deepti 15-3-40-1, Harmanpreet 3-0-9-0, Smriti 2-0-8-0.

before tea, Sneh Rana had Bosch caught at slip.

The South African batters showed great application, using the depth of the crease and waiting for the

bad deliveries to put away on a pitch beginning to assist the spinners.

For India, Sneh (three for 61) was the best bowler on the day, beating the bat-

ters with her guile and extra bounce.

The Indian catching, though, was shoddy as Luus got two reprieves – on 38 and 44. First 'keeper Richa dropped an edge off Sneh and then Sneh missed a sharp catch at first slip off Deepti Sharma.

In the final session, Kapp showed her class, batting positively with some glorious boundaries through the off-side off pacer Pooja Vastrakar and got to her half-century in style, driving left-arm spinner Rajeshwari Gayakwad to the long-off boundary.

Though South Africa fought back on the second day, it still needs another 221 runs to avoid the follow-on, and the side will need Kapp to make a big one.

Meanwhile, the Indian bowlers will look to be more clinical on the field and get to the lower-order quickly.

**We stuck to our gameplan: Luus**



**Patient knock:** Luus was involved in two useful partnerships to help the Proteas dig in. B. JOTHI RAMALINGAM

**S. Prasanna Venkatesan**  
CHENNAI

Sune Luus' 65 and her 63-run second-wicket stand with Anneke Bosch (39) and 93-run third-wicket partnership with Marizanne Kapp (69 batting) helped South Africa dig in to 236 for four against India here on Saturday.

It is to be commended as the batters had to contend with the Chennai heat, low bounce, and sharp turn from the Indian spinners.

"I think we just stuck to our game plans. We obviously had certain plans against the various bowlers, and then we felt using the depth of our crease and just keeping a straight bat.

"We had four days (after the ODIs). It feels long, but we only had two days to prepare for the Test. I think your game plan is just to bat longer, be patient, and have a good defence.

"Playing in India, it's one of the toughest Test matches you'll play in your career. I think Perth felt like winter when I look back now (to the Test vs Australia in February), compared to Chennai. Today was really one of the hottest days I've ever experienced in my long career," she said after the second day of the one-off Test.

Luus attributed her team's impressive batting to their new coach Baakier

Abrahams and the spin-centric camp they had before the ODI series. "I think we obviously got the new batting coach on board with some new ideas and a fresh perspective on things.

"And he really helped us just to tweak one or two things, just to add some elements to the game that could help us in this situation. Like I mentioned earlier, using the depth of the crease. So, all those things coming into play today to really just help us," she said.

On the conversations she had with Kapp during their partnership, she said: "There was a lot of conversation about just me keeping her calm today.

"She knew that she needed to be patient and still has a long way to go. She just needed to be level-headed and she just asked me to help her out with that."

**LIVE TELECAST**

**India Women vs South Africa Women:** Only Test, day 3, Sports 18-1 & JioCinema, 9.30 a.m.

**Hockey:** Pro League, Sports 18-1 & JioCinema, 6.30 p.m.

**Formula One:** Austrian GP, F1 TV, F1 TV Pro App & FanCode, 6.30 p.m.

**Football:** Euro 2024, Sony Sports Ten 2, 3, 5 & LIV, 9.30 p.m. & 12.30 a.m. (Monday)

**Badminton:** US Open, Sports 18-1 & JioCinema, 10.30 p.m.

**Sable overwrites own meet record, Kushare consolidates Paris spot**

**ATHLETICS**

**Uthra Ganesan**  
PANCHKULA

Avinash Sable was far from his best but still ahead of the rest of the pack by a distance as he practically sauntered to win the 3000m steeplechase on day three of the 63rd Inter-State athletics championships here on Saturday.

The national record holder, who has already attained the Paris Olympic qualifying standard, clocked 8:31.75 to overwrite his own previous meet record of 8:33.19, set five years ago in Lucknow.

That was also the last time he had participated in the Inter-State meet. Despite the slow race, Sable was satisfied with his effort, saying he had run only at 75-80%.

