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Akhilesh Yadav attends Trinamool Congress event

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Biden drops out of race, endorses Kamala Harris

He says the decision, which comes amid escalating pressure from Democratic allies, was made in the best interest of the party and country; adds that he will complete the remainder of the term

Associated Press
WASHINGTON

U.S. President Joe Biden dropped out of the 2024 race for the White House on Sunday, ending his bid for re-election following a disastrous debate with Donald Trump that raised doubts about his fitness for office under four months before the election. Mr. Biden said he was endorsing Vice-President Kamala Harris as the Democratic nominee for the 2024 election.

The decision comes after escalating pressure from Mr. Biden's Democratic allies to step aside following the June 27 debate, in which the 81-year-old President trailed off, often gave nonsensical answers and failed to call out the former President's ma-



Passing the baton: U.S. President Joe Biden and Vice-President Kamala Harris at the White House on July 4. AFP

ny falsehoods. Mr. Biden plans to serve out the remainder of his term in office, which ends on January 20, 2025. "It has been the greatest honor of my life to serve as your President. And while it has been my intention to seek reelection, I believe it

is in the best interest of my party and the country for me to stand down and to focus solely on fulfilling my duties as President for the remainder of my term," Mr. Biden wrote in a letter posted on X.

Mr. Biden's decision came as he has been isolat-

ing at his Delaware beach house after being diagnosed with COVID-19 last week, huddling with a shrinking circle of close confidants and family members about his political future. He said he would address the nation later this week to provide "details" about his decision.

The White House confirmed the authenticity of the letter.

The announcement is the latest jolt to a campaign for the White House that both political parties see as the most consequential election in generations, coming just days after the attempted assassination of Mr. Trump at a Pennsylvania rally.

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Bangladesh Supreme Court scales back jobs quota amid unrest



Police stand guard outside Bangladesh's Supreme Court in Dhaka on Sunday. AP

Associated Press
Agence France-Presse
DHAKA

The Bangladesh Supreme Court on Sunday scaled back a controversial quota system for government job applicants. The move comes as a partial victory for student protesters after days of nationwide unrest and deadly clashes that left at least 155 people dead.

"We welcome the Supreme Court verdict," a spokesperson for Students Against Discrimination, the main group responsible for organising the protests, said on condition of anonymity. "But we will not call off our protests until the government issues an order reflecting our demands."

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Stormy Budget Session of Parliament likely over U.P.'s Kanwar Yatra order, terrorist attacks in J&K

Sobhana K. Nair
NEW DELHI

The first all-party meeting of the 18th Lok Sabha held on Sunday on the eve of the start of the Budget Session of Parliament saw both allies and rivals of the NDA coming up with a long wish list for the Centre.

The Opposition demanded a discussion on the Uttar Pradesh government's order to display nameplates at eateries on the Kanwar Yatra route, the rising number of terror cases in Jammu, internal strife in Manipur, and irregularities in NEET and other competitive exams.

NDA allies – the TDP, JD (U) and LJP (Ram Vilas) – demanded financial aid for Andhra Pradesh and Bihar.

In a break from the past, the BJP extended invitations to smaller parties. Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju said 44 parties were represented and 55 leaders, including Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, who chaired the meeting, spoke. Mr. Rijiju, while urging cooperation from the Opposition, said the government and the Opposition had a "collective responsibility" to run Parliament smoothly.

The Trinamool skipped the meeting due to the party's Martyrs' Day event.

Nearly all Opposition parties strongly raised the issue of the U.P. government's order. There was a unanimous demand to revoke the order. None of the NDA allies flagged the is-

sue, though the JD(U), the LJP (Ram Vilas) and the RLD have spoken out against the order outside Parliament.

At the end of the meeting, JD(U) working president Sanjay Jha said his party did not believe in segregation of society on religious or caste lines, and urged revisiting the orders. "The Uttar Pradesh government's decision is unconstitutional; it is a way to torture the Muslims of Uttar Pradesh. We oppose this and the entire Opposition is with us." AIMIM leader Asaduddin Owaisi called the order a violation of Article 17, which abolished "untouchability."

The Left parties, at the end of the meeting, said the Congress's response

was muted on the issue of "nameplate order".

Internal security issues
The Congress's Deputy Leader in the Lok Sabha, Gaurav Gogoi, speaking to *The Hindu*, rubbished this claim. "Speaking for the party, I raised the issue of internal security issues in Jammu and Manipur. I also spoke about the tension within our society created by divisive comments raised by Assam CM Himanta Biswa Sarma and orders on Kanwar Yatra."

The Congress and the Samajwadi Party demanded that the post of Deputy Speaker in the Lok Sabha that lay vacant for the whole of the 17th Lok Sabha's tenure should be filled at the earliest.

While the all-party meeting proceeded without much drama, Congress leader Jairam Ramesh's post on X in the middle of the meeting set the stage for confrontation between the TDP and its Andhra Pradesh rival, YSRCP. "In today's all-party meeting of floor leaders chaired by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, the JD(U) leader demanded special category status for Bihar. The YSRCP leader demanded special category status for Andhra Pradesh. Strangely, the TDP leader kept quiet on the matter." His remarks forced both the TDP and the YSR Congress Party to speak on the issue.

RELATED REPORTS
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Herders' homecoming



On the move: A Kutchi Rabari camel herder returning to Kutch in Gujarat with her animals after the district received good rainfall. VIJAY SONEJI

IN BRIEF



MVA 'Aurangzeb fan club', says Amit Shah

MUMBAI
In his first campaign visit to Maharashtra ahead of the Assembly poll, Union Minister Amit Shah attacked all three constituents of the Maha Vikas Aghadi while addressing party workers in Pune on Sunday. He termed the Opposition alliance the "Aurangzeb fan club" and said Shiv Sena (UBT) president Uddhav Thackeray was its leader. » PAGE 4

NCP will contest local body polls in Maharashtra alone: Ajit Pawar

Ateeq Shaikh
MUMBAI

Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister and NCP chief Ajit Pawar on Sunday said that his party, which is part of the ruling *Mahayuti*, will contest the local body polls on its own. The elections are yet to be scheduled. The announcement comes weeks after two Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh-linked publications, *Organiser* and *Vivek*, pinned the blame for the BJP's poor performance in the Lok Sabha election in the State on the NCP.

"I want to say one thing, Lok Sabha and Maharashtra Assembly will be contested unitedly as part of the *Mahayuti*. However,

multiple local bodies have to be contested independently, be it for municipal corporation, municipal council, zilla parishad or nagar panchayat. All these have to be contested independently by the NCP," Mr. Pawar said while addressing party workers in Pune's Pimpri-Chinchwad.

'Will strengthen party'
According to Mr. Pawar, going solo in the local body polls will help strengthen the party. Elections to 23 municipal corporations, 226 municipal councils, and nagar panchayats are due. The term of these local bodies have expired in the last four years. They are currently functioning with a bureaucrat being

appointed as an administrator, without any elected representatives.

Mr. Pawar called Pimpri-Chinchwad an area synonymous with himself as he was the one who developed Pune's extension to the area. "There were many small villages in this area. It was our government that developed the area and got the Information Technology sector, created employment opportunities, and changed the face of this area," the Deputy Chief Minister said.

Earlier this week, nearly 25 office-bearers and workers of the NCP from Pimpri-Chinchwad, including the area's party head Ajit Gavhane, had joined Shrad Pawar-led NCP faction.

Kerala imposes containment measures as 14-year-old boy dies of Nipah infection

The Hindu Bureau
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

The Nipah virus claimed the life of a 14-year-old boy from Malappuram district of Kerala on Sunday.

The resurgence of the infection, which often spreads from fruit bats to humans and other animals, has prompted the State government to impose containment measures in at least two panchayats in the district.

Kerala Health Minister Veena George said the teenager died at the Government Medical College Hospital, Kozhikode, while under intensive medical care. She attributed the cause of death to a massive cardiac arrest. A previous



Viral scare: The body of a 14-year-old, who died of Nipah infection, being shifted to an ambulance in Kozhikode on Sunday. K. RAGESH

Nipah outbreak in Malappuram and Kozhikode claimed 17 lives in 2018.

The Pune-based National Institute of Virology confirmed that the teenager had Nipah virus infection. At least three of the boy's

relatives are under surveillance at the hospital, and four others who interacted with him are under observation at the Government Medical College Hospital at Manjeri in Malappuram, Ms. George said.

She said that those in the high-risk contact category did not show any symptoms of infection. At least seven samples had tested negative.

'Situation under control'
The Minister counselled the public against panicking and said the situation was under control.

Doctors had injected the boy with monoclonal antibodies procured from Australia by the Indian Council of Medical Research, but Ms. George noted that the injection was meant to be administered within five days of the patient showing signs of infection.

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Toddler found dead in toilet

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

A two-year-old boy was found dead on Sunday at an abandoned toilet block in central Delhi's Anand Parbat area. The toilet was situated close to his makeshift home.

The boy's family staged a protest, seeking strict police action in the case. DCP (Central) M. Harsha Vardhan said multiple teams have been formed to probe the case, and an autopsy will be conducted to ascertain the cause of the boy's death.

Timings

DELHI

MONDAY, JUL. 22

RISE 05:38 SET 19:18

RISE 20:24 SET 06:13

TUESDAY, JUL. 23

RISE 05:38 SET 19:18

RISE 21:03 SET 07:23

WEDNESDAY, JUL. 24

RISE 05:39 SET 19:17

RISE 21:39 SET 08:31

Delhi Weather	max	min
Delhi City	37	26
Safdarjang	37	26
Palam	37	28

Delhi Palam Today

36°C Day will be very warm and uneasy. Spell of light to moderate rain and thunder-shower with gusty winds to occur.

Delhi Palam Tomorrow 34°C The weather will be warm with cloudy sky. Spell of moderate rain and thunder-shower with gusty winds to occur.

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THE HINDU
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BJP, L-G conspiring to kill Kejriwal, says AAP; CM playing victim: Sachdeva

Sanjay Singh says attempts are being made to keep the CM in jail despite his blood sugar levels dropping drastically, party mulling to lodge 'attempt to murder case'; CM deliberately eating less: BJP

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) Rajya Sabha member Sanjay Singh on Sunday alleged that the BJP-led Centre and Lieutenant-Governor V.K. Saxena are "conspiring to kill" Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal in jail.

He also claimed that the BJP and the L-G are "trying to keep the CM in jail" despite his blood sugar levels dropping drastically on 26 occasions between June 3 and July 7.

There was no response from Raj Niwas on the allegation. Delhi BJP chief Virendra Sachdeva accused the CM of "deliberately eating less home-made food"



AAP leader Sanjay Singh addressing reporters on the health condition of Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal in New Delhi on Sunday. ANI

to lose weight so that he could get bail in a corruption case lodged by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) with regard to the now-scraped 2021-22 Delhi excise policy.

The allegation by AAP has come two days after the L-G office wrote to Delhi

Chief Secretary Naresh Kumar, saying Mr. Kejriwal, a diabetic, might be resorting to "willful low-calorie intake" by "deliberately" avoiding the diet prescribed by doctors. The CM is currently lodged in Tihar Jail pending a decision on his bail plea in the CBI case.

Earlier, the Supreme Court had granted him bail in a money laundering case lodged by the Enforcement Directorate.

'False statements made'

"The way the L-G and the BJP are making false statements about his health and issuing false reports, the suspicion grows that they are playing with Kejriwal's life in collusion with the Centre," Mr. Singh said, adding that his party is considering lodging an "attempt to murder case against those involved in the conspiracy". Meanwhile, Mr. Sachdeva said by presenting himself as a victim before the court, the CM wants to show that he is being mistreated in the jail.

Police advisory warns of traffic congestion during Kanwar Yatra

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Delhi police on Sunday issued a traffic advisory on the arrangements made for the Kanwar Yatra, and cautioned residents of traffic congestion at several places.

The Kanwar Yatra will commence on Monday, the first day of the Hindu month of Shraavan, and culminate on August 2 with devotees offering the Ganga water to Lord Shiva at temples back home.

Over 15 lakh devotees are expected to pass through the Capital on their way to Uttarakhand's Haridwar.

Traffic violations during the yatra will be checked by on-the-spot prosecution, the advisory said.

The devotees are expected to pass through several areas in the Capital, including Apsara border, Shahdara flyover, Seelampur T-point, ISBT flyover,



Over 15 lakh devotees are expected to pass through the Capital. FILE PHOTO

Rani Jhansi Road, Faiz Road, Upper Ridge Road, and Dhaura Kuan, the advisory said.

It also stated that heavy congestion is likely to occur on Najafgarh Firdi, Rohtak Road, Pankha Road, Outer Ring Road, Rani Jhansi Road, Boulevard Road, Maujpur Chowk, Badarpur T-point and Mathura Road. Arrangements have been made to segregate the movement of the devotees from other commuters, the advisory said.

Saxena orders revamp of Red Cross hospital in six months

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Lieutenant-Governor V.K. Saxena has ordered a "complete revamp" of the hospital run by the Indian Red Cross Society (IRCS) in Seemapur opposite the Dilshad Garden metro station in east Delhi, a Raj Niwas official said on Sunday.

The officials said the L-G, after visiting the hospital, directed that a total facelift of the hospital, which is lacking modern equipment and is suffering from a shortage in manpower, must be done within six months.

Mr. Saxena asked senior doctors and officials concerned present during the inspection to prepare a roadmap for developing facilities in the hospital, which was functioning under a skeleton staff without the presence of a medical officer for the last six months, according to officials.

Boxer-turned-gangster held for shooting uncle

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

A boxer-turned-gangster has been arrested for allegedly shooting his uncle over a property dispute, the police said on Sunday. The accused has been identified as Rajan Phour, 30, a resident of Nangla Paar in Haryana's Panipat.

He was arrested from Delhi's Rohini. The police said Rajan's uncle Azad had allegedly insulted his mother, following which the accused decided to take revenge. On June 23, Rajan and his associates fired at Azad while he was travelling in his car. "One of the bullets hit Azad in the waist," an officer said.

Delhi govt. releases ₹100 crore to fully-funded twelve DU colleges

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) government has released the second instalment of ₹100 crore to the 12 Delhi University (DU) colleges fully funded by it, amid allegations of financial mismanagement at the institutions.

The Delhi government had allocated ₹400 crore to the colleges in its budget for 2024-25. So far, it has released ₹200 crore in the first two instalments.

Education Minister Atishi said though many issues of financial mismanagement had come to the fore at the colleges, her government has decided that

the teachers and students there "should not suffer due to the mistakes of the management". She said since AAP came to power in Delhi, the budget of the colleges has gone up by over three times. "In 2014-15, ₹132 crore was allocated to the colleges, which was increased to ₹400 crore this fiscal," she said.

45% rise in vehicle permit violations from last year

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Delhi police's traffic wing has noted a 45% rise in permit violations from the beginning of the year until mid-July as compared to the same time period the previous year, according to officials.

Data shared by the traf-

fic police showed that 20,009 violators were booked for permit violations from January 1 to July 15, in comparison to 13,759 in the same time period in 2023.

"The steep rise in permit violations can be attributed to stricter enforcement measures," a senior officer said.

THE HINDU

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Bhavya Venkatesh

bhavya.venkatesh@thehindu.co.in

We live in a world that is VUCA (volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous). How do we equip children with the skills they need to make their way through this environment? Authored by educators V. Raghunathan and Meena Raghunathan, *To Every Parent, To Every School* addresses this topic and offers insights and action points meant for students, teachers, parents and educational institutions. Excerpts from an interview with the authors:

Are children in India truly happy at school? Should this be a parameter to measure a school's performance?

Our intuitive feeling is that, with stress on various fronts increasing, childhood and school are less happy than they used to be. We believe that students being happy is an important criterion for the school to be called successful. As we mention in the book, "We see schools routinely ranked for their excellence within a town or city, formally or informally. The parameters for such rankings are frequently based on the performance of their students in Board exams, or how many children went to IITs or other Ivy League institutions within the country or abroad, and so on. It is a pity that such rankings seldom consider stress factors that schools inject into the students, how happy children feel while in the school or how much a school stresses on cooperation as compared to competition between students

It's a whole new world

To Every Parent, To Every School, by educators V. Raghunathan and Meena Raghunathan, offers insights on how to prepare children to face today's challenging environment

GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

and other such factors.'

Do the book's insights apply only to children? Are there any takeaways for college students?

The book is applicable to all ages. In fact, many of the models developed in a corporate context. For instance, the concept of VUCA came into play after 9/11 in 2001. Before the end of the decade, a lot of work on how this framework could be used and applied in business had taken place, and this had entered the mainstream of management thinking, practice and training.

We focused the book on younger children because in such things, it is always important to begin early. Having said that, if not in school, our young people must get these inputs at least in college. Since they are at an age when they can figure things out for themselves, they could



individually use the book to shape themselves. Additionally, if colleges do structured programmes around these issues, it would be a great support to their students.

The book envisions a shift from competition to cooperation in the education

system. Is this possible? It isn't easy, but it is such an important and fundamental re-orientation that we cannot just give up. It requires a change in the mindset of adults and conviction among education leaders. We require educators and parents to review how they

think about success. Is success about winning the race or improving one's performance?

To inculcate co-operation, we could reward collective as much as individual efforts, institute awards for the most improved child, award socially-conscious or civic-minded children, enhance the importance of group assignments, and so on.

Does the concept of 'ranking' put 'learning' on the backseat?

The practice of evaluating and ranking students can put the intrinsic value of learning on the backseat. The emphasis on grades can lead to a focus on rote memorisation rather than deep comprehension. It can increase stress and anxiety among students, and stifle creativity and intellectual risk-taking.

In contrast, educational systems that prioritise formative assessments, personalised

feedback, and project-based learning can foster a more meaningful and engaging learning experience.

What effect has the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown had on children?

COVID did set our children back in terms of being part of a group, an institution and the process of education. We feel it has loosened social ties and made 'real life' interactions less important and the virtual world more real. We do see differences in the children who have spent their formative years in lockdown. They are more prone to stress, anxiety, not being able to open up, and so on. And not enough is being done to support them. We aren't sure whether this effect is going to be permanent, but we do feel it has altered the children at some fundamental level.

Will the degree of VUCA increase in the future?

Yes, factors such as technological advancements, artificial intelligence, globalisation, climate change, resource shortages, political and economic instability and health crises will contribute to a more volatile and unpredictable world. A comprehensive approach that emphasises resilience, adaptability, critical thinking, lifelong learning, effective communication, digital literacy, global awareness, financial literacy, and overall well-being will better prepare ourselves and our children.

To Every Parent, To Every School: Raising Resilient Children in a VUCA World; V Raghunathan, Meena Raghunathan; Penguin Viking, ₹ 699.