"I think I am peaking at the right time. Earlier, I had thought of entering the 1500m to check my speed.

"But given the weather and conditions here, I thought I would have to put more effort in 1500m and so decided against it," Sable admitted.

On Saturday, he explained, his main aim was to check his progress and so had started slowly for the first kilometre.

"But then I realised I was not putting any effort at all and started pulling harder for the remaining laps," he said. The change



**Doing it in style:** Sarvesh continued his brilliant season, equalling the six-year old meet record. RITU RAJ KONWAR

was evident in the way he broke away from the rest of the pack to lead by more than 250m by the time he neared the finish line.

"Earlier I used to start my season early and then train quietly before the big events without any competition to actually check myself. This time I have decided to mix training and competition closer to the Olympics.

"At the Paris Diamond League also I will not try to go full out. My main focus during training has been on the final kick and I have learnt from my previous mistakes," he said confidently.

In high jump, Sarvesh Kushare continued his bril-

liant season, equalling the six-year old meet record of 2.25m for a season's best to further consolidate his position on the Road to Paris rankings (he is currently 29th).

In shot put, Tajinderpal Singh Toor went all out in final attempt to take the top spot with 19.93m, then admitted he was still recovering and far from full fitness but insisted he would be ready for Paris. Toor too has qualified through the world-rankings quota.

**The results (only finals): Men: 3000m Steeplechase:** 1. Avinash Sable (Mah, 8:31.75), 2. Sumit Kumar (MP, 8:46.93), 3. Shankar Swami (Har, 8:47.05); **pole vault:** 1. Yugendran (TN, 5m), 2. M. Gowtham (TN, 4.90m), 3. Lakshay (Har, 4.90m); **hammer**

**throw:** 1. Praveen Kumar (Raj, 68.76m), 2. Damneet Singh (Pun, 66.40m), 3. Mohd. Shahban (UP, 65.02m); **shot put:** 1. Tajinderpal Singh Toor (19.93m), 2. Samardeep Gill (MP, 19.68m), 3. Aryan Tyagi (UP, 18.02m); **high jump:** 1. Sarvesh Kushare (Mah, 2.25m), 2. Tejaswin Shankar (Del, 2.23m), 3. Jesse Sandesh (Kar, 2.18m); **long jump:** 1. Arya (Kar, 7.78m), 2. Jesvin Aldrin (TN, 7.75m), 3. Aravindh (TN, 7.73m); **decathlon:** 1. N. Thowfeeq (Ker, 7042 pts), 2. Jashbir Nayak (Odi, 6791), 3. Rohit Roman (AP, 6667).

**Women: 3000m Steeplechase:** 1. Parul Chaudhary (UP, 9:45.70), 2. Komal Jagadale (Mah, 10:12.64), 3. Chhavi Yadav (MP, 10:13.58); **20km walk:** 1. Ravina (Har, 1:39:53.00), 2. Munita Prajapati (UP, 1:40:20.00), 3. Sejal Singh (Mah, 1:41:28.00); **discus:** 1. Seema (Har, 57.19m), 2. Nidhi (Har, 52.06m), 3. Priti (Raj, 49.40m).

**'We were focusing more on stock balls'**

**Sports Bureau**  
CHENNAI

Sneh Rana, who's playing for India after six months, was the standout bowler with three for 61 on the second day of the one-off Test against South Africa here on Saturday.

Asked how she keeps herself motivated and about her preparation, she said: "We had the BCCI inter-zonal multi-day tournament for motivation. I think a player should always be motivated. Any challenge is given to you, you have to be spot on.

Speaking about the pitch behaviour and India's bowling plan on the day, she said: "We were focusing more on our stock balls. In Test cricket, fielding is the only way to dominate the other team. So we focused more on fielding well.

"In the beginning, there was not much turn. But later on, as the wicket got older, I think we saw more bounce on the wicket and there was more turn."



Sneh. B. JOTHI RAMALINGAM

# Slovakia no pushover for misfiring England

Denmark will be the underdog when it takes on Germany, but that suits it just fine as it seeks to channel the spirit of 1992

Reuters  
BLANKENHAIN

Gareth Southgate's hesitant England team will need to finally make its presence felt in Euro 2024 against Slovakia in the last-16, or the underdog Slovaks will fancy their chances.

Southgate's richly talented squad arrived in Germany as a tournament favourite but optimism around the 2020 runner-up fizzled with three drab group games mired in uncertainty over the best line-up, with the coach conceding an "experiment" in the early matches



had failed.

Slovakia, on the other hand, kicked off its campaign by shocking No. 3 Belgium.

Slovakia boss Francesco Calzona called his team the Cinderella story of the group stage.

England at least showed some improvement in the second half of its 0-0 draw with Slovenia on Tuesday, with Kobbie Mainoo and Cole Palmer impressing off the bench.

While England's defence was a major concern

ahead of the tournament with veterans such as Harry Maguire missing due to injury, it has been the best part of this campaign. Through the group phase England have offered up the least expected goals (xG).

Southgate will hope for a better performance from Jude Bellingham, who was excellent in the first half against Serbia, but drifted out of the two games since.

Slovakia is led by crafty Napoli midfielder Stanislav Lobotka, who Italian great

Andrea Pirlo called the "best playmaker in the Italian league."

Later in the day, Denmark will be the underdog when it takes on Germany, but that suits it just fine as it seeks to channel the spirit of 1992.

Since the draw was confirmed, much has been said in Denmark about its unexpected win over Germany in the final of the European Championship more than three decades ago.

The Danish are far less of a surprise package at Euro 2024, having gone to the semifinals in the last edition, and though they have struggled for goals in the group stage, they still fancy their chances of springing another upset.

Denmark may have to take on Germany with a depleted midfield, and a late decision will need to be taken over the fitness of playmaker Christian Eriksen.



# India makes the quarterfinals

BADMINTON

Press Trust of India  
YOGYAKARTA (INDONESIA)

India booked quarterfinals berth at the Badminton Asia Junior Mixed Team Championship with a 3-2 victory over Philippines in its second Group-C clash here on Saturday.

The Indian team, which had blanked Vietnam 5-0 in their tournament opener, made a couple of changes to their line-up with Rounak Chauhan replacing Pranay Shettigar in boys' singles and K Vennala combining with Shravani Walekar in girls' doubles.

The senior national women's singles finalist Tanvi Sharma started India's march with a 21-9, 21-17 win against Funtespina Christel Rei, but Chauhan could not maintain the momentum after winning the opening game against Jamal Rahmat Pandi and lost 15-21, 21-

18, 21-12.

Vennala and Shravani then put India ahead once again as they defeated Hernandes Andrea and Pecious Libaton 23-21, 21-11.

The boys' doubles combination of Arsh Mohammad and Sankar Sarawat then put the result beyond doubt with a 21-16, 21-14 win over Christian Dorega and John Lanza. The mixed doubles pair of Bhargav Ram Arigela and K Vennala lost final rubber.

Indonesia are also through to the quarterfinal having beaten Philippines 5-0 and Vietnam 4-1 in their two group matches.

**The results: India bt Philippines 3-2** (Tanvi Sharma bt Funtespina Christel Rei 21-9, 21-17; Rounak Chauhan lost to Jamal Rahmat Pandi 21-15, 18-21, 12-21; K Vennala/Shravani Walekar bt Hernandes Andrea/Precious Libaton 23-21, 21-11; Arsh Mohammad/Sankar Sarawat bt Christian Dorega/John Lanza 21-16, 21-14; Bhargav Ram Arigela/K Vennala lost to Jamal Pandi/Mary Untal 8-21, 15-21).

# We will go into this game with confidence, nothing to lose: Sagnol

Agence France-Presse  
COLOGNE

Georgia coach Willy Sagnol insisted that his team will enjoy every minute of Sunday's Euro 2024 clash with Spain.

"We will go into this game with a lot of confidence because we have absolutely nothing to lose. For me we have already won the European Championship and I am just excited to be on the pitch," said Sagnol.