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AHMEDABAD 12 JULY	BENGALURU 12 JULY, 18 JULY	BHOPAL 18 JULY	CHANDIGARH 18 JULY	HYDERABAD 24 JULY	JAIPUR 22 JULY	JODHPUR 11 JULY	LUCKNOW 17 JULY	PUNE 5 JULY	भोपाल 23 जुलाई	जयपुर 25 जुलाई	जोधपुर 11 जुलाई	लखनऊ 18 जुलाई

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IN BRIEF



3 killed, 8 injured in landslide on Kedarnath trekking route

Three devotees died and eight others were injured in a landslide on the Kedarnath Dham trekking route in Uttarakhand's Rudrapur district on Sunday, officials said. Rudrapur District Disaster Management Officer Nandan Singh Rajwar said the incident happened at around 7:30 a.m. near Chirbasa area on the Gaurikund-Kedarnath trekking route when the devotees were hit by heavy stones and debris falling down from the hills. The State Disaster Response Force and disaster management teams reached the spot and started a search and rescue operation, he said. PTI

Kanwariyas attack parking lot staff with swords; 4 arrested

Four *kanwariyas* from Haryana have been arrested in New Tehri of Uttarakhand for allegedly attacking a parking lot employee with swords following an argument over parking fee, police said on Sunday. The employee suffered serious injury to his head in the incident that took place on Saturday evening in the Janaki Pul parking lot near the Neelkanth temple. The accused had kept their tractor-trolley there, Muni ki Reti police station in-charge Ritesh Shah said. Shah said after visiting the temple, when the *kanwariyas* reached the parking lot, Balam Singh Bisht, Ajay and Subhash asked for parking fee. There was an argument and the accused attacked Bisht with swords, the officer said. PTI

Jharkhand CM offers ₹2-crore aid to flood-affected Assam

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said on Sunday that Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren has offered ₹2 crore as aid to the flood-affected people of this northeastern State. Mr. Sarma thanked Mr. Soren and the people of Jharkhand for the gesture. "Hon'ble CM of Jharkhand, @HemantSorenJMM Ji has graciously offered ₹2 crore to the Chief Minister's Relief Fund of Assam to aid flood-affected people," Mr. Sarma posted on X. "On behalf of the people of Assam, I deeply appreciate the generosity of the kind-hearted people of Jharkhand and the Hon'ble Chief Minister," he added. At least 113 people have been killed in the flood, landslides, lightning and storms in the State so far. More than 1.30 lakh people in 10 districts continued to remain affected. PTI

Mahayuti will perform better, MVA 'Aurangzeb fan club': Shah

Addressing party workers in Pune, Union Minister terms Sharad Pawar 'godfather of corruption', kick-starts his campaign for Maharashtra Assembly election; NCP (SP) says BJP has 'legitimised' graft by incorporating tainted leaders into its fold

Ateeq Shaikh
MUMBAI

In his first campaign visit to Maharashtra ahead of the Assembly poll, Union Minister Amit Shah attacked all three constituents of the Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) while addressing party workers in Pune on Sunday.

He termed the alliance the "Aurangzeb fan club" and said Shiv Sena (UBT) chief Uddhav Thackeray was its leader. He also called Congress leader Rahul Gandhi arrogant and alleged that NCP (SP) chief Sharad Pawar was the "godfather of corruption". "Uddhav Thackeray is sitting with those who sought clemency for 1993 blasts – convict Yakub Memon," he said, adding that Mr. Thackeray had joined hands with those who had given the messenger of



Battle-ready: Union Home Minister Amit Shah being felicitated by BJP leaders in Pune on Sunday. ANI

peace award to controversial preacher Zakir Naik and served biryani to 26/11 Mumbai terror attack convict Ajmal Kasab. "He should be ashamed of sitting with these people."

Congress leader and Rajya Sabha MP Digvijaya Singh in 2016 had called Mr. Naik as "a messenger of peace". During the terror attack trial, Special Public Prosecutor Ujjwal Nikam had said Kasab was

served biryani. Jail authorities, and later Mr. Nikam himself, denied the claim.

Mr. Shah also reminded the gathering that the MVA failed to rename Aurangabad as Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar when it had been in power in the State.

Attacking Mr. Pawar, the BJP leader said he "institutionalised corruption and yet [is] calling us corrupt". "I am asking Sharad Pawar, what have you given to

Maharashtra apart from fake assurances during the UPA regime?" he said.

The allegations came in response to NCP (SP) MP Supriya Sule terming the *Mahayuti* 'MBBS' – for *me-henghai* (inflation), *berozgari* (unemployment), *bhrashtachar* (corruption) *sarkar* (government) during a speech at a women's gathering in Karad.

'Result decided'

Mr. Shah said the BJP-led *Mahayuti*'s performance will be better than that of 2014 and 2019. "Maharashtra's result is decided. I can read it on the wall that this time, it will be the biggest victory in Maharashtra... In India, we are there to rule for 30 years, and have only completed 10," he said.

On the Maratha reservation issue, he said only the BJP can uplift the underprivileged. "Whenever a BJP

government has been elected in the State, Marathas got reservation. When Sharad Pawar's party came to power, Marathas lost the quota. It was during his regime, the case was lost in court," he said.

'NCP (SP) cleanest'

Responding to Mr. Shah's charges, NCP (SP) leader Jayant Patil said people know which leaders are most corrupt. "The corrupt ones have joined forces with the BJP, making our party the cleanest."

Party spokesperson Clyde Crasto said it is the BJP that has "legitimised" corruption by incorporating tainted leaders into its fold. "They accuse political leaders of corruption, and then once those who they accuse join BJP, they are all given a clean chit. This is the BJP's washing machine process," he said.

Valmiki 'scam': 'Siddaramaiah finding it difficult to defend his govt. against graft charges'

The Hindu Bureau
SHIVAMOGGA

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah has been engaged in all sorts of exercises to defend himself following allegations of corruption against his government, said Union Minister for Heavy Industries H.D. Kumaraswamy at Hassan in Karnataka on Sunday.

Speaking to the media, Mr. Kumaraswamy said the CM could not defend himself during the debate in the legislature session. "He entrusted five Ministers of the Cabinet to address the media before he could give his reply in the session. Be-

sides that, he gave interviews to the media as an exercise before facing the session. All these efforts show that he is finding it difficult to defend his government," he said.

Corruption issue

Referring to the alleged corruption in the Maharshi Valmiki Scheduled Tribes Development Corporation, Mr. Kumaraswamy said the issue would not have come out if (officer) Chandrasekharan had not committed suicide. "Whether it is misuse of ₹187 crore, ₹94 crore, or even ₹90 it is corruption. Now, the government has taken a decision

to transfer money from all corporations to the treasury. I had made this suggestion in 2017 itself," he said.

Further, Mr. Kumaraswamy said the CM had made 21 fresh charges against BJP leaders. Mr. Siddaramaiah had been CM for five years. Later, he worked as the Leader of the Opposition. "Now, he raised some of the issues related to 2010-11. What was he doing all these years?" he questioned.

Regarding the JD(S) activities in Hassan district, he said party MLAs had been putting pressure on him to hold a convention in Hassan.

2 women partially buried under gravel at protest against road construction

The Hindu Bureau
BHOPAL

Two women were partially buried under gravel while they were protesting against construction at a disputed plot of land in Madhya Pradesh's Rewa district on Sunday, the police said.

According to the police, the incident took place in Hinot Jorot village within Mangawa police station limits when Mamta Pandey and Asha Pandey, whose family was involved in a land dispute with some relatives, went to the disputed land to stop the construction of a road. Additional Superintendent of Police (Rewa) Vivek Lal said a

dumper was unloading some construction material, which fell on the women.

They were buried under the gravel and injured, he said, adding that the women were discharged from a hospital after treatment. "We have filed a case under Section 110 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) and arrested one person in this case," Mr. Lal said, adding that the dumper has also been seized.

A purported video of the incident has also gone viral. The officer, however, said that it was not clear whether the unloading of the construction material was intentional. A probe was on to ascertain this, he added.



Congress leader Deepender Hooda in Rewari on Sunday.

'BJP using probe agencies to silence Cong. leaders'

The Hindu Bureau
GURUGRAM

Holding a *padayatra* in parts of south Haryana on Sunday as part of the Congress's 'Haryana Maange Hisaab' campaign ahead of the Assembly election, the party's Rohtak Lok Sabha member, Deepender Hooda, accused the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) government of unleashing the Central investigating agencies on Congress leaders to silence them.

Walking through the streets in Rewari's Bawal, Mr. Hooda, accompanied by local Congress leaders, including Raj Babbar and Rewari MLA Chiranjeev Rao, said the investigating agencies such as Enforcement Directorate (ED) and Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) had launched a parallel drive against the Congress leaders at the behest of the BJP government ever since his party had kicked-off the account-taking campaign in Haryana. "The BJP government should not be under the misconception that the Congress will stop asking questions," he stated.

His remarks came a day after the ED arrested Haryana Congress MLA Sunder Panwar in an "illegal" mining-linked "money-laundering" case on Saturday.

Raising the issues of contaminated drinking water, poor drainage and damaged roads, Mr. Hooda said the Congress had built the Industrial Model Township in Bawal, and the BJP should let people know if any new industry had come to the town during its 10-year regime.

DDA's decision to cut 1,100 trees in the Ridge has poked a hole in Delhi's lung

SPOTLIGHT

Nikhil M. Babu
Satvika Mahajan

In the summer of 1996, as parts of the Ridge, Delhi's main forested area, was under threat, the Supreme Court passed a landmark order that it is mandatory to keep the area free of encroachers and "its pristine glory must be maintained for all times (sic)".

Twenty-eight summers later, white-haired Ram Murthy, who lives near the southern part of the forest area, in a hut off Gaushala Road in Chhatarpur, remembers "important-looking people" with the police visiting the area in February. Within days, hundreds of trees were cut.

The cutting of the trees made national headlines this July after two petitions were filed, one in the Delhi High Court and another in the Supreme Court. Both revealed that about 1,100 trees were cut in the southern Ridge and the adjoining area of Satbari by the Delhi Development Authority (DDA) that manages land and housing for the city's residents, and comes under the Central government. The felling did not have a go-ahead from the Supreme Court that now wants 100 trees planted for every one chopped down.

In the past, there have been similar instances of ecological transgressions. The DDA and various other agencies have still not physically demarcated the Yamuna floodplain, leading to encroachments and events that cause damage to the ecosystem.

Every winter, Delhi and parts of the Indo-Gangetic plains face severe air pollution, but citizens see no signs of improvement.

Caught in a political dissonance, Delhiites experience the impact of environmental neglect and degradation first-hand. The ruling Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) has been attacking Delhi Lieutenant-Governor V.K. Saxena, and on Saturday protested in front of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) headquarters in Delhi. They claim the L-G is "a killer of trees".

The L-G has not responded to this; instead, he has highlighted the greening efforts under his tenure and his plans of tree plantation in the Capital.

The Ridge is the tail end of the Aravali hills, which are around 1,500 million years old as per government reports, and form a band, stretching from Gujarat, through Rajasthan and Haryana, and ending in Delhi. A large chunk of the part in Delhi – 6,626 hectares – is owned by Delhi's Forest Department.



A view of Satbari in Delhi's Ridge area, where 1,100 trees were cut down for civic activities; (right) Ram Murthy, who witnessed the felling of the trees. SHIV KUMAR PUSHAKAR

The rest – 1,158 hectares – is owned by many departments, with the largest chunk owned by the DDA. In May this year, a Central Empowered Committee (CEC), formed on the directions of the Supreme Court, noted that on one hand the rate of clearing of encroachments in the Ridge is slow and on the other, diversion of Ridge land for "non-forestry purposes" is increasing.

Barren and brown

The 1,100 trees were cut to widen Gaushala Road, which leads to the newly inaugurated South Asian University and Central Armed Police Forces Insti-

tute of Medical Sciences. On May 9, the Supreme Court halted the road's construction. "The trees were once full and green, and offered shade to people stopping for tea," says Murthy, who has set up a cart on the roadside, selling tea and biscuits.

Bhavreen Kandhari, 51, an environmental activist, found out about the felling of the trees and visited the area on February 29. "I was angry when I went there. We even fight for two trees and here hundreds were cut," Kandhari says, animatedly.

Attaching photos from the area, she filed an application in an ongoing con-

tempt case on trees she had filed in the Delhi High Court. On March 18, the High Court issued a contempt notice to the vice-chairperson of DDA and Delhi's Principal Secretary of the Department of Forest and Wildlife.

We all fall down

Neeraj Kumar, 44, who works as a driver and lives in Satyanand Colony, next to Gaushala Road, alleges that the alignment of the road was changed by the DDA to benefit the farmhouses that line it.

"If the road was built as per the initial plan, only 100 trees would have been cut. But they expanded the

road only on the right side and 1,100 trees had to be cut," Kumar says. "After the DDA demolished the boundary wall of two farmhouses, the officials said we are also on DDA land and will be evicted. How can it be? My family has been living here for 45 years," he says. Kumar and others filed a case in the High Court on the issue.

On February 15, the DDA had filed an application before the Supreme Court for the felling of trees. On March 4, the court rejected it by saying that the application is "very vague which seeks permission to fell/translocate 1,051 trees" and directed

the DDA to re-examine the proposal by employing experts in the field.

"The exercise to be undertaken by the DDA is necessary for ensuring that while public work is carried out, minimum number of trees are required to be felled. The said approach is not reflected from the application made by the DDA," the Supreme Court said. The DDA at that point did not disclose to the court that trees had already been felled from February 16 to 26.

From May 14, the top court started asking questions about who had ordered a private contractor to cut trees in the Ridge

without the mandatory permission from the court.

In its latest hearing on July 12, the Supreme Court observed that *prima facie*, it appeared that officers were reluctant to state what exactly happened during the L-G's visit to the site on February 3.

The court has asked the DDA to clarify if it instructed the contractor to fell the trees by its own decision or on the basis of an oral direction issued by the L-G – who is the chairperson of the DDA – on February 3.

It slammed the Delhi government for exercising its "non-existent powers" by issuing a notification (with the L-G's orders) on February 14, allowing the DDA to cut 422 trees.

Kandhari says there is still a long way to go. "Our case in the High Court is contempt of a second case, which is actually contempt of another case. So, it is contempt of contempt. Is this a joke?" she says.

Murthy remembers a full forest adjacent to the road, where cattle grazed and birds flew, and her home that had been built by taking a loan.

"I know my house was on government land, but they razed it without any notice. I am still paying off my debt on it," she says.

LINK TO FULL STORY
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Cong. stakes claim to 5 seats in U.P. bypolls

Party says it will back Samajwadi Party in State; its INDIA bloc ally agrees and asks for favour to be returned in States headed for elections this year

The Hindu Bureau
LUCKNOW

The Uttar Pradesh Congress unit on Sunday staked claim to five of the 10 Assembly seats left vacant in the State after the Lok Sabha election.

Of the 10 vacant seats, five were held by the NDA and the rest were with the Samajwadi Party (SP).

After a meeting with party leaders and workers, Congress State president Ajay Rai said the party will support the SP in five seats and is strong and ready to fight in the rest.

'All set to fight'

"We held a meeting with party leaders and workers from seats held by the NDA. We will support our INDIA bloc partner Samajwadi Party in five seats. In the rest, we are strong and ready to fight. The final decision on seats will be taken by the [national] leadership, but our claim is on the five remaining seats," Mr. Rai told *The Hindu*.



Uttar Pradesh Congress president Ajay Rai. PTI

ter their MLAs were elected to the Lok Sabha.

The SP, the principal Opposition party in the State, has agreed for an alliance but remained non-committal on the number of seats. The party said it will respect the Congress during seat-sharing talks, but expected a "return of favour" in States such as Maharashtra, Haryana, and Jharkhand going to the polls later this year.

'Ready to give respect'

"Under our leader Akhilesh Yadav, we aim at becoming a national party; our party is the third-largest political force in Lok Sabha. We expect that the way we are ready to give respect to our alliance partner in bypolls, they will do the same in Maharashtra and Haryana," said SP spokesperson Sunil Singh Yadav 'Sajan'.

"The bypolls and State polls are not linked and seat sharing will be decided by the leadership in due course," the spokesperson added.

Meat shops on Kanwar Yatra route to remain closed for Shravan

Press Trust of India
VARANASI

Meat shops on the Kanwar Yatra route here will remain closed during the holy month of Shravan, which spans from July 22 to August 19, officials of the Varanasi Municipal Corporation (VMC) said on Sunday.

Instructions in this regard have been issued to the officials concerned by the municipal body, they added.

"Meat shops on all Kanwar Yatra routes under the Varanasi Municipal Corporation limits will remain closed in the month of Shravan, so that *Kanwariyas* do not have to face any kind of difficulties," VMC Public Relations Officer (PRO) Sandeep Srivastava said.

A survey was conducted on several routes taken by the *Kanwariyas*, and instructions were issued accordingly, he said, and added that the decision was taken in an executive meeting of the corporation chaired by Mayor Ashok Kumar Tiwari, on July 19.

Odisha reverses order renaming Biju Patnaik Sports Award

The Hindu Bureau
BHUBANESWAR

The Bharatiya Janata Party-led Odisha government announced that it has reversed its decision to rechristen the State's sports awards from the existing Biju Patnaik Sports Award to the Odisha State Sports

Award. Chief Minister Mohan Mahji clarified in a press briefing on Sunday that no decision has been taken on the change in nomenclature.

The previous decision had elicited sharp reactions from the Biju Janata Dal (BJD), which termed the notification narrow

and vengeful politics by the BJP. Party spokesperson Arun Kumar Sahoo said, "The BJP should refrain from engaging in this type of politics. It is unclear what the BJP government hopes to gain by dropping the name of Biju Patnaik, who is a revered figure in Odisha and res-

pected by all political parties." After the clarification, the BJD took a more aggressive stance, alleging that the one-month BJP government had shown its intolerance and immaturity by first deciding to drop the name of the legendary Biju Patnaik from the sports award and again it.



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The reservoir level was 123.10 ft as against the full level of 124.80 ft. Officials have advised people to shift to safer place. M.A. SRIRAM

Flood warning issued as outflow from KRS crosses 50,000 cusecs

The Hindu Bureau
MYSURU

More than 50,000 cusecs of water is being discharged from the Krishna Raja Sagar (KRS) dam since Sunday as a result of which a flood warning has been issued for people living in low-lying areas in the downstream region.

The outflow from the KRS on Sunday morning was increased from 35,000 cusecs to 50,000 cusecs and by night it was further stepped up to 52,162 cusecs even as the rate of inflow into the reservoir hovered at 70,850 cusecs.

The reservoir level was 123.1 ft as against the full level of 124.8 ft.

Cauvery Neeravari Nigam Ltd. (CNL), which issued the flood warning, stated that the outflow could be further increased and hence people living near the riverbanks in the downstream of the reservoir and low-lying areas were advised to shift to safer places.

Meanwhile, Srirangapatna MLA Ramesh Bandiside Gowda said that

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar, Mandya district in-charge Minister N. Cheluvayaswamy and others will offer the traditional thanksgiving or *bagina* at the KRS on July 27. The dam is expected to reach the full reservoir level (FRL) of 124.8 ft by then, given the current rate of inflow, he added.