Georgia is appearing at a major tournament for the first time and made it to the knockout phase with a remarkable 2-0 win over Cristiano Ronaldo's Portugal in their last group match.

Miraculous win

Its miraculous win was preceded by a 1-1 draw with the Czech Republic and a 3-1 loss to Turkey. Georgia progressed from Group F as one of the best third-placed finishers.

However, all the evidence suggests their run will come to an end against a Spain side who have been the most impressive team so far at the tournament, winning all three group games without letting in a goal.

Georgia have played



Marching on: A defiant Georgia will look to put up a strong fight against Spain in the round of 16. AFP

Spain four times since Frenchman Sagnol was appointed coach in early 2021, and have lost all four meetings.

They went down twice in the 2022 World Cup qualifiers, and then lost twice more in qualifying for this competition.

That included a chastening 7-1 reverse fixture at home in Tbilisi last September.

"It was a difficult mo-

ment for us but sometimes to get further in life you need moments like that, where it is very difficult, where you are not good, where you think you have done everything bad," Sagnol reflected.

"Without difficulties you can't have great achievements. It was part of our journey.

"If we are here today I am sure this 7-1 taught us a lot of things and we learnt

a lot of things from it."

The 47-year-old former France international added: "Spain are clearly the best team in the competition up until now so that is why it is going to be a tough match.

"We played four times against them, we lost four times, but now it is a different competition, a different atmosphere, a different environment, so many things can happen."

# Basketball Federation of India assures support for under-18 women

Sports Bureau  
NEW DELHI

The Basketball Federation of India (BFI) has taken several steps to wipe away the disappointment of missing the Asian championship for the Indian under-18 women.

The FIBA Asia had chosen the much lower-ranked Maldives ahead of India for the championship.

"Why are we not having a SABA zonal championship for women in that age group?"

"It is discriminatory when we have competition for the boys.

"India is ready to host any tournament", said BFI president, Aadhav Arjuna, during a media interaction in the capital.

Exposure tournament

Assuring all support for the under-18 women players, Arjuna said that an exposure tournament has been planned for the under-18 teams in Russia.

The training camp for the same will be held from July 9.

"We will call everyone. The under-18 players are the future of India. We stand strongly with the players. We are ready to support their education and give them scholarships.

"There will be a number of opportunities. Be ready," said Arjuna, suggesting that he would write a strong message to the world and Asian bodies, demanding a professional system that would respect merit and talent.

"We request the zonal and regional bodies to con-

duct tournaments for both men and women. Choose the best teams," he said.

On a different note, the BFI president also assured that the National championships would be held a lot more professionally from next season, with similar treatment for every team, in terms of quality accommodation, food and other facilities.

Initiatives

There are also other initiatives in the pipeline to strengthen Indian basketball.

# Vaidehi Chaudhari cruises into final

TENNIS

Sports Bureau  
COIMBATORE

Vaidehi Chaudhari outclassed Monique Barry of New Zealand 6-2, 6-0 in the semifinals of the \$25,000 ITF women's tennis tournament in Taipei, Taiwan, on Saturday.

The results:

\$25,000 ITF men, Hillcrest, South Africa: Semifinals: Devin

Badenhorst (RSA) bt Aryan Shah 4-6, 7-6(3), 6-4.

\$15,000 ITF women, Tianjin, China: Semifinals: S. Mukund bt Dong Zhenxiong (Chn) 7-5, 6-2.

\$40,000 ITF women, Palma del Rio, Spain: Doubles: Final: Martyna Kubka (Pol) & Lara Salden (Bel) bt Rutuja Bhosale & Sophie Chang (USA) 6-2, 6-1.

\$25,000 ITF men, Taipei: Semifinals: Vaidehi Chaudhari bt Monique Barry (Nzl) 6-2, 6-0.

\$15,000 ITF men, Los Angeles: Quarterfinals: Sahaja Yamalapalli bt Kate Fakih (USA) 6-1, 6-1.