The *bagina* tradition was dispensed with last year as the KRS did not attain the maximum level. The reservoir level on the same day last year was 90.1 ft. The current storage in the reservoir is 47.1 tmcft as against the gross capacity of 49.45 tmcft.

The reservoir storage on the same day last year was 16 tmcft.

Meanwhile, the inflow and outflow from the Kabiini reservoir has reduced as rain abated in the catchment area of the Kapila.

The inflow into the reservoir was 29,855 cusecs while the outflow was 20,000 cusecs on Sunday night. The reservoir level was 2,281.89 ft as against the full level of 2,284 ft.

Karnataka Cabinet to discuss draft Bill on local quota today

The State had faced backlash from industry after the Bill was approved and later put on hold; it is unlikely to be tabled in the Monsoon Session

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Karnataka Cabinet meeting on Monday is likely to again discuss the proposed legislation to reserve jobs for local people in the private sector.

There was a backlash from industry leaders and bodies after a draft Bill on job reservation for locals was approved, forcing the government to put it on hold.

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, while maintaining that the draft Bill was being kept on hold, had said it would be discussed in the Cabinet again before a final decision was taken.

Sources in the Chief Minister's Office told *The Hindu* that the draft Bill was expected to be extensively discussed in the Cabinet on Monday, and depending on the opinion received at the meeting a decision would be arrived at.

Asked if the Bill would be presented in the ongoing Monsoon Session of the State legislature, the sources said: "It all depends on what the Cabinet decides to do with the Bill. At this moment, it looks unlikely that it would be placed before the legislature."

Sources in the Labour Department said they were not sure as to what discussion on the draft Bill would take place in the Cabinet.



The Bill mandated 70% of jobs in non-management cadre and 50% of jobs in management cadre for locals. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

The Karnataka State Employment of Local Candidates in the Industries, Factories and Other Establishments Bill, 2024, mandating 70% of jobs in non-management cadre and 50% of jobs in management cadre for local candidates, had been discussed in the Cabinet before being put on hold.

language barriers resulting in industrial accidents.

Criticism of Bill
Labour Department sources said that though industry leaders and bodies had criticised the draft Bill, there was nothing wrong in the provisions. "We have provided flexibility in the reservation too. Are the industry leaders saying there is no talent in Karnataka that could fill the quota? The government is aware that in a large number of industries, human resources department headed by people from other States have been preferring candidates from their States, thus denying opportunities to local candidates. While the department is keen to secure the passage of the Bill, it will depend on the Cabinet's decision," a source added.

Emotional chord
Ever since the Sarojini Mahishi Commission in 1986 recommended reservation for Kannadigas in private sector jobs, the issue has struck an emotional chord with Kannadigas.

Though the previous BJP government tried to bring changes to the Industrial Standing Order Rules in 2019, it refrained from setting a quota. It had told the industries to give priority to Kannadigas, citing

12 corporators of YSRCP shift loyalties to NDA in Vizag

The Hindu Bureau
VISAKHAPATNAM

In a major jolt to the YSR Congress Party, 12 party corporators of the Greater Visakhapatnam Municipal Corporation (GVMC) joined the TDP-JanaSena Party-BJP alliance on Sunday. Sources said at least 10 more corporators were likely to switch loyalties soon.

While seven corporators joined the TDP in the presence of Visakhapatnam MP M. Sribharat, State TDP president Palla Srinivasa Rao, and Bheemuniapatnam MLA Ganta Srinivasa Rao, five met Visakhapatnam South MLA Vamsikrishna Srinivasa Yadav and confirmed they would join the JanaSena. They would join the party in the presence of its president, K. Pawan Kalyan, in a couple of days.

Sensing the possible defection, a former Minister, senior YSRCP leaders and Mayor G. Hari Venkata Kumar convened a meeting with the corporators on Saturday, and urged them to stay loyal to the party that had given them ticket. However, more than 20 corporators reportedly did not attend the meeting.

Welcoming the corporators into the TDP, Mr. Palla Srinivasa said their role was important for the development of the Corporation. He said that in the recent elections, people had voted for the NDA combine and given it a huge responsibility, and it was time to provide all amenities in the wards. He said development should be the motto.

BCI ban on soliciting litigation work sparks debate among lawyers

Soibam Rocky Singh
NEW DELHI

The Bar Council of India (BCI), which regulates the legal profession in India, recently issued a directive banning lawyers from advertising and soliciting work through online platforms that connect them with litigants.

The decision has sparked a debate among legal professionals about the implications of the ban in the digital age, where many advocates have been using online platforms to reach a broader audience.

The BCI's decision followed a July 3 judgment by the Madras High Court directing it to initiate disciplinary proceedings against advocates advertising or soliciting work directly or indirectly. The court took an exception to websites like Quirk, Sulekha, and Justdial, providing online lawyer services on their platforms, allowing advocates to solicit legal work.

"...the websites have also independently provided rating services of lawyers without any basis or authority and the lawyers by enlisting themselves in such websites have brought down the nobility and dignity of the profession," the High Court had remarked.

'Economic reality'
Advocate Aditya Kashyap said while he appreciates the intent behind the BCI's directive, the financial challenges faced by many lawyers cannot be ignored. "On the one hand, we say

Financial challenges faced by advocates cannot be ignored, say some from the legal community

litigation is a noble profession; that it is a 'calling'. But the harsh reality is that most of the lawyers, especially first-generation law graduates, are not even being paid the minimum wages for skilled labour".

"One needs to think about these things while undertaking measures to regulate litigation as a profession," he said.

Mr. Kashyap said there is a huge gap between the demand for legal services and the supply of competent lawyers, to overcome which, the adoption of technology is necessary. "Currently, a major chunk of referral mechanism is restricted to informal sources, and hence the problem of touts in courts prevail," he said.

"Therefore, while legal marketplaces or directories, which help connect clients with lawyers, may be regulated within the boundaries of law, they should not be taken down or banned," added Mr. Kashyap.

However, Mr. Singh draws a clear line when it comes to commercialising legal services online. "Having websites and apps offering legal services through online mode and advertising the same as a 'one-time solution' is problematic. You never know whether your lawyer is competent or not."

Sabarimala pilgrims can now avail of insurance under new scheme

Hiran Unnikrishnan
PATHANAMTHITTA

Pilgrims booking slots for visiting the Sabarimala temple can soon insure themselves against deaths due to natural causes for a premium of less than ₹10.

This scheme, to be effective

from the next annual pilgrimage season, allows pilgrims to opt for coverage by paying a one-time premium of up to ₹10 while booking their darshan through the virtual Q system. During the previous Mandalam-Makaravilakku season, the trekking path

from Pampa to the Sannidhanam had witnessed 53 deaths, with most attributed to cardiac arrests and respiratory issues.

Currently, the Travancore Devaswom Board only provides insurance coverage for Sabarimala pilgrims against accidental deaths.

Kerala issues guidelines on amoebic brain infection

The Hindu Bureau
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

With five cases of amoebic meningoencephalitis, including three deaths, being reported in adolescents in Kerala in the past three months, the State's Health Department has come out with technical guidelines on the prevention, diagnosis

and treatment of the rare but fatal infection.

In all but one case, the causative organism was the amoebic parasite, *Naegleria fowleri*. In one case, the organism was *Vermamoeba vermiformis*, another free-living amoeba found in human environment.

These guidelines are to be followed by all hospitals

when dealing with cases of acute meningitis. Primary amoebic meningoencephalitis (PAM) is a rare but lethal central nervous system infection of rapid fatality caused by free-living amoebae found in freshwater, lakes, and rivers. It is usually caused by an infection by *Naegleria fowleri*, a microscopic amoeba com-

monly called a "brain-eating amoeba". The amoeba enters through the nasal channels and destroys brain tissue, causing severe brain swelling and death in most cases.

As far as treatment is concerned, the optimal approach is uncertain. In theory, the best drug regimen should include an amoebicidal drug (or a combination of drugs) with good in-vitro activity capable of crossing the blood-brain barrier, experts say.

As for preventive steps, experts suggest avoiding diving and jumping into stagnant water, and use of nose plugs when participating in water-related activities.

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NIT No. 02/Transport/Municipal Corporation Satna, Dated 19.07.2024

Tender No. 2024_UAD_358496_1 NOTICE INVITING TENDER (NIT)

SCTSL invites online Bids for submissions on website www.mptenders.gov.in under organization name "Satna City Transport Services Limited" for the following work. Detailed NIT, Bid Schedule and other information can be seen on the website www.mptenders.gov.in of Government of M.P.

No.	Name of Work	Earnest Money Deposit (Rs)	Cost of Bid Document
01	Selection of Bus Operator for Procurement, Operation and Maintenance of 2 Numbers of "12 Meter Electric AC Buses" on different Intercity Routes for SCTSL	Rs 3,00,000/- (Rs Three Lacs Only)	Rs 15,000/- (Rs Fifteen Thousand Only)

The Tender form can be purchased online from www.mptenders.gov.in. The form duly filled along with necessary certificates in support of fulfillment of eligibility criterion and Earnest money should be uploaded by consultant by 20.08.2024, 17:30 late submission is liable to be rejected. Any further amendment/information can be seen on website. CEO, SCTSL reserves all the rights to accept or reject any or all tenders without assigning any reasons.

Note:

- Joint Venture/Consortium shall be allowed. The bus operator shall operate and maintain buses during the Agreement period. Bus operators will also be responsible for all statutory, regulatory, legal, tax and other requirements associated with the bus operation and maintenance.
- The Fare collected from the users on the buses will be retained by the operator and SCTSL shall have no share in such revenue.
- The selected bidder will have to form an SPV, in case any past litigation is pending against the company in relation to similar projects, to avoid transfer of any past litigation/obligation of the Company to the project entity.

CEO
Satna City Transport Services Ltd., Satna (M.P.)
Satna, dated 19.07.2024

N.I.T. No. 02/Transport/E-Tender/2024-25

GOVERNMENT OF HIMACHAL PRADESH PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT OFFICE OF THE CHIEF ENGINEER NATIONAL HIGHWAYS, BLOCK-D, NIRMAN BHAWAN, NIGAM VIHAR, SHIMLA-171002 Notice Inviting Bid

Bid No. PW-CE-NH-CTR-Tender Notice/EPC- 63/2024-2283-90 Dated :- 20-07-2024
"SLOPE STABILIZATION AND ROCK FALL MITIGATION WORKS AT KM 273/280 TO 273/600, KM 274/310 TO 274/435, 274/550 TO 274/660 AND 275/730 TO 275/855 ON NH-05 IN THE STATE OF HIMACHAL PRADESH" (Tender No. EPC-63/2024).

The Ministry of Road Transport & Highways through Chief Engineer NH HPPWD Shimla is engaged in the development of National Highways and as part of this Endeavour, it has decided to undertake "SLOPE STABILIZATION AND ROCK FALL MITIGATION WORKS AT KM 273/280 TO 273/600, KM 274/310 TO 274/435, 274/550 TO 274/660 AND 275/730 TO 275/855 ON NH-05 IN THE STATE OF HIMACHAL PRADESH" through an Engineering, Procurement and Construction (EPC) Contract.

Himachal Pradesh Public works Department through Chief Engineer NH HPPWD Shimla now invites bids from eligible contractors for the following project:
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Himachal Pradesh	NH-05	EPC-63	"Slope stabilization and rock fall mitigation works at Km 273/280 to 273/600, Km 274/310 to 274/435, 274/550 to 274/660 and 275/730 to 275/855 on NH-05 in the state of Himachal Pradesh"	Rs. 21.64 Crores*	12 Months	10 years

*Note: 1) The Estimated Project Cost is the Civil Cost of the work without GST and is used only for Evaluation Purpose. The bid should be quoted as per BoQ Inclusive of GST.

The complete BID document can be viewed/downloaded from official portal of e-procurement portal of MoR&H (<https://eprocure.gov.in/eprocure/app>) from 20-07-2024 (1800 Hrs. IST) to 02-09-2024 (upto 1100 Hrs. IST). It is mandatory for the bidder to submit its Technical bid & Financial Bid at (<https://eprocure.gov.in/eprocure/app>) and also Technical Bid at (<https://bids.gov.in/>) on or before 02-09-2024 (upto 1100 Hrs IST). Bids received online shall be opened on 03-09-2024 (at 1130 Hours IST). Any document not uploaded on e-procurement portal shall not be considered.

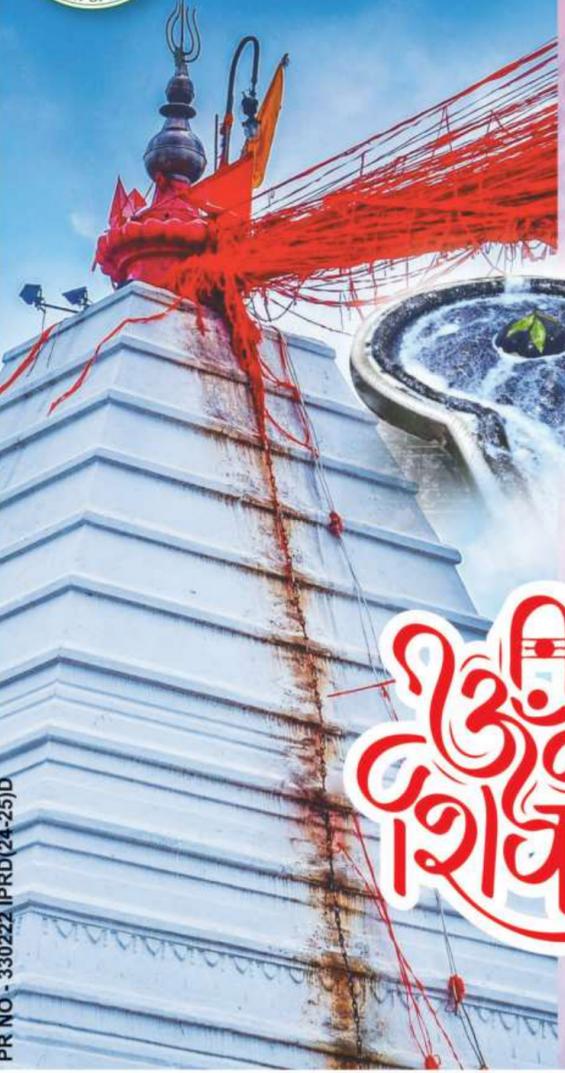
Bid through any other mode shall not be entertained. However, a BID Security of Rs. 43.28 Lakh (Rupees Forty three lakh twenty eight thousand only) shall be submitted in the form of Insurance Surety Bond (in the format at Appendix - IX issued by Insurance Company authorized by Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India), Account Payee Demand Draft, Banker's Cheque or e - Bank Guarantee (in the format at Appendix-II from a Scheduled Bank) to the "Executive Engineer, National Highways, Rampur, document fee receipt deposited in account of "Regional Pay & Accounts Officer (NH), Ministry of Road Transport & Highways, Chandigarh, Power of Attorney and Joint Bidding Agreement etc. shall be submitted physically by the Bidder on or before 03-09-2024 (at 1100 Hrs IST). Please note that the Chief Engineer, NH, HPPWD, Shimla-2 reserves the right to accept or reject all or any of the BIDs without assigning any reason whatsoever.

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Jitendra Kardam Arun Kr. Maji Adv.
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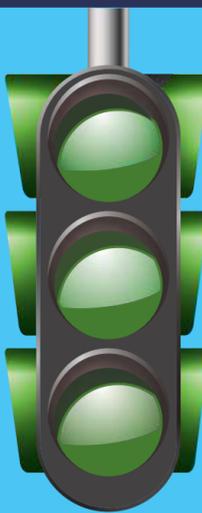
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Public at large is hereby informed that my Client, Shri. Pradeep Kant Mishra, R/O I-538, BETA-2, Uttar Pradesh-201308, has detached all ties with his son namely Shri. Priyank Mishra due to his abominable behavior, contemptuous attitude, and persistent disrespect towards my Client and other family members. Additionally, he has disgracefully engaged in relations with women of ill repute, tarnishing our family's honor. He is further disowned and disinherited from the inheritance of all the properties of my Client, and from now on he has no right, title, interest or claim of any nature whatsoever in the estate and assets of my Client. My Client maintains no concern for his son's personal matters. Any dealings with the aforementioned son shall be at one's own peril and responsibility. Neither my Client nor any family members shall bear any liabilities or repercussions arising from any association with him. **Siddhant Pandey Advocate Enrl. No. 8/4396/20**

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Shock-proof state

India must ensure its democratic digital infrastructure is shock-proof

A bright light fell on the extent of the world's dependence on information technologies when on July 19, supermarkets, banks, hospitals, airports, and many other services in between suffered a simultaneous blackout after a common software solution they used glitched. Between then and the time at which the solution's developers rolled out a fix, news of the problem and the resulting downtime spread around the world through the same networks that have been erected to facilitate communications between these systems. Technological advancements are inevitable and desirable, but the concurrent responsibility to set up failsafes and emergency protocols is often less glamorous. These gaps are exacerbated in societies where the adoption of new technologies is concentrated in sectors competing in the global market and in piecemeal fashion *vis-à-vis* services provided in local markets. Thus, for example, the glitch may have caused an airline operator to suffer greater monetary losses but it would have been more debilitating for cardiac facilities at a tertiary care centre, or a computer trying to access a thermal power facility during peak demand.

Such glitches are more common than people realise thanks to otherwise trivial process- or business-level failures. The focus must instead be on the network interconnections that allow these technologies to be useful and the implementation of life-saving redundancies. Unfortunately, unlike most other technological enterprises, information technologies are yet to develop a mature self-awareness of their pansocial character and the impetus to adjust for this rudiment lies with the state. This requires a 'Digital India' push that is cognisant of software solutions' relationship with digital privacy and data sovereignty, layered over the challenges that income inequality and political marginalisation impose on communities navigating more socially interconnected settings. For example, public distrust in electronic voting machines, stoked by an incomplete understanding of software security among the political class, the judiciary, and civil society, could have been restored with open-source software and modes of integrity testing that violate neither physical nor digital property rights. The July 19 outage offers a similar opportunity: to rejig the software that public sector institutions need to provide their essential services and to incorporate redundancies, including moving away from single-vendor policies, that preserve the links between these institutions and people engaged in informal economies in the event of a network-level outage. The state was previously duty-bound to develop democratic digital infrastructure. Now, cognisant of more powerful interlinks among social, economic, and cultural realities, it is also duty-bound to ensure that this infrastructure is shock-proof.