# Dominant show by Hemanth Muddappa

MOTORSPORTS

Sports Bureau  
CHENNAI

Hemanth Muddappa (Mantra Racing) gave another dominant performance to notch a double crown in the first round of the MMSC FMSCI National motorcycle drag racing championships on Saturday.

Muddappa, a multiple National champion, won in two of the four categories he took part in, while finishing second in the others. He won the 302-metre dash in the Super Sport 1051-1650cc category astride a Suzuki Hayabusa and 551-850cc class on a Ninja 6R.

Provisional results (all four-stroke unless mentioned): Unrestricted: 1. Mujahid Pasha (Fast Track Racing) (08.251secs); 2. Hemanth Muddappa (Mantra Racing) (08.251s); 3. Alimon (Fast Track



Picture perfect: The round 1 winners of the National drag racing championships held here on Saturday.

Racing) (08.279s).  
1051-1650cc (Super Sport): 1. Muddappa (08.063s); 2. Pasha (08.103s); 3. Aymaan Baig (08.117s).  
851-1050cc (SS): 1. Anvay Patil (08.286s); 2. Muddappa (08.294s); 3. Sugan Prasad S.P. (Mantra Racing) (08.448).  
551-850cc (SS): 1. Muddappa (08.630s); 2. Mohammed Riyaz (Fast Track Racing) (08.675s); 3. Altaf Khan (Fast Track Racing) (09.112s).  
361-550cc (SS Indian): 1.

Shahrulkh Khan (Mantra Racing) (11.494s); 2. Imran (Fast Track Racing) (12.315s); 3. Pasha (12.452s).  
166-225cc (SS): 1. Prashanth (13.683s); 2. Prashanth K. (13.928s); 3. Shaninsha R. (14.395).  
Up to 165cc (SS Indian): 1. Madhan R (ACCYS India Rookies Racing) (13.896s); 2. Bharathraj J. (Rockers Racing) (14.081s); 3. Aravind Ganesh (ACCYS India Rookies Racing) (14.130s).  
Girls (Stock 165cc): 1.

Jagathishree Kumaresan (One Racing) (16.561s); 2. S.P. Shuria (One Racing) (16.894s); 3. Aisvarya (Motul Sparks Racing) (17.158s).  
2-Stroke (131-165cc, SS): 1. Imran (12.719s); 2. Prashanth (12.904); 3. Balasubramanian (ACCYS India Rookies Racing) (13.293s).  
2-Stroke (Up to 130cc, SS): 1. Balasubramanian (Big Boys Racing) (13.329s); 2. Shahrulkh (13.388s); 3. Madhan (Big Boys Racing) (13.425s).

# MRF Natl. supercross attracts 120 entries from across the country

Sports Bureau  
COIMBATORE

After setting the stages on fire in the opener at Nashik, the riders are ready to repeat their feat in the second round of the 22nd MRF MoGrip FMSCI National supercross championship scheduled at a make-shift venue, opposite Jenneys Club, on June 30.

MRF Tyres is the title sponsor and TVS Motor Company, Sidvin Energy, Servo, MX Store and Monster Energy are the associate sponsors.

The biggest off-road two-wheeler event has attracted 120 entries from across the country. "We are always happy to come here as the fans, who throng in large numbers, here have the knowledge

and the passion for the sport," said Shyam Kothari, a seven-time National champion and Head of Godspeed Racing, Pune, the rights-holder.

Shyam said the first round, a night event, was safe and easy flowing.

The good news is KTM Factory Racing India will field Shlok Ghorpade. "He is a force to reckon with. With three factory teams (TVS Racing, Hero MotoSports) in the fray now, it would be more exciting for the fans," he added.

Rain is expected over the weekend.

"It has been pouring in the night for the past one week. Given the current trend, it is good for us as there will be some traction in the morning," said Shyam and assured they were prepared for it.

## APPOINTMENT

Advocate for Fairness  
Become  
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Tamilnad Mercantile Bank Ltd., one of the leading Private Sector Banks on a high growth trajectory, invites applications from dynamic and solution oriented individuals for the following posts.