Medal count

India needs a strong showing in Paris as it bids for 2036 Olympics

As Paris is ready to host its third Olympics after a century, the 117 Indian athletes are gearing up earnestly to increase the country's medal count in the post-COVID Games, kicking off on the banks of the majestic river Seine on July 26. When the pandemic-delayed Olympics were staged behind closed doors in Tokyo three years ago, India claimed seven medals to record its best-ever tally. With the country aiming to bid for the 2036 Games, it is understandable that the government, pumping in money into sports promotion, is optimistic about double-digit medals. World and Olympic champion javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra is the brightest medal contender for India. The second Indian individual gold medallist after shooter Abhinav Bindra, he is fourth among the leading throwers this season with a mark of 88.36m. To bolster his legendary status, he must perform at his peak and overcome several elite competitors. Shuttler P.V. Sindhu, the only Indian woman with two Olympic medals, will seek to overcome a slump and bag an unprecedented third medal. The other two individual medallists from Tokyo, weightlifter Mirabai Chanu and boxer Lovlina Borgohain will also look to secure second consecutive medals and make history. Mirabai, the women's 49kg silver medallist, has recovered from a hip injury and needs to perform at her best to register a 200kg-plus total for a podium finish. Lovlina, a 69kg Tokyo bronze medallist, will try to live up to her current status — the 75kg World champion.

Another World champion boxer Nikhat Zareen (50kg), former Worlds silver medallist Amit Panghal (51kg), Worlds bronze medallist wrestler Anam Panghal (53kg) and two-time bronze medallist Vinesh Phogat (50kg), who was a prominent face during the wrestlers' protest, World No.3 men's doubles badminton pair Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty will be some of the names expected to contribute to the medal kitty. Altogether, 21 shooters have qualified this time and will be determined to end Indian shooting's flop show in the last two Olympics. Pistol shooters Manu Bhaker, Anish Bhanwala, and rifle shooters Sift Kaur Samra and Aishwary Pratap Singh Tomar hold much promise. The Indian hockey team, which ended a 41-year medal drought in Tokyo by landing a bronze, will hope to excel under new coach Craig Fulton and repeat its glorious performance in Tokyo. An improved medals tally in Paris would lift the country's profile as a sporting nation and help build the momentum for India's aspirations to embrace the Olympic movement in the near future.

Focus on female employment to counter unemployment

The difficulty in getting jobs and inflation were the two major issues that played a role in the results of the Lok Sabha Elections 2024, according to the Lokniti-CSDS pre-poll survey (*The Hindu*, April 11, 2024). The India Employment Report (IER) 2024, published by the Institute for Human Development and the International Labour Organization, also illustrated a rise in the unemployment rate from a little more than 2% in 2000 and 2012 to 5.8% in 2019. Unemployment reduced somewhat to 4.1% in 2022, although time-related underemployment was high at 7.5%. The labour force participation rate (LFPR) also fell from 61.6% in 2000 to 49.8% in 2018 but recovered halfway to 55.2% in 2022. But in this gloomy picture marked by unemployment and underemployment, there was a steep and steady upward trend of female LFPR from 24.6% in 2018 to 36.6% in 2022 in rural India. It also increased by around 3.5% from 20.4% in 2018 in urban areas. This is in contrast with male LFPR, which rose marginally by 2% in rural areas and almost stagnant in urban areas.

Female LFPR in India is low when compared to the world average of 53.4% (2019), and it has decreased from 38.9% in 2000 to 23.3% in 2018. Against this backdrop, the current increasing trend in female LFPR, especially a 12% rise in rural India during 2018-22, indicates an untapped opportunity for employment generation. Women have been engaged in unpaid family labour work in both rural and urban areas. While 9.3% of males were employed as unpaid family workers, the same was as high as 36.5% for females in 2022. Moreover, the difference between female and male unpaid family labour employment was 31.4% in rural areas against only 8.1% in urban areas. Hence, if appropriate strategies are taken, there is a much greater opportunity for female employment generation, especially in rural areas.

The choice of employment for earnings may be extremely gendered, which makes generating employment opportunities for females tricky. Our study on work conditions and employment for women in the slums of Bhuj, Gujarat, shows that women are more interested in engaging in traditional employment activities from home,



Indranil De

Professor, Institute of Rural Management, Anand, Gujarat

such as *bandhani*, embroidery and fall beading, rather than other opportunities, including non-farm casual labour. The flexibility of work and the possibility of working from home were the major reasons for preferring traditional occupations despite their low income. The study also found that 30% of women were stuck to their traditional occupations due to the unavailability of other options. A lower rise of female LFPR in urban than rural areas during 2018-22, as shown in IER 2024, also indicates a lack of appropriate and gainful opportunities for females in urban areas. The opportunity to develop one's own enterprise was difficult due to limited access to capital and binding social norms where males of a particular community control the dominant business of the locality — tie and dye. Collectivising women under self-help groups (SHG), and, further, through federations may benefit women involved in traditional occupations. SHG women may be trained to acquire new skills, and federations may link women directly to the market for better returns. The Kutch Mahila Vikas Sangathan (KMVS), a local non-profit organisation, is working in the region towards this end.

Traditional occupations are accepted by society as they conform to local gender norms. These occupations have emerged as the dominant choice of women. Traditional occupations support women's practical gender needs, such as managing both household work and earnings. However, they may not help in meeting strategic gender needs, such as challenging regressive gender norms. Moving out of their own dwelling and working in a professional environment increases women's agency and empowers them to meet strategic gender needs.

The importance of market access

The foray of women into male-dominated workspaces would increase competition for labour work. This competition can be avoided by generating new opportunities in previously neglected arenas. In a study on the relationship between the type of dominant irrigation source of a region (canal or groundwater) and women's empowerment (farm employment and decision-making abilities) in the villages in the Upper Gangetic Plains of Uttarakhand and Uttar Pradesh, we found that women's wages in farm labour work and decision-making abilities increased with the expansion of relatively less dominant source of irrigation and vice versa. Males may take more interest if more water is available through the dominant source of the region. Further, the expansion of canal irrigation during *Ziad* (summer slump season), when males had less interest in agriculture, positively affected female empowerment.

Additional non-conventional irrigation benefits women, as this writer's recent field visits to villages in West Bengal showed. Women have initiated farming, pisciculture, nursery and vermicompost after water is made available

through ponds or tube wells in arid and monocropped regions. These women are part of an all-women water user's association supported by the West Bengal Accelerated Development of Minor Irrigation Project, Government of West Bengal. Availability of work near home has reduced female migration with the whole family and has increased family welfare. Male family members help in heavy activities that demand strength, such as ploughing or netting in ponds. In most tribal villages, women are barred from ploughing due to gender norms. Similar norms exist for netting in ponds. Women said that they could carry on without the help of male family members if they used hired tractors for ploughing and hired labour for netting. More market interaction empowers women by enabling them to circumvent gender norms and reduce dependency on male family members. Far away, in the Upper Gangetic Plains, a more vibrant water market was found to be associated with higher agency by women to influence the purchase of agricultural inputs.

The earnings of both men and women contribute to family income and welfare. Hence, the strategy to enhance women's workforce participation and reduce underutilisation of time can be possible by developing income-earning opportunities where males need not be confronted and driven out of the labour market. Women's work opportunities at or near home can enhance the family income and women's position in the family. Strikingly, a woman in West Bengal was proud that she could lend money to her husband to buy agricultural inputs. In another study in the slums of Kolkata, it was observed that women's participation in the workforce has reduced economic vulnerability and improved resilience during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Need for a better work environment

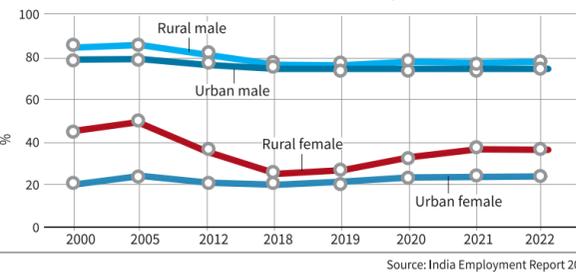
At the same time, participation in work outside the home should be focused. This has a more direct impact on women's empowerment. However, a long-term strategy is required to develop a better work environment for women. Safety and basic facilities in the workplace (toilets and crèches) should be made available. Public policy should mandate these facilities in small- and medium-manufacturing or business units.

A strategy of focusing on the improvement of female LFPR would improve overall employment and the family income. In rural areas, public policy should help women by providing more access to resources (such as water) and markets (to buy inputs and implements and to sell produce). In urban areas, better facilities in the workplace should be mandated. Collectivising women and federating collectives in rural and urban India under planned economic activities will be most helpful. The *Lakshpati Didi* programme aiming at raising an SHG woman's annual income to ₹1 lakh or above may pave the way.

The views expressed are personal

Labour force participation rate in India

A sharp rise in the female labour force participation rate, especially in rural India, from 2018 indicates new opportunities for employment generation



Source: India Employment Report 2024

Reasonable accommodations and disability rights

The principle of reasonable accommodations (RA) is foregrounded in the legal framework through the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPwD) Act, 2016. The Act, in 2.(y), describes RAs as those adjustments which ensure that Persons with Disabilities (PwD) are able to exercise their rights equally with others. These RAs may range from building ramps or providing assistive technologies to restructuring job requirements and modifying workplace policies. However, public and private institutions are exempt from implementing these RAs if they can prove that such an exercise would cause them disproportionate or "undue burden".

The reluctance of Indian institutions

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) charts out an illustrative set of factors which should aid an institution in objectively determining its undue burden. However, from a financial standpoint, Indian institutions are still reluctant to bear the costs of complying with such anti-discrimination legislation. The reason is not far to see.

When institutions are made the sole cost-bearers of RAs, they adopt efficiency-enhancing, utilitarian approaches rather than a welfare-based approach towards PwDs. Informed by prejudices that PwDs are inherently less productive, or that providing RAs is always expensive, institutions tend to use the defence of undue burden for reasons of expediency more than for reasons of actual hardship. This directly compromises the rights of PwDs and makes them the subject of a cost-benefit analysis. Thus, setting a uniform legal standard to determine undue burden becomes imperative in order to prevent misuse. However, compliance with this standard can only thrive in an ecosystem where institutions realise that in addition to fulfilling the legal mandate, an investment in RAs can also generate tangible business benefits for them.

The Constitution of India puts the state under



Tanishk Goyal

an advocate at the Allahabad High Court, a former law clerk of the Supreme Court of India and an incoming LL.M candidate at Harvard Law School

a positive obligation to create conditions wherein individuals can effectively exercise their right to equality. Since the rights of PwDs directly depend on how accessible institutions are to them, the state is bound to create positive ecosystems which not only mandate but also encourage institutions to accommodate PwDs.

A model that can be implemented

First, a state can do so by sensitising institutions about the fact that a majority of the requested RAs can be procured at inexpensive prices. Second, by giving targeted incentives to such institutions for providing RAs such as deductions, subsidies or tax credits. And, third, by sharing the costs of RAs with those remaining institutions that demonstrate actual hardship in providing RAs due to a true shortfall in their resources. This incentive and cost-sharing model will not only redress disadvantage and stigma against PwDs but also develop a policy response that increases PwD participation in institutional ecosystems and also accommodates their differences.

This model is also practically implementable. It can be operationalised by using the provisions in the RPwD Act. Section 86 of the Act highlights the creation of a National Fund for PwDs. Its corpus, inter alia, includes substantial contributions from banks and financial institutions in pursuance of the judgment of the Supreme Court of India in *Indian Banks' Association, Bombay vs M/s Devkala Consultancy Service*. Rule 42 of the RPwD Rules, 2017, supplements this provision by mandating that the corpus should be used to implement the objectives of the RPwD Act. However, despite these provisions, the corpus of the National Fund still remains underutilised. Further, its scope remains severely restricted and its coverage remains capped at dismally low amounts. This roadblock can be addressed by ensuring a continuous flow of funds towards the National Fund while also optimally utilising the funds already available therein. The state can do so by

designating the National Fund as a separate line item in every annual budget and framing the following rules for the disbursement of its corpus.

Ensuring a welfare approach

Whenever RAs are requested, institutions should first assess their resource deficit which precludes them from procuring the said RAs. This inquiry should be undertaken in light of the incentives such as tax credits or expense deductions that may have already been provided to them. Institutions can then submit a request to the National Fund's governing body to compensate them for the shortfall.

Borrowing from the standards under the Americans with Disabilities Act, 1990, the National Fund's governing body can also require them to state in their request, their overall financial resources, access to external funding and the lack of alternative and efficacious RAs in the market which could be procured at a lesser cost. This can eliminate any deliberate cost avoidance by institutions. Upon receiving such a request, the designated authority under the National Fund can conduct a fact-finding inquiry to assess the veracity of the resource-deficit claims. Subsequently, the National Fund's governing body can consult the Office of Chief Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities to assess the proportionality of the requested RAs as contemplated under the CRPD before sanctioning funds to make up for the shortfall. This safeguard will ensure that any proportionality analysis of an RA is guided by a welfare rather than a utilitarian approach.

With these approaches, the Incentive and Cost-Sharing Model can achieve a three-fold objective. It can diminish the reluctance of erring institutions to accommodate PwDs; provide the prospects of positive market outcomes to new and upcoming institutions and, concurrently, ensure that institutions satisfy a uniform legal threshold of "undue burden" before they can be allowed to avoid the costs of providing RAs.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Unrest in Bangladesh

The ongoing violence in Bangladesh against the reservation system, which has claimed many lives, is shocking (Page 1, July 21). Of course, growing unemployment is the main reason that prompted youth

to revolt against the government. Further, it is a fact that the gap between the "haves and the have-nots" is widening across the world. Rulers around the globe need to look into this and provide opportunities to all sections

in a democratic manner. **Kshirasagara Balaji Rao,** Hyderabad

In Paris

It is a great moment that the French government has requested India to help in providing security for the

Paris Olympics in the form of a dog squad (Inside pages, "10 Indian dogs in

Paris to guard Olympics", July 18). It is an honour that has been bestowed on our

Corrections & Clarifications

In a report, "Ex-Foreign Secretary Vinay Kwatra is new Ambassador to U.S." (Inside pages, July 20, 2024), a sentence should have read, "In 2001, the government had appointed retiring Foreign Secretary Lalit Mansingh to the U.S., and in 2011 Nirupama Rao after her retirement, but all..."

security system. The dog squad has already demonstrated its capabilities during the G-20 summit in India in 2023. One is sure that the squad and handlers will do well.

Dr. Arunachalam, Nagercoil, Tamil Nadu

The importance of both Quad and BRICS

The Quad Foreign Ministers' meeting in Japan end-July, after a long gap of 10 months, comes at a time when the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) is paralysed and its reform nowhere in sight, international law is violated with impunity both in the Ukraine war and in the assault on Gaza by Israel, an axis of Russia, China, North Korea, and Iran is gaining traction, and Chinese influence is growing not just in the Indo-Pacific, but elsewhere too.

The U.S. has, in turn, realised that it needs not just allies, but also credible partners in its security architecture, including in the Indo-Pacific, and reached "across the aisle" to "non-ally" countries like India to partner with them in smaller pluri-lateral groupings and joint security initiatives. Further, ASEAN countries are getting increasingly vulnerable, with South China Sea remaining a flashpoint.

While India is a member of many pluri-lateral groups on both sides of the geo-strategic "divide", its engagement in Quad and with BRICS present the country with interesting, and sometimes contrasting, dilemmas.

India has enthusiastically embraced Quad and its strategic objectives. U.S. President Joe Biden's belief in the Quad has given it the necessary fillip at the highest level since 2021. The fact that India, during its presidency of the UNSC in August 2021, held a high-level virtual event on 'Enhancing Maritime Security', presided over by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and attended by Russian President Vladimir Putin, among others, indicates the importance India attaches to strengthening maritime security in the Indo-Pacific and beyond.

India's role in the Quad

While Quad has always had a geopolitical security objective vis-à-vis China, India's vision goes beyond this narrow thrust to a much broader redrawing of the security and techno-economic architecture of the Indo-Pacific



T.S. Tirumurti

Foreign Service Officer who was India's Permanent Representative to the UN, New York, and India's Sherpa for BRICS

region. With Quad now working on reorientation of global supply chains of critical technologies and on a range of areas of direct strategic relevance to the region, including digital, telecom, health, power, and semi-conductors, it has underlined that development too has a security perspective which cannot be ignored. India, in its turn, has benefited through enhanced bilateral relations with Quad partners, especially the U.S.

On the other hand, the formation of AUKUS with the U.S., Australia, and the U.K., with a view to enhance their military capabilities, especially Australia's with nuclear submarines, has put securitisation of the Indo-Pacific region and deterrence of China at the centre. The Ukraine war and enhanced focus on NATO has made the West look at Asia too through a military lens. AUKUS may well suit India's geo-strategic interests, but India's reluctance to go the whole nine yards in embracing a purely security vision for Quad is seen as a dampener, in spite of the Indian External Affairs Minister clarifying that Quad is not an Asian NATO and India is not a treaty ally unlike the other three. In fact, I used to tell my Quad colleagues in the UN that the only value-add we have in Quad is India. Instead of factoring in India's viewpoint, if they merely want to convert India to their cause, then they are wasting the opportunity to become inclusive and enhance their overall impact in the region, which includes developing countries with differing compulsions, not all of which are military-centric.

India's independent policy of close relations with Russia and calling for a diplomatic solution to the Ukraine war, both of which are frowned upon by the West, do not distract India from strengthening the Quad. Some Quad members and European countries are themselves enhancing their bilateral engagement with China, underlining their differing bilateral and regional compulsions.

Against the backdrop of India's enthusiastic engagement with

Quad, its engagement with BRICS presents a different conundrum. India was an enthusiastic founder of BRICS. In fact, at the 10th annual summit of the BRICS in 2018 in Johannesburg, South Africa, it was Mr. Modi who reminded the leaders that BRICS was founded to reform the multilateral system and proposed for the first time his vision of "reformed multilateralism." However, India's participation in BRICS has fluctuated from enthusiastic to lukewarm. While BRICS' initiatives such as New Development Bank and the Contingent Reserve Arrangement have been pioneering, the attempt by China to use BRICS to grandstand and push its world view on the Global South and now, to push back the West has made India wary of giving BRICS a higher profile.

The potential of BRICS

India had, consequently, been reluctant to expand BRICS. In fact, in 2018, Mr. Putin too underlined his reluctance to expand BRICS by quoting former South African President Nelson Mandela: "After climbing a great hill, one only finds that there are many more hills to climb." But after Quad and the situation in Ukraine, Russia too realised the potential of BRICS, which includes pushing back the West, and lined up behind China. The change of guard in Brazil leaves India as the lone member to push back China. A reluctant India decided to accept BRICS's expansion than oppose it and now many more countries are reportedly waiting to join. Even if India has the best of bilateral relations with all the new members, we need to make sure it all adds up to support for India inside BRICS. For this, India cannot afford to be ambivalent about BRICS any more. To counter moves to take BRICS in a direction India does not like, we need to be more engaged, not less. With India being the only country common to both Quad and BRICS, the country cannot afford to downplay one for the other.

With India being the only country common to both Quad and BRICS and a founding member of both, it cannot afford to downplay one for the other

Shaky law, unsound for investment

The Karnataka jobs-for-locals Bill may run afoul of the Constitution

STATE OF PLAY

M.R. Madhavan



The Karnataka Cabinet approved and then put on hold a Bill mandating reservation in private sector jobs for local residents. The Bill not only makes the State unattractive for investments, but may also violate the Constitution.

The Bill defines a local candidate as anyone who was born in Karnataka, has been residing in the State for the last 15 years, and has studied Kannada as a subject at the secondary level or passed a language proficiency test. The Bill reserves half the seats at the managerial level and 70% at lower levels for all private sector establishments. It excludes State and Central government entities.

Bills that require reservation for locals have been passed in recent years by Andhra Pradesh (AP), Jharkhand, and Haryana. The AP (2019) and Haryana (2020) laws require 75% reservation for locals. Unlike the Karnataka Bill, these laws have quotas based solely on residency, and do not have a requirement of language proficiency. The Haryana law was struck down by the Punjab and Haryana High Court, while the AP law has been challenged in the Andhra Pradesh High Court. Jharkhand passed a Bill in 2023 requiring 100% reservation for locals in Class-III and Class-IV State government jobs, but has not implemented it yet.

The Karnataka Bill may breach the Constitution in four ways. First, requiring private sector entities to provide reservation may infringe upon their fundamental right to do occupation, trade, or business under Article 19(1)(g) of the Constitution. In two judge-

ments – in 2002 (*T.M.A. Pai*) and 2005 (*P.A. Inamdar*) – the Supreme Court held that unaided educational institutions cannot be asked to implement reservation on any criterion except merit. It observed that establishing and administering an educational institution was an occupation under Article 19(1)(g), and thus protected from government interference. Subsequently, the 93rd Amendment to the Constitution allowed reservation for Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, and Other Backward Classes for education in private institutions. As this Amendment is restricted to admissions in educational institutions, the Karnataka Bill would infringe on the right to trade and business.

Second, Article 16(2) of the Constitution prohibits discrimination in public employment on the basis of residence. While Article 16(3) allows for reservation based on residence, this can be made only for public employment, and by a law made by Parliament and not the State Legislature. State laws providing reservation based on residence have been struck down by the Supreme Court in the past. For example, in 2002, the Court struck down provisions in Rajasthan for preferential employment of teachers from a particular region.

Third, the Bill may violate Articles 19(1)(d) and 19(1)(e) which provide every citizen the right to move freely, and

reside and settle anywhere in India. This right implicitly (and read with the right to carry out an occupation) allows any citizen to work anywhere in India. The Bill would also violate Article 14 (right to equality) in two ways: it discriminates between residents and non-residents, and between those proficient in Kannada and others.

Fourth, in 1992 (*Indira Sawhney*), the Supreme Court put a cap of 50% on reservation in public employment. It said this rule may be relaxed for extraordinary situations of social backwardness. In 2020, the Court stayed implementation of a Maharashtra Act providing reservation for Marathas, which led to total reservations going over 50%.

A couple of years ago, Karnataka enacted the Kannada Language Comprehensive Development Act, 2022. Among other things, this Act provides for reservation in higher education for persons who have studied in the Kannada medium up to Class 10. It also requires private sector companies to reserve a certain percentage of jobs for Kannadigas, so that they can avail themselves of tax benefits such as rebate or grants.

The new draft Bill furthers the push towards employment of locals and use of Kannada. Industry groups such as Nasscom have voiced concerns that businesses may be forced to relocate. The government has indicated that it will redraft the provisions. However, any law that provides reservation for locals would not just run afoul of the Constitution but would challenge the very idea of India as a nation where every citizen can live and work anywhere within its territory.

M.R. Madhavan is president and co-founder of PRS Legislative Research

Select towns are host to NEET-UG-2024 best performers

While high-scoring candidates in Rajasthan and Haryana were spread across centres, Namakkal in Tamil Nadu and Tanuku in A.P. were a cut apart

DATA POINT

Srinivasan Ramani
Jasmin Nihalani

Data released by the National Testing Agency on NEET-UG for 2024 show that the cities with the highest share of students scoring 650 or more out of 720 in the exam were Sikar in Rajasthan, followed by Namakkal in Tamil Nadu, Kottayam in Kerala, Tanuku in Andhra Pradesh (AP), Jhunjhunu in Rajasthan, and Kurukshetra in Haryana. A score of 650 and above gives candidates a high probability of securing admission in government medical colleges. Chart 1 plots the share of candidates who scored 650 and above in each city across centres. Sikar was on top of the list with 7.5% (2,037 candidates), followed by Namakkal (5.1%, 313), Kottayam (4.4%, 544), Tanuku (4.1%, 41), Jhunjhunu (3.96%, 196) and Kurukshetra (3.96%, 196). In Kota, the touted coaching hub in Rajasthan, 1,066 candidates scored 650 and above. This was the second highest absolute number after Sikar.

From Sikar, 149 candidates (0.55%) scored 700 or more – the highest in any city. Jaipur (131, 0.24%), Delhi (120, 0.18%), Kota (74, 0.27%), Bengaluru-Urban (74, 0.25%) Kottayam (61, 0.49%), Ahmedabad (53, 0.45%), Vijayawada (50, 0.34%), Pune (41, 0.18%), Chennai (41, 0.18%) rounded up the top 10 in absolute terms. In Namakkal, 31 candidates (0.52%) scored 700 or above. This was the second highest share after Sikar.

The fact that Namakkal hosts the highest share of candidates scoring 650 or more in Tamil Nadu is revealing given the significant opposition to NEET in the State. Prior to the implementation of NEET, Namakkal used to feature "super schools", which generated "toppers" in the Class 12 Board exam. Now, the city is a hub for

coaching institutes that train candidates for the NEET/JEE exams.

No other city/town in Tamil Nadu came close to Namakkal's proportion of candidates (5.1%) who scored 650 or more – the second best, Chennai, registered only 1.61%. Tanuku in Andhra Pradesh also showed a similar pattern – Vijayawada with 2.4% had the second highest share in the State.

In terms of centres (Table 2), the share of candidates scoring 650 or more was the highest (12.64%) at Tagore P.G. College in Sikar. In fact, eight more centres from Sikar were in the top 10, and 37 of the top 50 centres are also from Sikar. Delhi Public School in Rewari, Haryana, registered the highest proportion of scores of 600 or more among all the centres (22.73%, 60 out of 264 candidates), while 25 candidates scored 650 or more (9.5%).

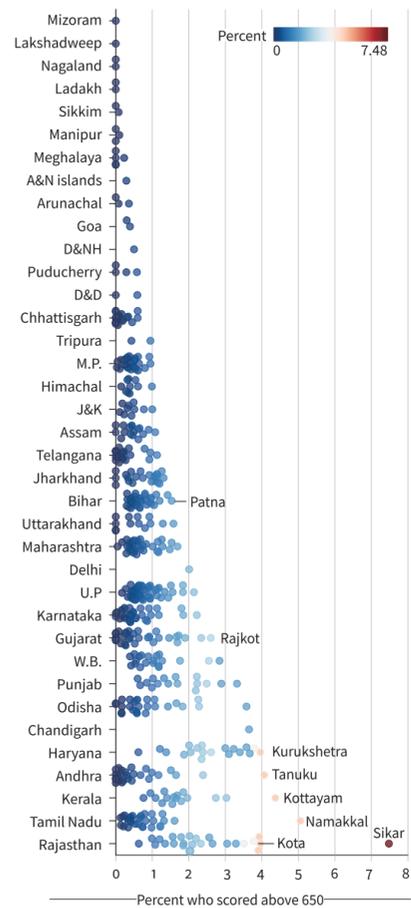
Petitioners who have demanded a re-exam in the Supreme Court have alleged that the numbers from Rewari are an anomaly. That said, Rewari as a city with 10 centres had a relatively high average score among candidates – 288, the 16th best for any town/city – and its Delhi Public School centre leads the country with an average of 406.34. In Haryana in general, candidates scored 650 or more in a considerable number of cities and towns. They constitute more than 3% of the overall exam-takers, next only to Rajasthan.

While the scores in centres that have registered a high average does not follow a typical normal distribution, there are also some centres with low averages but more than a few candidates who have performed exceedingly well. Therefore, merely looking at 2024 data without a State-wise, city-wise, and centre-wise comparison with other years would not help in decisively pointing out anomalies and concluding that there has been large-scale fraud in the implementation of the NEET-UG exam.

Small towns far ahead

The data for the chart and table were sourced from the National Testing Agency

Chart 1: The chart plots the percentage of candidates who scored 650 and above in each city across States



No other city/town in Tamil Nadu came close to the proportion of candidates (5.1%) who scored 650 or more in Namakkal -- the second best, Chennai, registered only 1.61%. Tanuku in Andhra Pradesh also showed a similar pattern -- Vijayawada with 2.4% had the second highest share in terms of proportion in the State

Table 2: The table lists the top ten centres with the highest share of candidates who scored above 650

Centre	City	State	Total	Above 650	% 650+
Tagore P.G. College	Sikar	Rajasthan	356	45	12.64
Yash Public Sr. Sec.	Sikar	Rajasthan	358	38	10.61
D.A.V. Public Shikshan Sansthan Sr. Sec.	Sikar	Rajasthan	502	52	10.36
Sobhasaria Group Of Institutions	Sikar	Rajasthan	502	50	9.96
Swami Nityanand Sr. Sec.	Sikar	Rajasthan	475	47	9.89
Danta Mahavidhalaya	Sikar	Rajasthan	425	41	9.65
Mahatma Gandhi Int.	Sikar	Rajasthan	703	67	9.53
Delhi Public School	Rewari	Haryana	264	25	9.47
New Central Academy Chhawani Neemkathana	Sikar	Rajasthan	351	33	9.4
Jr Baselios Eng Med Sch Pam-pady (S) Kottayam Kl	Kottayam	Kerala	183	17	9.29



Seeking justice: Student protesting against NTA and NEET, at Jantar Mantar in New Delhi. SHASHI SHEKHAR KASHYAP

FROM THE ARCHIVES

The Hindu

FIFTY YEARS AGO JULY 22, 1974

U.N. calls for Greek pull-out

United Nations, July 21: The Security Council last night unanimously called for a ceasefire by all belligerents in Cyprus and negotiations by Greece, Turkey and Britain to restore peace and constitutional Government there.

In a resolution calling on all States to respect the sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity of Cyprus, the Council also demanded "an immediate end to foreign military intervention" which contravened this.

Turkey, which landed troops in Cyprus early yesterday has special treaty responsibilities together with Greece and Britain, for guaranteeing Cypriot independence.

The document also, in effect, requested the withdrawal from Cyprus of the 650 Greek Army officers heading the Cyprus National Guard, which led the July 15 coup against the Government of Archbishop Makarios.

All parties were called on to co-operate fully with the 2,300 man peace-keeping force stationed on the island since 1964 to keep the peace between the Greek majority and Turkish minority communities.

The 15-nation Council decided to keep the situation under constant review and asked the Secretary-General, Mr. Kurt Waldheim, to report as appropriate "with a view to adopting measures in order to ensure that peaceful conditions are restored as soon as possible."

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO JULY 22, 1924

Havoc in Mysore

Mysore, July 20: The floods in the Cauvery and its tributaries are subsiding. The overflow on the Kannabadi Dam is now 11 ft, and the overflow on the bridge over the waste weirs has subsided, making access to the dam possible. It is apprehended that some slight damage has been caused to the rear slope of the dam.

Seringapatam is surrounded on all sides by water. But for the fort which surrounds the historic town, there would have been a deluge at Seringapatam. The moats surrounding the fort are full of water. The Wellesley Bridge is completely under water. The bridge is likely to have sustained serious damage, but it is too early to say anything. Wheeled traffic on the road from Seringapatam to Bangalore is out of the question for some time.

Text & Context

THE HINDU

NEWS IN NUMBERS

The number of people affected by the floods in Assam

1.3 in lakh. The Brahmaputra and Disang rivers continue to flow above the danger level in Assam. About 9,000 people are taking shelter in 46 camps, while another 18 relief distribution centres are serving over 21,000 citizens, according to officials. PTI

Indians trapped in a cybercrime scam in Cambodia rescued

14 The Indian embassy said that it has facilitated the rescue of over 650 Indian citizens who had fallen victim to fake job offers and into the trap of human traffickers. The embassy also said that they have issued an advisory against such fake job scams. PTI

Funds set for disbursement of social security pension in Kerala

900 in ₹ crore. State Finance Minister K. N. Balagopal said beneficiaries would get ₹1,600 each via bank or through cooperative societies. Pension has been distributed on a monthly basis without any fail since March. PTI

The revenue Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) aims for by 2047

1 in trillion dollars. The company will continue to invest in fossil fuels and new energy avenues to achieve net-zero carbon emissions by 2046, IOC chairman Shrikant Madhav Vaidya said. The IOC posted a net profit of ₹39,619 crore in the 2023-24 fiscal. PTI

Funds announced by the BCCI for IOA for Paris Olympics

8.5 in ₹ crore. BCCI secretary Jay Shah announced assistance to the Indian Olympic Association for the Paris Games. 117 athletes will represent India. There will also be a 140-strong support staff. PTI

COMPILED BY THE HINDU DATA TEAM

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On the student protests in Bangladesh

Why have students in Bangladesh took to the streets? Why is the 30% quota for freedom fighters and their descendants an emotive matter for the Awami League? How did the protests turn violent? Have the quotas been misused?

EXPLAINER

Kallol Bhattacharjee

The story so far:

At least 130 people have been killed in the student protest clashes against quotas for government jobs in Bangladesh. In a new development, the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court dismissed the order of the High Court that had precipitated the crisis, and reserved 93% of the seats in government services for merit, allocating just 5% jobs for freedom fighters and their descendants. A one per cent quota each has been allocated for tribes, differentially abled people and sexual minorities.

What do the protests mean for the Sheikh Hasina government?

The anti-quota protests have come at a time when Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina was settling down to power after winning a controversial election in January that gave her an unprecedented fourth consecutive term. Ms. Hasina was aware that the biggest challenge this time was high inflation and unemployment, and had started looking for solutions from partner countries like India and China as she wanted to increase employment opportunities in the manufacturing sector. The agitation, coupled with her own intemperate remarks, has created one of the biggest crises that she has faced since coming to power for her first term in 1996.

How did the agitation begin?

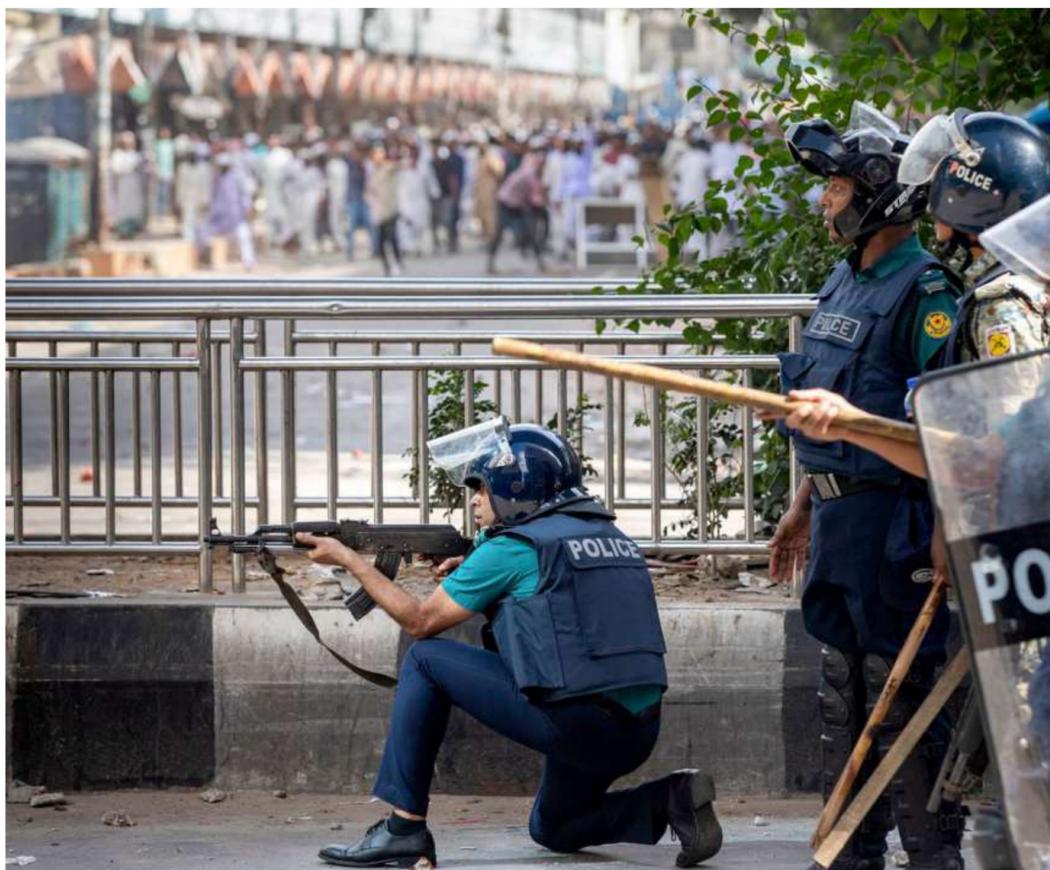
The seeds of the present quota reform movement lies in the smaller anti-quota movement of 2018. On March 8, 2018, the Bangladesh High Court rejected a petition challenging the legality of the quota system in the country that had existed since the early 1970s. In this backdrop, Ms. Hasina declared that she would maintain the quota for the descendants of the veterans of the liberation war. It was broadly understood that this quota which was started by her father Sheikh Mujib was an emotional matter for her. But this declaration of support for the quota for the descendants of the liberation war triggered a major agitation by students.

Responding to the agitation, Ms. Hasina cancelled all quotas in the Bangladesh Civil service through an executive order. This was a jolt for the students who just wanted a reform of the quota system and not abolition. It was clear that if freedom fighters were not to get any quota then no one else would either. During the next two years, over several rounds of discussion, Ms. Hasina stuck to her decision to abolish all quotas and in 2020, the executive order became operational.

What role did the court play in the quota agitation?

On June 5, 2024, the Bangladesh High Court nullified Ms. Hasina's executive order that had dissolved all quotas. This action by the judiciary restored all quotas in the Bangladesh civil service. This judicial intervention was brought upon by an appeal filed by the descendant of a freedom fighter and six other individuals. Responding to the High Court's verdict, the government filed an appeal with the appellate division of the Supreme Court. It became apparent that since the court had brought back the quota system, Ms. Hasina would try and ensure that the earlier system of 30% quota for descendants of freedom fighters is reintroduced in the new quota system. This triggered the current protests.

The appellate division of the Supreme



Violent clashes: Police takes position to disperse students protesting over the quota system, in Dhaka, Bangladesh, on July 19. AP

Court then issued an order halting the High Court's order till the government's appeal was fully heard. Ms. Hasina appealed to the students to allow the Supreme Court's appellate division to complete the hearing. However, there was uncertainty about the judiciary's decision. Students wanted the Prime Minister to consult them and other stakeholders and come up with an inclusive quota system and implement the same through an executive order. It was felt that if Ms. Hasina could abolish the quota system as she did in 2018, she could also bring in a quota as per the demand of the protesters.