Internal Ombudsman (IO) on Contract Basis

Qualification : Any Graduate / Post Graduate from a recognised university under regular curriculum

Age : Not less than 50 years and not more than 65 years as on March 31, 2024

Tenure : On Contract basis for a period of 3 years

Eligibility & Experience : The Internal Ombudsman shall either be a retired or serving officer, in the rank equivalent to a General Manager of another bank / Financial Sector Regulatory Body / NBSP / NBFC / CIC, having necessary skills and experience of minimum seven years of working in areas such as banking, non-banking finance, regulation, supervision, payment and settlement systems, credit information or consumer protection.

The application should reach the Bank on or before 14.07.2024.

HOW TO APPLY : Candidates are requested to apply only ON-LINE through TMBS website [www.tmbnet.in/tmb\\_careers/](http://www.tmbnet.in/tmb_careers/). No other mode of submission of application will be accepted by the Bank. Register your correct email ID/ Mobile Number while creating User ID.

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**In action:** Rescue teams look for survivors at a stone quarry that collapsed following torrential rain brought by Cyclone Remal in Aizawl on May 28. REUTERS



**Flash flood:** The Old Courtallam falls in Tenkasi of Tamil Nadu saw a heavy overflow following rain on May 17. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT



**Soaked to the skin:** Women hazard crossing a road in pouring rain in Salem, Tamil Nadu, on June 3. E. LAKSHMI NARAYANAN



**Billboard tragedy:** A giant hoarding collapsed after a storm at Ghatkopar in Mumbai on May 13. It took away 17 lives and left at least 75 injured. Investigation revealed that the hoarding was erected on a weak foundation and had flouted standards. ANI

# In fear of freak weather

Extreme rainfall, unanticipated dust storms and unprecedented temperatures push cities and States across India into uncharted territory

**S**eparated by 1,500-odd kilometres but equal victims of freak weather, Delhi and Mumbai were buffeted by dust storms, a summer phenomenon, in a span of three days in May.

Conditions were ideal for dust storms with the blazing hot weather in the northern plains and in areas around the coastal metropolis of Mumbai. Accompanying these storms were rain and even thundershowers. The Mumbai storm did a lot of damage, sending a huge unauthorised hoarding crashing on a fuel pump where many commuters were filling up. The death toll was 17, and more than 75 people were injured. The 250-tonne hoarding was erected on massive metal frames but failed to meet many standards, including the need for a solid foundation.

While the Mumbai incident was not just an act of nature, the recent incident in Delhi airport where a portion of the roof collapsed causing the death of one person after heavy rain in the city has brought about conversations on how many

Indian towns and cities are under severe stress each time the monsoon comes calling.

June saw Delhi and Tamil Nadu recording the highest rainfall in a calendar month. Sudden rain in the Western Ghats triggered flash floods in the Old Courtallam waterfalls. A teenager who had come as part of a tourist group was washed away.

Floods and landslips in Sikkim led to disruptions in road connectivity. Indian Army engineers from Trishakti Corps constructed a 150-foot suspension bridge in northern Sikkim to reconnect the border villages that got marooned.

In Assam, over 5 lakh people were affected by floods. Three major rivers – the Kopili, Barak and Kushiya – were flowing above the danger level. Relief camps were set up to help those internally displaced.

According to the India Meteorological Department, isolated heavy rainfall is expected in Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Punjab, Haryana, Chandigarh, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, and Rajasthan till July 3.



**Showers of blessings:** A family braves the deluge to offer prayers at the Aluva Shiva Temple in Kochi on June 27. PTI



**Terminal mishap:** Restoration and relief work under way after the collapse of a canopy at Terminal 1 of Indira Gandhi International Airport after rain lashed New Delhi on June 28. One person was killed and five were injured. PTI



**Left stranded:** Vehicles stuck in mud and silt following landslips triggered by incessant rain in northern Sikkim on June 13. PTI



**On duty:** A mechanic repairs a two-wheeler under an umbrella held by his wife during rain in Chennai on June 25. AKHILA EASWARAN



**Monsoon magic:** While the rain can bring destruction, they also serve to showcase Nature in all its beauty. THULASI KAKKAT