At the core of the negotiations was the concern of the protesters about the 30% quota for freedom fighters and their descendants and the possibility that Ms. Hasina would bring back the quota for freedom fighters in jobs through either an appellate tribunal or executive decision which would limit the availability of merit-based jobs.

What triggered the clashes?

In the backdrop of the hearing in the appellate division and the protests, Ms. Hasina termed the protesters who opposed quota for freedom fighters' families as 'razakars' or traitors who supported the Pakistani military in carrying out large-scale atrocities against men and women in 1971. This enraged the students who demanded an apology from her and occupied public squares. The situation escalated as the police and the Rapid Action Battalion (RAB) cracked down on protesters. The Awami League, the ruling party of Bangladesh, was also accused of using its student leaders to crack down on the protests.

This led to further confrontation and finally the military had to be pressed into service. As violence spiralled out of control, the protesters were offered a dialogue with the law minister but protesters refused stating "no dialogue

while bloodshed continues".

What is quota for freedom fighters?

After the war of 1971, Bangladesh was remodelled and one of the main planks of the creation of the state was Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's promise to do justice to those who had sacrificed and endured atrocities by the Pakistani military. In 1972, immediately after returning to Dhaka he resolved to create a quota for freedom fighters. Apart from freedom fighters, Mujib also gave a quota for the women who were tortured by Pakistani soldiers. After the assassination of Sheikh Mujib, the quota system was diluted and extended to unrepresented sections of the country. Thus Bangladesh's varying and evolving quota system spanned freedom fighters, women, underdeveloped areas and ethnic minorities or tribes.

Over the years, the quota system at times remained underutilised as the number of freedom fighters dwindled, and therefore possibilities of abuse of the quota arose. The argument of the critics was that as long as *Mukti joddhas* (freedom fighters) were young and seeking jobs, it was fair to give them reservation. After the *mukti joddhas* passed, their children have been getting reservation in jobs. And now the grand children of the *mukti joddhas* are also going to benefit from the revived quota system. At times, when the families were not available, there were suspicions that the quota was extended to party operatives of Ms. Hasina's Awami League.

Bangladesh's political system has been dominated by Ms. Hasina and the Awami League for a long time. There has been a growing sentiment among opposition parties and critics that the quota for freedom fighters was essentially an attempt to create a group of close supporters for the Awami League within the bureaucracy or civil service who would perpetuate the Awami League's rule. This is one of the main reasons that

prompted the students to launch the quota reform movement after the government filed an appeal with the appellate division of the court.

Why does the govt. feel strongly about the freedom fighters quota?

From the beginning, Ms. Hasina has fashioned her government around the agenda of Sheikh Mujib. She feels that the quota for freedom fighters and women who survived the torture camps of the Pakistan military are part of the sacred duty that she as the daughter of Sheikh Mujib has to carry forward. Her previous negotiations with the students have indicated that she suspects that by criticising freedom fighters, critics and students are allowing themselves to be used as a Trojan horse of opposition parties such as the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) and Jamaat-e-Islami.

How does the student movement reflect the political landscape?

Sheikh Hasina won the January election that was boycotted by the BNP who wanted the elections to be conducted under a caretaker government. The Awami League's position towards the quota for freedom fighters indicates that the party feels that Jamaat and the BNP are using the movement to embarrass her and show that her electoral victory did not reflect the anti-incumbency sentiment that is raging in the country.

The Appellate Division of the Supreme Court has now drastically cut the quota for freedom fighters indicating that Prime Minister Hasina has taken a step back to address the concern of the protesting students. There is also talk that Ms. Hasina may constitute a commission that will work on creating a more representative quota system. However, she has not yet indicated whether she would be willing to engage with opposition parties who have also participated in the anti-quota protests.

THE GIST

The seeds of the present quota reform movement lies in the smaller anti-quota movement of 2018. On March 8, 2018, the Bangladesh High Court rejected a petition challenging the legality of the quota system in the country that had existed since the early 1970s. In this backdrop, Ms. Hasina declared that she would maintain the quota for the descendants of the veterans of the liberation war.

Bangladesh's political system has been dominated by Ms. Hasina and the Awami League for a long time. There has been a growing sentiment among opposition parties and critics that the quota for freedom fighters was essentially an attempt to create a group of close supporters for the Awami League within the bureaucracy or civil service who would perpetuate the Awami League's rule.

Ms. Hasina termed the protesters who opposed quota for freedom fighters' families as 'razakars' or traitors who supported the Pakistani military in carrying out large-scale atrocities against men and women in 1971.

CACHE



GETTY IMAGES

What is a PC emulator, and why did Apple allow it on the App Store?

An emulator, as the name suggests, is a software that allows a computer device to emulate another software. The difference in how a device operates allows it to run and use software designed for other, previously, incompatible devices

Nabeel Ahmed

The story so far:

Apple approved a PC emulator for iOS for the first time this week. The move will allow users to run classic software, mostly games on iOS, iPadOS and visionOS. Earlier this year, Apple updated its App Store guidelines to allow retro game console emulators, mini games, and HTML5 mini apps on iPhones.

What is an emulator in PC?

An emulator, as the name suggests, is a software that allows a computer device to emulate another software. The difference in how a device operates allows it to run and use software designed for other, previously, incompatible devices.

For example, software designed for a Windows PC will have to be redesigned to run on macOS. This redesign will have to be done by developers, who may choose to not include all the functionalities available on Windows to Mac users.

An emulator can be used in this scenario to run software designed for Windows on macOS by emulating the design architecture of Windows.

Emulators are commonly used to run applications designed for different operating systems, play video games from

older consoles, and test software across different platforms.

Why did Apple allow emulators?

Apple, in the past, did not allow emulators on its platform. The Cupertino-based tech giant approved UTM SE, an app for emulating a computer, to run classic software and games. The move came weeks after the company rejected it and barred it from being notarised for third-party app stores in the European Union. The move may be an attempt by the company to shake off anti-trust allegations in the U.S. for operating as a monopoly and restricting certain gaming apps on its App Store and preventing competition.

Allowing emulators on its App Store could help the iPhone-maker ensure users do not use third-party app stores in the EU to download emulators.

Are PC emulators legal?

Emulators come in handy when testing and designing software, and they do not use proprietary codes. So, they are considered legal to use. However, sharing copyrighted ROMs (Read Only Memory) online is illegal.

But, as most emulators are used to running software not originally meant for a particular device, the question of

legality becomes complicated.

Using an emulator is considered legal if users own the software they are running on the emulator. However, if they use the emulator to run pirated copies of a software or use the emulator to distribute or download ROMs of software they do not own, it is considered illegal.

Are emulators risky?

Unlike proprietary software, which receives timely updates to ensure smooth and secure functions, using an emulator can be a risky proposition. Especially, if the emulator is downloaded from unofficial sources. These can contain malware that can compromise the security of a system.

Additionally, depending on the software users choose to emulate, they may inadvertently end up violating licensing agreements or copyright laws. This can result in refusal by the Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) to provide maintenance, or technical support and even lead to users being penalised for using proprietary ROMs.

Emulators can also impact the performance of a device. They are resource-intensive and may lead to decreased CPU performance, overheating, and potential damage to the battery. Additionally, poorly designed and

untested emulators may lead to data corruption, especially if the emulator crashes or if there are compatibility issues with the ROMs or software being used.

Are emulators banned?

Due to their ability to help developers use different operating ecosystems for testing purposes without having to switch hardware or the underlying software, emulators are not typically banned in any country. However, the legal status of emulators depends on specific laws in each country, and on how they are used in that jurisdiction.

Are emulators legal in India?

In India, the laws do not specifically ban the use of emulators. However, their use is subject to copyright and intellectual property laws.

While it is legal to use and distribute emulators in India, users may land in trouble if they use emulators to run software such as games, operating systems, or applications without the proper licences or ownership. Distributing ROMs without proper ownership can be problematic.

Additionally, the concept of fair use applies if users own an original copy of the software and are using the emulator as a backup.

THE DAILY QUIZ

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

Five years ago on this date, India launched the Chandrayaan-2 mission. Here is a quiz on the lunar exploration mission

Vasudevan Mukunth

QUESTION 1

The landers of the Chandrayaan 2 and the Chandrayaan 3 missions both aimed for a patch on the moon's surface between the craters X and Y, in the LQ30 quadrangle designated by the U.S. Geological Survey. X is named for an Italian astronomer noted for his contributions to lens-making for telescopes. Name the astronomer.

QUESTION 2

India's first moon mission Chandrayaan 1 is credited with discovering water ice on the moon's surface with two instruments. One, called the Moon Impact Probe, was made by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO). The other was made by NASA; what was it called?

QUESTION 3

Name the component of the Chandrayaan 2

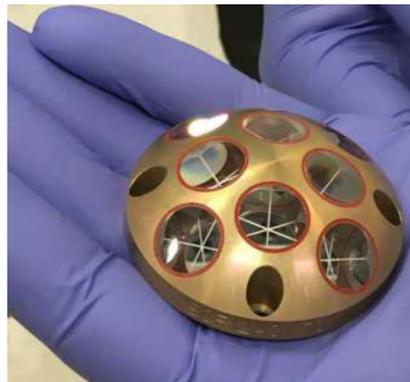
mission still online and conducting operations. After it started operating, ISRO also increased its mission lifetime to more than seven years. It captured data that helped finalise the landing spot of Chandrayaan 3.

QUESTION 4

At the time, on August 23, 2023, Chandrayaan 3's Vikram was the lander closest to the moon's south pole. Name the American moon mission that superseded this feat in February 2024 when it landed further south, in the Malapert A crater.

QUESTION 5

In the first week of December 2023, ISRO moved the propulsion module of Chandrayaan 3 from a lunar orbit to an earth orbit. ISRO said the feat tested a technology for a future mission to perform the same feat China most recently did with its Chang'e 6 mission. What feat?



Visual question:

Name this device that the Pragyaan rovers on both Chandrayaan 2 and Chandrayaan 3 carried. It reflects light incident on it in a specific direction. NASA

Questions and Answers to the July 19 edition of the daily quiz:

- This sport is governed by the oldest international sports federation in the world. **Ans: Gymnastics**
 - This sport is said to feature the most participants at the Paris Games. **Ans: Athletics**
 - In this sport, the winner is the team with the highest score at the end of 10 minutes or the first to reach 21 points. **Ans: Basketball 3x3**
 - This sport is set to debut in Paris. **Ans: Breaking**
 - The distances for men and women in Cycling road races. **Ans: 200km and 120km respectively**
 - This sport was invented by George Nissen in 1934. **Ans: Trampoline**
- Visual: The sports taking place at the Palace of Versailles. **Ans: Equestrian and Modern Pentathlon**
- Early Bird: Tamal Biswas



KNOW YOUR ENGLISH

He was in full cry when he saw the rules

We don't have a single picture with her even though she arranged the event. She is very camera shy

S. Upendran

What is the meaning of 'vox populi'? How is the word pronounced? (Sharoon, Bengaluru)

First, I will begin with the pronunciation of this Latin expression. The first word rhymes with 'fox', 'box' and 'pox'. 'Populi' consists of three syllables; the first is pronounced like the word 'pop', while the vowel in the second, sounds like the 'a' in 'china'. The 'i' sounds like the 'y' in 'by', 'my' and 'sly'. The word, which literally means 'voice of the people', is pronounced 'vox-POP-yu-lie', with the stress on the first syllable of 'populi'. Nowadays, the expression is mostly reduced to 'vox pop', and it is a method used by the media, both electronic and print, to determine the public perception about something – the budget, corruption in government institutions, price of petrol, potholes on the roads, etc. When a news channel wants to know what the common man thinks of the NEET exam, they usually send a reporter to do quick interviews with members of the public. This method of recording the opinions of people, while talking with them informally in public places, is called 'vox populi' or 'vox pop'.

I think we need to do a vox pop and use it at the beginning of the programme.

What is the meaning and origin of 'in full cry'? (Kamala Das, Kolkata)

The 'cry' in the expression has nothing to do with the salty tears that come from the eyes. As you are aware, the word 'cry' has several different meanings. In the context of this idiom, it refers to the act of shouting something out or saying something loudly. We often resort to this in order to attract the attention of someone. When you say that someone was 'in full cry', what you are suggesting is that the individual was expressing his opinion in a very strong manner; he was being very vocal about the matter.

The students were in full cry over the sudden fee hike.

I understand that the expression comes from the world of hunting. The 'cry' in this case comes from the dogs or hounds being used to track the animal being hunted. Usually, when the hounds see or catch the scent of an animal, they bark loudly to let their masters know that they are closing in on the prey.

What do you call someone who loves taking photographs, but doesn't like being in them? (S. Raja, Hyderabad)

An individual who has a passion for taking photographs is called a 'shutterbug'; photography may be his hobby, but he is not a professional photographer. A person who does not like being in front of the camera is said to be 'camera shy'.

Unlike her model sister, Revathi is camera shy.
upendrankye@gmail.com

Word of the day

Nonplus:

be a mystery or bewildering to

Synonyms: vex, stupefy, baffle, bewilder, dumbfound, perplex, puzzle, flummox, mystify

Usage: I was nonplussed by his admiration of me.

Pronunciation: bit.ly/nonpluspro

International Phonetic Alphabet: /nɒnˈplʌs/

For feedback and suggestions for Text & Context, please write to letters@thehindu.co.in with the subject 'Text & Context'

From Page One

Biden drops out of race, endorses Kamala Harris

A party's presumptive presidential nominee has never stepped out of the race so close to the election.

The closest parallel would be President Lyndon Johnson who, besieged by the Vietnam War, announced in March 1968 that he would not seek another term.

The decision marks a swift and stunning end to Mr. Biden's 52 years in electoral politics, as donors, lawmakers and even aides expressed to him their doubts that he could convince voters that he could plausibly handle the job for another four years.

Mr. Biden won the vast majority of delegates and every nominating contest but one, which would have made his nomination a formality.

In 2020, Mr. Biden pitched himself as a transitional figure who wanted to be a bridge to a new generation of leaders. But once he secured the job he spent decades struggling to attain, he was reluctant to part with it. Mr. Biden was once asked whether any other Democrats could beat Trump.

"Probably 50 of them," Mr. Biden replied. "No, I'm not the only one who can defeat him, but I will defeat him."

Mr. Biden is already the country's oldest President and had insisted repeatedly that he was up for the challenge of another campaign and another term.

Teenager dies of Nipah infection; Kerala on alert

"In the teenager's case, the deadline for the infusion of antibodies had passed. Still, the medical Board authorised their administration as a desperate life-saving measure," she said.

The teenager had reported being sick after school on July 10 after which his parents admitted him to a private hospital. However, as the boy's condition worsened, his relatives shifted him to the Kozhikode hospital. The doctors said that by then, encephalitis had set in. The body will now be interred as per the Nipah protocol in the boy's village.

Containment measures

The government has stepped up containment measures in Malappuram, with District Collector V.R. Vinod declaring masks and social distancing mandatory till further notice. Educational institutions in Pandikkad and Anakkayam panchayats and cinemas will remain shut. Mr. Vinod asked people to avoid social gatherings. Shops within the containment zones must open at 10 a.m. and close at 5 p.m.

District Medical Officer R. Renuka warned people against self-treatment. She advised them to seek medical attention immediately if they develop fever symptoms and also counselled the public against consuming partly-eaten fruit, especially those dropped by bats or other animals.

The Union government will deploy a multi-member joint outbreak response team in Malappuram to support the State. The team will help identify epidemiological linkages and provide technical assistance.

Bangladesh SC scales back jobs quota

The Supreme Court's Appellate Division dismissed a lower court order that had reinstated the quotas, directing that 93% of government jobs would be open to candidates on merit.

The ruling curtailed the number of reserved jobs, from 56% of all positions to 7%, and brought down the veterans' quota from 30% to 5%. The remaining 2% will be set aside for members of ethnic minorities, transgender community, and people with disability. The Supreme Court was due to decide next month on the legality of the reintroduced scheme but brought forward its verdict as the civil strife intensified.

It decided that the lower Bench's order last month to reintroduce the scheme was "illegal", Bangladesh Attorney General A.M. Amin Uddin said. Shah Monjurul Haque, a lawyer representing some student groups, called the court's decision historic. He said it was a start to reforming the problematic quota system.

"Everyone should abide by the verdict. I urge all protestors to return to their homes," Mr. Haque said. Law Minister Anisul Haq of the ruling Awami League party also welcomed the court's decision and said it was "well thought of."

Speed up rescue work at Ankola: Siddaramaiah

The Hindu Bureau
BELAGAVI

Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Sunday asked officials to use all available technological tools to look for survivors, clear the debris and open the road for traffic at the landslide site in Ankola of

Uttara Kannada district.

He asked revenue and other officials to use metal detectors, earthmovers and other equipment to see if there were any more survivors and to speed up the work. He lauded the NDRF and SDRF teams for their efforts in torrential rains.

India's garment export woes self-inflicted: report

At \$14.5 billion, exports from the job-intensive sector were lower in 2023-24 than a decade earlier, owing to barriers on raw material imports and difficult customs, trade procedures, says think tank

Vikas Dhoot
NEW DELHI

Exports from India's labour-intensive garment sector, which have been losing ground to rivals such as Vietnam and Bangladesh and were lower than the 2013-14 levels last year, have been dented more by the country's high duties and barriers on raw material imports along with difficult customs and trade procedures, rather than other nations' competitive strengths, a research report has flagged.

India's garment exports in 2023-24 stood at \$14.5 billion, compared with \$15 billion in 2013-14. Between 2013 and 2023, garment exports from Vietnam have grown nearly 82% to hit \$33.4 billion while that of Bangladesh has grown nearly 70% to hit \$43.8 billion. China exported about \$114 billion of garments in the same year, nearly a quarter lower than a decade earlier.

A production-linked incentive (PLI) scheme for textiles launched by the Centre in 2021 has failed to



The report pointed out that recent quality control orders have complicated the process of bringing in essential raw materials. AFP

gain traction with investors and needs significant modifications to be effective, the think tank, Global Trade Research Initiative (GTRI), has noted in a report titled "How Complex Procedures, Import Restrictions and Domestic Interests Hinder India's Garments Exports".

The report has also raised concerns about a steady rise in India's garments and textiles imports in recent years, which had grown to almost \$9.2 billion in the calendar year 2023. It warned that this tally could rise faster if the

export slide is not arrested, especially with firms like Reliance Retail expected to kick off sales of Chinese brands such as Shein in the country.

"Complex procedures, import restrictions and domestic vested interests are holding up Indian garment export growth. At the root of the exporters' problem is difficulty in obtaining quality raw fabric particularly synthetic fabric," the report said, adding that Bangladesh and Vietnam do not suffer from these complexities, while Indian firms have to "waste time

and money" on them.

The report, based on interactions with small, medium-sized, and large garment exporters, pointed out that recent quality control orders, or QCOs, issued for fabric imports have complicated the process of bringing in essential raw material. This is pushing up costs for exporters who have to rely on pricier options from domestic firms who dominate the market for raw materials like polyester staple fibre and viscose staple fibre.

"This scenario forces exporters to use expensive domestic supplies, making Indian garments overpriced," it explained.

Moreover, the procedures laid down by the Directorate General of Foreign Trade and Customs are archaic, requiring exporters to meticulously account for every square centimetre of imported fabric, buttons, and zippers, ensuring these are used in the production process and reflected in export product description, the report said, mooting a comprehensive overhaul to change the status quo.

Bengal will open its doors to people from Bangladesh: Mamata

The Hindu Bureau
KOLKATA



Mamata Banerjee

Expressing solidarity with the people of strife-torn Bangladesh, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Sunday said the State would open its doors to people in distress from the neighbouring country.

"I should not be speaking on the affairs of Bangladesh since that is a sovereign nation and whatever needs to be said on the issue is a subject matter for the Centre. But I can tell you this, if helpless people come knocking on the doors of Bengal, we will surely provide them shelter," Ms. Banerjee said at the Trinamool Congress's Martyrs' Day rally.

She highlighted a UN resolution to accommodate refugees in regions adjacent to those facing turmoil.

"Hundreds of students and others are returning to West Bengal/ India, from the trouble-torn Bangladesh. I have asked our State administration to render all help and assistance to the returnees. For instance, around 300 students arrived at Hilli border today [Sunday] and most of them left for their respective destinations

safely: 35 of them, however, needed help and we provided them with basic amenities and facilitation assistance. United we stand!" Ms. Banerjee said in a series of posts on social media platform X.

The Border Security Force (BSF), in a statement, said that over the past four days, 1,062 students entered West Bengal from three Land Customs Stations (LCS) at Ghojadan-ga, Gede, and Mahadipur, and the Integrated Check Post (ICP) at Petrapole. Of the 1,062 students, 901 are Indians, and the remaining are students from Nepal, Bhutan, and Bangladesh.

BSF South Bengal Frontier's spokesperson and Deputy Inspector-General A.K. Arya confirmed that the BSF is in touch with the Border Guard Bangladesh, and has set up special assistance at the ICP and LCSs.

Bar on govt. servants from associating with RSS lifted: Jairam

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Union government, through a fresh office memorandum, has removed a 58-year-old ban on government servants from associating with the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) and its activities, senior Congress leader Jairam Ramesh said here on Sunday.

Mr. Ramesh posted on X a photo grab of a purported order issued by the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT) on July 9.

It referred to the earlier memoranda issued on November 30, 1966, July 25, 1970 and October 28, 1980 on the subject, stating that those instructions were reviewed and it was decided to remove the mention of "Rashtriya Swayam Sewak Sangh (R.S.S.S)" from the impugned memoranda.

The 1966 document stated, "As certain doubts have been raised about the government's policy with respect to the membership of and participation in the activities of the Rashtriya Swayam Sewak Sangh and

the Jamaat-e-Islami by government servants, it is clarified that government have always held the activities of these two organisations to be of such a nature that participation in them by government servants would attract the Central Civil Services Conduct Rules." "Any government servant, who is a member of or is otherwise associated with the aforesaid organisations or with their activities is liable to disciplinary action," it had said.

In his post, Mr. Ramesh said: "Sardar Patel had banned the RSS in February 1948 following Gandhi's assassination. Subsequently, the ban was withdrawn on assurances of good behaviour. Even after this the RSS never flew the Tiranga in Nagpur."

"After June 4th 2024, relations between the self-anointed non-biological PM and the RSS have nosedived. On July 9, 2024, the 58-year ban that was in force even during Mr. Vajpayee's tenure as PM was removed. The bureaucracy can now come in knickers too I suppose," he added.

PPF returns still languishing lower than formula-based rates, says RBI

Vikas Dhoot
NEW DELHI

The interest rates offered by the Union government on two of India's most popular small savings schemes — the Public Provident Fund and five-year recurring deposits — continue to languish below the rates they should have earned as per a formula-based system adopted since April 2016, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has indicated.

The PPF rate has been static at 7.1% since April 2020. The return on the five-year recurring deposit (RD), which had been frozen at 5.8% from April 2020 to March 2023, had been hiked gradually over the first three quarters of 2023-24, taking it to 6.7% by last October.

At the time, the RBI had reckoned that the returns on the PPF were 41 basis points (bps) lower than their formula-based rates, while the five-year RD rate was 21 bps lower, for the October to December 2023 quarter. One basis point equals 0.01%.

The formula for quarterly resets of small savings

How they stack up

The interest rates of various small savings schemes over the years

Small savings rates	October 2018-June 2019	July-September 2019	April-June 2020	January-September 2024
Public Provident Fund	8%	7.9%	7.1%	7.1%
Sukanya Samridhi Account	8.5%	8.4%	7.6%	8.2%
Senior Citizen Savings Scheme	8.7%	8.6%	7.4%	8.2%
National Savings Certificate	8%	7.9%	6.8%	7.7%
Monthly Income Account	7.7%	7.6%	6.6%	7.4%
Five-year Recurring Deposit	7.3%	7.2%	5.8%	6.7%
Kisan Vikas Patra	7.7%	7.6%	6.9%	7.5%

rates, mooted by a panel led by former RBI Deputy Governor Shyamala Gopinath, links them to secondary market yields on government securities of comparable maturities over a three-month period prior to each quarter.

The PPF rate was last hiked in October 2018, when it was pegged at 8% ahead of the 2019 Lok Sabha election. After that poll, the government reduced the rate to 7.9% from July 2019, and slashed it further to 7.1% at the onset of 2020-21, when it cut rates on all small savings instruments in the range of 0.5 and 1.4 percentage points (or 50 to 140 bps).

Before the 2024 Lok Sabha election, the Union

government announced a hike in rates on most small savings schemes for six successive quarters, culminating in the January to March 2024 quarter, when the returns on the Sukanya Samridhi Account Scheme (SSAS) were raised from 8% to 8.2%, and the three-year time deposit from 7% to 7.1%. While there have been no changes effected in rates since the PPF rate has been excluded from the ambit of all these hikes.

Tax-free scheme
"The Government of India kept rates on small savings schemes unchanged for Q2:2024-25 [July to September 2024]. Rates on various schemes are now

aligned with the formula-based rates except for public provident funds and five-year recurring deposits," the RBI noted, in its latest monetary policy report. Unlike last October, the RBI has not quantified the gap between the formula-based rate and the PPF and five-year RD rates.

The Finance Ministry has generally defended the stasis in PPF rates by emphasising that the returns on the scheme are tax-free and so tax-adjusted returns are higher. But the same tax treatment is also offered on the SSAS. The SSAS rate was frozen at 7.6% from April 2020 to March 2023, but was raised to 8% last April and 8.2% from this January.

'Nitish repeatedly raised Bagmati river flooding concerns with Nepal ex-PM'

Nistula Hebbar
NEW DELHI

Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar has "repeatedly" raised concerns about the annual flooding of the Bagmati river with multiple leaders from Nepal, including former Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda', a senior leader of the Janata Dal(U) told *The Hindu*.

The Bagmati, which is currently in spate, is one of the major cross-border rivers that flow through the plains of Bihar, carrying a large amount of water from the upper reaches of the Himalayas in Nepal.

"While there are long-term relationships between the socialist leadership in India and Nepal's leadership, this is one issue where nothing has moved. Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar has raised this issue repeatedly with many leaders, including former Prime Minister of Nepal Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda', but nothing moved," the source said.

The senior JD(U) leader said that neither India nor Nepal have shown any urgency to resolve the issue despite the advocacy of the Bihar government.

The Bagmati flows from Nepal and crosses the Bi-

har districts of Darbhanga, Sitamarhi, Sheohar, Muzaffarpur, and Khagaria, before meeting the river Kamala in Samastipur.

New course

In the past, the river had a different course, draining directly into the Ganga, but it is the new course that has created the flooding issue.

The worst flood it caused occurred in 1994, but the problem has continued to recur, leaving the State government anxious for some way to resolve the issue.

Nepal has recently undergone a political change

of guard and Prachanda has been replaced as Prime Minister by Khadga Prasad Sharma Oli, who is yet to meet with the Indian interlocutors.

Bihar has been urging Nepal to create the infrastructure needed to prevent the annual flooding that takes place in the State because of the cross-border river systems. Nepal, Bhutan, and Bangladesh share a large number of cross-border rivers that are important for States like Assam, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Meghalaya, and Tripura.

(With inputs from Kallol Bhattacharjee)

Haryana suspends Internet, bulk SMS for 24 hours in Nuh

Press Trust of India
CHANDIGARH

The Haryana government on Sunday beefed up security and ordered the suspension of mobile Internet and bulk SMS services in Nuh district for 24 hours ahead of the Braj Mandal Jalabhishek Yatra that was marred by violence last year.

Two home guards were killed and at least 15 others were injured last year.

Around 2,500 police and paramilitary personnel have been deployed in the district, the police said.

Nuh Superintendent of Police Vijay Pratap Singh said force would be deployed along the procession route. "We will keep a close eye on everyone through drones."

Nuh Deputy Commissioner Dharendra Khadgata said, "Situation is very peaceful, and cordial ahead of the yatra and both communities (Hindus and Muslims) are ready to welcome it."

"We also have 100 volunteers who will help police with the coordination of the movement along the yatra route," he added.

Pilgrims don't check the faith of those who serve them food: RLD

Union Minister Jayant Chaudhary calls U.P. order to affix nameplates on eateries on Kanwar Yatra route impractical, and adds that he felt the decision had been taken without thinking it through; his stand will have impact on western U.P. politics

Anuj Kumar
NEW DELHI

Union Minister and Rashtriya Lok Dal (RLD) president Jayant Chaudhary on Sunday came down heavily on the Uttar Pradesh government's diktat asking owners of eateries on the Kanwar Yatra route to put up their nameplates on their shops, stalls and carts.

Ahead of the all-party meeting on the eve of the opening day of the Budget Session of Parliament, Mr. Chaudhary, whose party is the only ally of the Bharatiya Janata Party in western Uttar Pradesh, said in Muzaffarnagar that the Kanwar Yatra should not be linked to caste or religion.

"People of all religions come out to serve the *kanwars* during this holy period. The *kanwars* don't check the faith of those serving them and those serving them consider the stops made by the *kanwars* a blessing," he said.



Row over order: *Kanwars* walking past a shop which has a banner with the shopkeeper's name, in Muzaffarnagar on Saturday. PTI

Political observers say Mr. Chaudhary's disagreement with the Yogi Adityanath government ahead of Assembly byelections in the State could have repercussions in western Uttar Pradesh. It seems the RLD does not want to face the wrath of Muslims who helped it win the Meerapur seat in Muzaffarnagar district in 2022.

The party also wants to

contest in Kundarki (Moradabad), another seat where the Muslim vote is decisive.

Suggesting that the order was impractical, Mr. Chaudhary said that there could be multiple owners and a franchisee's faith could be different from that of the brand's owner. He wondered what would the outlets of McDonald's and Burger King at Khatau-

li in Muzaffarnagar write on their nameplate.

Asked what advice he would give to his alliance partner, Mr. Chaudhary said he felt the decision had been taken without thinking it through, and now that the decision had been taken, they were sticking to it.

"It happens with governments. There is still time. Maybe the decision is not implemented strictly. I see the administration is not putting pressure. The decision to display the nameplate should be left to the owner," he said.

He said vegetarian and non-vegetarian classification made sense. "The *kanwars* should know that the ingredients and process of making food are vegetarian. It is immaterial who is preparing it. Many Muslims are vegetarians and many Hindus eat meat," Mr. Chaudhary said.

In Muzaffarnagar, posters of Congress leader Rahul Gandhi with "*Mohab-*

bat Ki Dukan: No Hindu *Musalman*" written on them have surfaced in some places. Local party sources said there had been no directive from the party's senior leadership and "some enthusiastic party workers" might have put up the posters to "remain in news".

Most eatery and dhaba owners with long-term business interests in the region quickly followed the order because many of them either do not have or properly display the mandatory registration certificate of the Department of Food Safety and Drug Administration where the kind of food served at the eating joint is clearly mentioned. "Criticising the order would mean inviting official scrutiny," said an owner requesting anonymity.

The Uttar Pradesh Police have also started covering liquor shops with curtains, carefully leaving the signboard visible.

If not special category, then give Bihar special package, says JD(U) at all-party meet

Sobhana K. Nair
NEW DELHI

The Janata Dal(U), a key BJP ally which heads the government in Bihar, has strongly argued for a special financial package for the State to be granted during the Budget Session of Parliament that begins on Monday, since the Union government has ruled out special category status.

The JD(U) made the demand at an all-party meeting held on the eve of the opening day of the session. However, the BJP's other major ally, the Telugu Desam Party (TDP), which is in power in Andhra Pradesh, remained ambivalent on the issue, only seeking financial support on "legacy" issues dogging the State.

According to sources, back-channel talks are on between the BJP and the two allies. The JD(U) has told the BJP in no uncertain terms that the State must get significant financial aid if the National Democratic Alliance were to have a fair shot at the Assembly election in 2026.

The JD(U) has made a concession for the BJP, climbing down from its long-running demand for special category status. A resolution was passed at its previous national execu-



Union Minister Chirag Paswan too raised a similar demand at the meeting. ANI

utive meeting in Delhi, stating that Bihar needs either a special category status or a special financial package.

JD(U) leader Sanjay Jha raised the issue during the all-party meeting. "We said that if on some technical grounds, they are unable to accord Bihar this status, they should grant a special package. We hope that in the upcoming Budget, the government will consider it," Mr. Jha said. Lok Janshakti Party (Ram Vilas) president and Union Minister Chirag Paswan too raised the demand.

The TDP did not explicitly spell out its demand for "special category status" or a "special package", but spoke at length on the precarious economic condition that the State finds itself in. The TDP's equivocation gave a handle to its political rival, the YSR Congress Party, which has framed special category

status as the "only solution for the development of Andhra Pradesh".

"We will be presenting a White Paper on the dire financial condition that the State finds itself in so that every political party understands our situation," Lavu Sri Krishna Devarayalu, TDP Parliamentary Party leader, told *The Hindu*.

YSRCP leader Vijay Sai Reddy told presspersons that he had raised the need for "special category status" for Andhra Pradesh. "We have been raising it right from the day it was promised by then-Prime Minister Manmohan Singh in the Rajya Sabha. It is the only solution for the development of Andhra Pradesh. The TDP ignoring it and asking for an incentive or additional funds is unacceptable," he said.

The Biju Janata Dal sought special category status for Odisha.

The concept of special category status was introduced in 1969 by the Planning Commission. It extends tax incentives for investors and also increases the Centre's financial share in all Centrally sponsored schemes. However, consecutive Finance Commissions have ruled out extending the status to any States beyond those who already enjoy it.



Annual event: Supporters of the Trinamool Congress attending the party's Martyrs' Day event in Kolkata on Sunday. With Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on the dais, Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav said the people of Uttar Pradesh and Bengal defeated the BJP. AFP

Mamata's speech was a bundle of lies: CPI(M), BJP

The Hindu Bureau
KOLKATA

The Communist Party of India (Marxist) and the BJP said on Sunday that the Trinamool Congress leadership's claim at the Kolkata event that it was working to restrain party workers was a bundle of lies.

Reacting to remarks by the West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee at the Martyrs' Day rally, the CPI(M) leadership said that Ms. Banerjee was misleading her party workers with her lies. CPI(M) State Secretary Mohammad Salim said that what was prevailing in the State was far from the rule of law.

Samik Bhattacharya, MP and BJP spokesperson, said the rally was an attempt to divert attention from the deteriorating law and order situation.

Mahua, others move SC against nameplate orders by State govts.

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Trinamool Congress MP Mahua Moitra, academic Apoorvanand Jha and columnist Aakar Patel have separately moved the Supreme Court against directives issued by the Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand governments to owners of shops along the Kanwar Yatra route to display their names and that of their staff members prominently.

In their petition, Mr. Jha and Mr. Patel said the directives were a deliberate attempt to discriminate on the grounds of religion and caste and a blatant viola-

tion of fundamental rights. Their petition argued that the two States were using their machinery to choke the rights of shopkeepers who belonged to certain communities. The directives had no authority of law and ought to be quashed.

"These directives promote discrimination solely based on religious and caste identity as they do not require the display of food items being served or a statement that no non-vegetarian or non-satvik food is being served, but only the display of religious or caste identity explicit in one's name," it said.

Ms. Moitra has sought

an immediate stay on the implementation of the two directives. The MP said they ran the risk of sowing the seeds of communal discord.

'Forcible disclosure'
The Trinamool leader said the directives amounted to forcible disclosure of religious identity in the name of respecting the pilgrims' dietary choices.

On Monday, a Supreme Court Bench headed by Justice Hrishikesh Roy is scheduled to hear a connected plea filed by NGO Association of Protection of Civil Rights against the Uttar Pradesh government's controversial order.

Government in Delhi will collapse soon, say Mamata and Akhilesh

The Hindu Bureau
KOLKATA

Weeks after the Lok Sabha election, Trinamool Congress chairperson and West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee and Samajwadi Party (SP) president Akhilesh Yadav shared a dais at the Trinamool's Martyrs' Day rally here on Sunday.

They said the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government would not last long.

"The government at the Centre is a guest for a few days. I had said in the Lok Sabha, and I am saying it now. The government in Delhi won't last long; the government will collapse," Mr. Yadav said.

Ms. Banerjee also spoke

in a similar vein that the BJP-led government at the Centre would not last long as it had been formed through "intimidation" by Central agencies.

The SP president said there were divisive forces that wanted to rule the country and people had to come together to save the nation.

Emphasising that people of Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal defeated the BJP in the Lok Sabha election, Mr. Yadav heaped praises on Ms. Banerjee and urged the people at the gathering to support her in her fight.

Like Mr. Yadav, Ms. Banerjee said she would fight against communalism and the Trinamool Congress would never join hands

with the BJP. "I called Akhileshji so that he can see this. Now we will join forces and work across the country," she said.

Slams NDA allies

Ms. Banerjee came down heavily on the NDA allies and called them "cowards and greedy individuals who yielded to financial inducements". "Has anyone ever heard of money being offered instead of Ministries? They are cowards, shameless, and greedy. They sacrificed their own identities," she said.

Addressing the gathering, Ms. Banerjee and party general secretary Abhishek Banerjee gave out a stern message to party leaders asking them to be "soft and gentle with people and suppress greed".

"Trinamool is not a political party but a platform to work for the people," she said. Ms. Banerjee said that her government would not shy away from taking action against Trinamool leaders if there were complaints against them.

Mr. Abhishek vowed to take action against public representatives of the party "who were unable to persuade the people and get the desired results during the polls".

He urged party leaders not to become complacent before the 2026 Assembly election. "On July 21's dais, we need to pledge that the upcoming victories should be greater than the victories in 2016, 2021, and 2024," Mr. Abhishek said.

Odisha Cong. Committee dissolved

The Hindu Bureau
BHUBANESWAR

The Congress has dissolved the Odisha Pradesh Congress Committee following its dismal performance in the elections.

Party leader K.C. Venugopal said that the Congress chief approved a proposal for the dissolution.

भारत सरकार - अंतरिक्ष विभाग / GOVERNMENT OF INDIA - DEPARTMENT OF SPACE
निर्माण एवं अनुसंधान समूह, एसडीएससी-शार / CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE GROUP, SDSC-SHAR
श्रीहरिकोटा / नेल्दूर (जिला), आ.प्र. / SRIHARIKOTA - 524124

संक्षिप्त ई-निविदा सूचना / Brief E-TENDER NOTICE

ई-निविदा सूचना सं. / e-Tender Notice No. CMG/C/CON/248714, 248715 तिथि/ Date. 18.07.2024

भारत के राष्ट्रपति की ओर से, "एसएसएलवी प्रमोचन परिसर (एसएसएलवी), तिरुचेन्द्र एवं सतनकुलम तालुक, थुथुकुडी जिले में उपग्रह तैयारी सुविधा (एसपीएफ) का निर्माण (सिविल, जन स्वास्थ्य विद्युतीय, यांत्रिक एवं एसी कार्य) (₹2592 लाख)", "एसएसएलवी प्रमोचन परिसर (एसएसएलवी), तिरुचेन्द्र एवं सतनकुलम तालुक, थुथुकुडी जिले में उच्च स्तरीय समुच्चयन सुविधा (यूपएफ-II) एवं यूपएफ-III) तथा प्रमोचन सेवा भवन (एलएएसबी) सुविधा का निर्माण (सिविल, जन स्वास्थ्य विद्युतीय, यांत्रिक एवं एसी कार्य) (₹1552 लाख) के लिए ई-निविदा के माध्यम से मद दर निविदाएं आमंत्रित की जाती हैं। निविदा दस्तावेज 12.08.2024 को 14:30 बजे तक डाउनलोड किए जा सकते हैं। विस्तृत सूचना हेतु इच्छुक निविदाकार हमारी वेबसाइट www.isro.gov.in या www.tenderwizard.com/ISRO देखें।

On behalf of President of India, Item Rate tenders are invited through e-tendering for "Construction of Satellite Preparation Facility (SPF) at SSLV Launch complex (SLC), Tiruchendur & Sathankulam Taluk, Tuticorin District (Civil, PH Electrical, Mechanical & AC works)" (₹2592 Lakhs); "Construction of Upper Stage Assembly Facility (UAF I & UAF-II) and Launch Service Building (LSB) Facility at SSLV Launch complex (SLC), Tiruchendur & Sathankulam Taluk, Tuticorin District (Civil, PH Electrical, Mechanical & AC works)" (₹1552 Lakhs). Tender documents can be downloaded up to 12.08.2024, 14:30 hrs. Interested tenderers may visit www.isro.gov.in or www.tenderwizard.com/ISRO for details.

हस्ताक्षरित- समूह प्रधान, सीएजीए / एसडीएससी शार / Sd/- GROUP HEAD, CMG / SDSC SHAR

ALL INDIA INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL SCIENCES
VIJAYPUR, JAMMU-184120

Notification for Non-Faculty Posts (on Deputation Basis)
Applications are invited in the prescribed Proforma for filling up of the Non-Faculty Posts (On Deputation Basis) mentioned hereunder for **AIIMS, Vijayapur, Jammu.**

S. No.	Name of Posts	Group	Pay Level (as per 7th CPC)	No of Vacancy
1.	Assistant Administrative Officer	B	(Level-7)	01
2.	Office Assistant (NS)	B	(Level-6)	01
3.	Assistant Accounts Officer	B	(Level-7)	01
4.	Sanitation Officer	B	(Level-6)	01
5.	Librarian Grade-I	B	(Level-7)	01
6.	Senior Pharmacist	B	(Level-6)	01
7.	Personal Assistant	B	(Level-6)	02
8.	Junior Medical Record Officer	C	(Level-5)	02
9.	Upper Division Clerk (UDC)	C	(Level-4)	02
Total				12

For other details, application form and terms & conditions, please visit the AIIMS Jammu website www.aiimsjammu.edu.in under the head "Recruitment" Duly filled in application (through proper channel) along with attested photocopies of ACRs/APARs for the last 5 years and vigilance clearance should reach to the undersigned on or before 30 days from publication of the advertisement in the Employment News.

In case of any query, mail can also be forwarded to admo officer1aiimsjammu@gmail.com.

Sd/-
Deputy Director (Administration)
For and on Behalf of the Executive Director & CEO, AIIMS Jammu

IN BRIEF



13 Indians lured into Laos cyberscam centres rescued

Thirteen Indians who were lured into cyberscamming centres in Laos have been rescued and sent back home, the Indian Embassy in the Southeast Asian country said on Sunday. "So far, Embassy has rescued 518 Indians. We thank Lao authorities for their cooperation," the mission posted on X. On May 7, the embassy came out with an advisory cautioning Indians against fake job offers. "Instances have come to our notice recently wherein Indian nationals are being lured for employment through Thailand... Victims are illegally taken across the border into Laos from Thailand and held captive to work in Golden Triangle Special Economic Zone in Laos under harsh conditions," the advisory said.

13-year-old boy dies in M.P. while enacting hanging scene

A 13-year-old boy died while enacting a hanging scene with his friends in Morena district of Madhya Pradesh on Saturday. Sub-divisional police officer, Ambah, Ravi Singh Bhadoriya said the Class 8 student, Kasha Parmar, was standing on a short wall and had put a noose tied from a tree around his neck, while his friends filmed the act on a mobile phone. "While they were filming, the boy slipped from the wall and suffered a jerk in his neck. His friends assumed that he was still acting," he said. "It was only after his movement stopped, the children realised something was wrong," he said. The boy was taken to a hospital where he was declared brought dead. The police have recovered a video of the incident.

NEET case hearing today; aspirants file more pleas

Intervention application seeks retest only for top scorers; aspirant's mother alleges copying by students at Rewari; officials say top scorers are from 1,404 centres, not from coaching hubs alone

Maitri Porecha
NEW DELHI

After the National Testing Agency (NTA) made public scores of over 23 lakh candidates who appeared for the NEET-UG medical entrance exam, an intervention application has been filed in the Supreme Court, requesting a retest for the nearly 3.5 lakh top scorers in the test. The court is slated to hear the matter on Monday.

The application, filed by student-petitioners in the NEET paper leak case, said they have scored fairly high marks in the exam, ranging from 650 to 680 out of 720. They are aware that conducting a retest is not an easy task and has several ramifications, and therefore a practical solution needs to be thought of.

"Of the 24 lakh who appeared in the examination, 13 lakh have qualified. The total number of medical seats available is 1,08,915. The retest, therefore, need only be conducted for twice or thrice the number of the seats available. That would reduce the cost in terms of time, money and manpower, to reasonable



The petitioners allege that certain centres in Sikar, Rajkot, and Latur registered abnormal results in the NEET-UG 2024. PTI

limits," the application said.

"The NEET-UG 2024 Examination which is wholly vitiated can be treated as NEET 2024 Preliminary Examination. The further test can be treated as the NEET-UG 2024 Final Examination," it added.

The application said 75% of the NTA's work is outsourced and "the current system is unthinkably faulty."

Copying allegations

After the NTA made the scores public and it was revealed that 22% of the 264 candidates who appeared from the Delhi Public School (DPS) centre in Rewari, Haryana, scored over 600 marks, Somlata, 54,

an aggrieved candidate's mother, alleged that students had been copying during the exam.

"My daughter Charu appeared for NEET-UG from Rewari. She told me that students were consulting each other while attempting the paper. After seeing DPS-Rewari on top of the high scores list, I find her allegation to be valid. The Central Bureau of Investigation should study CCTV footage of DPS-Rewari to rule out any irregularities," Ms. Somlata, who is a teacher, told The Hindu.

Official sources in the Ministry of Education said that while 23.33 lakh students appeared in the exam, 2,321 got 700 or more marks. "These students

were spread across 1,404 centres in the country and abroad, and across 276 cities and 25 States and Union Territories. This large spread shows that many candidates who were not from traditional coaching hubs were also able to secure a place among the toppers," a source said.

While the petitioners allege that certain centres in Sikar, Rajkot, and Latur registered abnormal results, the officials, while agreeing that many students from traditional tuition hubs were able to score 700 or more marks, said many students from other cities too were able to break into the bracket.

For example, 35 students appearing from Lucknow; 27 from Kolkata; 25 from Latur; 20 from Nagpur; 19 from Faridabad; 18 from Nanded; 17 from Indore; 16 each from Cuttack and Kanpur; 14 each from Kolhapur, Noida and Sahibzada Ajit Singh Nagar; and 13 each from Agra and Aligarh, were able to score 700 or more.

"It appears that aligning the syllabus of NEET with that of higher secondary schools has started to bear fruit," a source in the Ministry added.

Bail cannot be denied on ground of serious charges: SC

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court has clarified that seriousness of charges alone cannot be a factor to deny bail to undertrials nor can courts impose "freakish" bail conditions.

A Bench of Justices J.B. Pardiwala and Ujjal Bhuyan ordered Sheikh Javed Iqbal, a man awaiting trial under the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act (UAPA) for nine years, to be released on bail, in yet another decision which upheld the right of an individual's personal liberty over the state's claim that bail should not be made easy when serious crimes were involved.

"Bail cannot be denied only on the ground that the charges are very serious though there is no end in sight for the trial to conclude... Seriousness of charges would have to be balanced with other facts like the period of custody suffered and the likely period within which the trial can be expected to be completed," the Bench held.

An undertrial has a fundamental right to speedy trial, the court said.

"If the alleged offence is a serious one, all the more necessary for the prosecution to ensure that the trial is concluded expeditious-

An undertrial has a fundamental right to speedy trial, the Supreme Court said in its judgment

ly," the judgment reasoned.

The man was arrested near the India-Nepal border in February 2015 allegedly with fake Indian currency notes with a total face value of ₹23 lakh. He has been behind bars since then. The man appealed to the Supreme Court after the Allahabad High Court denied him bail. Justice Bhuyan noted that the statements of only two witnesses had been recorded in all these years.

"A reasonable view can be taken that the trial is likely to take a considerable time," the July 18 verdict noted.

In a similar decision on July 3, the same Bench had held that the state should not oppose bail if it had no intention or was devoid of the ability to hold a speedy trial. This order was based on an appeal filed by Javed Gulam Nabi Shaikh against a Bombay High Court decision refusing him bail in a UAPA case.

"Article 21 of the Constitution applies irrespective of the nature of the crime," the Bench had laid down.

India is moving ahead with vision of development and heritage: Modi

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday said that India, moving ahead with a vision of "development as well as heritage", was committed to promoting global cooperation and engaging local communities in heritage conservation efforts.

"It is India's clarion call to the world to come together to promote each other's heritage and amplify the spirit of human welfare," Mr. Modi said, inaugurating the 46th session of the World Heritage Committee in the national capital.

The World Heritage Committee meets annually and is responsible for managing all matters on World Heritage sites, and deciding on sites to be inscribed on the UNESCO



Prime Minister Narendra Modi with Audrey Azoulay, Director-General of UNESCO, in New Delhi on Sunday. ANI

World Heritage List. India is hosting the World Heritage Committee meeting for the first time.

"India's vision is development as well as heritage - vikas bhi, virasat bhi," he said.

The Prime Minister said that more than 350 heritage items have been brought back in recent

times. "This return of ancient heritage artifacts is a display of global generosity and respect for history," he said.

Mr. Modi mentioned that Northeast India's historic 'Maidam' has been nominated to enter UNESCO's popular World Heritage List, and is India's 43rd World Heritage Site and

the Northeast's first heritage to secure the status of Cultural World Heritage.

"India's history and sense of history are older and more elaborate than the normal, leading to the need for new perspectives to witness the past with technological developments and new discoveries," he said.

Bringing to notice the findings in Sinauli in Uttar Pradesh, including the discovery of a "4,000-year-old horse-driven chariot", he said such discoveries stress that in order to know India, there is a need for prejudice-free new concepts.

He invited the gathering to be part of this new stream. He encouraged people to use this potential of heritage for the betterment of the world, and to connect hearts.

The Hindu Tamil Nadu Women's Summit 2024 to be held on July 30

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

The Hindu Tamil Nadu Women's Summit, 2024 will be organised here on July 30 by The Hindu Group, in association with Guidance Tamil Nadu.

Experts will participate in sessions, including on women in manufacturing, STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics), global capability centres, and space.

"As we travel around India and the world spreading the word about Tamil Nadu's unparalleled strengths as the top-most destination for investments flowing into our country, one of our most proud talking points is the astounding fact that 42% of women factory workers in India are from Tamil Nadu," said T.R.B. Rajaa, State



Minister for Industries, Investment Promotions and Commerce. "Under the visionary leadership of Chief Minister M.K. Stalin, Tamil Nadu continues to lead the way in empowering women via various welfare schemes which have driven economic growth and setting example for the rest of the world to replicate," he added.

Geetha Ramamoorthi,

managing director of KBR India, said: "We have close to 600 women in our workforce in Tamil Nadu out of 2,000 people. Our aim is to further increase the gender balance by taking conscious efforts to provide equal opportunities to women as we grow and expand our business operations in Tamil Nadu."

Enhancing holistic skills She suggested that the government can take a lead in introducing schemes targeted at girl students to enhance their holistic skills so that they can become more confident and well-suited to take up jobs in the engineering or STEM fields.

A spokesperson of Indian Bank said 29.7% of its approximately 40,000 employees were women (12,241). In Tamil Nadu,

3,566 of its 9,754 employees were women. At the helm of the bank's leadership is also a woman serving as the Chief General Manager and Secretary to the Board.

The summit is powered by Naga Foods in association with Tamil Nadu Skill Development Corporation, KBR India, and Indian Bank.

Prestige, VFS Global, KPL, Port of Chennai, and United India Insurance are the associate partners. Other partners include Grundfos (sustainability partner), Chennai Metro Rail (mobility), Nippon Paint (colour), ITC Mangaldeep (fragrance), Confederation of Indian Industry & CII Indian Women Network (industry), CREDAI Chennai (real estate industry), and Puthiyathalaimurai TV (television partner).

THE CROSSWORD+ 14233 (set by Dr. X)

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

Crossword grid with numbers 1-27.

- 14 Crazy incident involving associate turning blue on a drug (3,2,1,6)
- 18 Oh my God! Hound twisting to bound over cougar is astonishing (4,8)
- 21 German diet's heavy, having ultimately terrible gas with bit of tummy upset (9)
- 23 Forget about divorce essentially and relax (5)
- 24 Sheltered part with cover over spot around back of cottage (3,4)
- 25 Shocking deceit with bit of arsenic in cold drink (4,3)
- 26 Investigates charges involving top star's son (6)
- 27 Husband overwhelmed by cocaine and drink becomes tearful (6,2)
- Down
- 1 Star conceals rifle, about to give bribe (6)
- 2 Wild leopard killing prince! Put more bullets in gun (6)
- 3 Force hit outlaw with good stun grenade (9)
- 4 Start to trek in Montana, inhale fresh country air (8,6)
- 6 One who encourages boy avoiding fast food item (5)
- 7 Chooses again to study and tops easily (8)
- 8 Wander, say, all round to inspect collection of devices (8)
- 9/15 Insane reason for halting card game (3,7,4,1,4,4)
- 16 Sell grog, nuts and deep-fried snacks (3,5)
- 17 Manages to drink peg, initially stumbles in state of stupefaction (8)
- 19 Sex, essentially uninhibited, breaking bed - extremely uproarious (6)
- 20 Escape from eastern Cuba, breaking barrier quietly (6)
- 22 Old lift in Idaho is enormous (5)

- Across
- 1 Royal Air Force in undercover operation doing this? (8)
- 5 Ethnic people from Vanuatu are graceful (6)
- 10 Live long and securely in capital city (7)
- 11 Wary of a dog - run frantically (2,5)
- 12 Fish is orca, moving closer to beach (5)
- 13 Old president in charge rejected act intentionally (2,7)

SUDOKU grid with difficulty rating: ★★☆☆☆

Solution to previous puzzle and Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

MADGALDEEP SCENT 3in1 PERFUME LIKE FRAGRANCES

FAITH Promise to Asvapati

Rama explains to Bharata why Kaikeyi is not wrong to have asked for Bharata's coronation. Many years ago, Dasaratha saw Kaikeyi and wanted to marry her. He requested her father, King Asvapati, for the hand of his daughter in marriage. Asvapati was himself a great king. He was a Brahma jnani. There are references to Asvapati in the Vedas, said Navalpakkam Vasudevachariar in a discourse. Asvapati was reluctant to give his daughter in marriage to Dasaratha, because Dasaratha was already married. Since Kausalya was Dasaratha's first wife, she was the chief queen, and Kaikeyi would, therefore, not even be the chief queen. So, he asked Dasaratha to promise that a son born to Kaikeyi would be made Dasaratha's successor.. The sacrifice for children, the appearance of the divine porridge - all these were future events. Dasaratha could not have anticipated all this. So, he promised Asvapati that if Kaikeyi had a son, then that son would become king of Ayodhya. Also, Dasaratha had given Kaikeyi two boons after the battle between devas and asuras. If Rama becomes king, then that would be a violation of Dasaratha's promise to Asvapati and to Kaikeyi. So, despite Bharata's efforts to persuade Rama, the latter refuses to return to Ayodhya.

MONEYWISE



Snatching value back from a fire

COVERNOTE

When you suddenly cannot afford to continue paying the premiums on a life policy, you may still be able to protect value. A new measure from IRDAI helps you in this quest

K. Nitva Kalyani

In a previous instalment of CoverNote we saw some of the new measures that the insurance regulator, Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI), is bringing into force for life insurance policies. They aim at making things better and easier for the customer and reinforce existing measures.

One of the main points the June 12, 2024 master circular introduced was that policies should acquire a surrender value once the first-year premium is paid, and even during the first policy year, given some terms and conditions.

In an earlier instalment of CoverNote we saw in detail how there are good options to consider before surrendering a life insurance policy and terminating the coverage.

There could be many factors that lead to a decision to surrender a life policy. Wrong policy, unsuitable terms and conditions, unaffordability of premium and so on.

In that instalment we had emphasised that, if at all, surrender should be the very last option and other ways and means to keep the policy live by addressing the other problems should be looked at.

If you think you bought the wrong policy, see if you can make it 'paid-up'. This is possible if the policy has been in force for a pre-decided period of time. This way you can freeze the policy as it stands with no future premium obligations, but life coverage will continue for the same policy period but at a lower sum assured. You will claw back some value and continuing coverage is always an asset.

The other suggestion was that if you can't afford to keep up the premium payment, maybe temporarily, try to see if you can take a loan on the policy and use those funds to pay a few instalments of the premium until things take a turn for the better and you can afford the premium instalments.

What if no loan is possible on the policy? That was a dead-end, but no more. The new circular says that "all non-linked savings products offering surrender value shall have the facility of policy loan based on the eligible surrender value".

Loans, however, will not be allowed in unit-linked insurance policies, and that is a point to note.

Loan facility should now be made available also for Annuity products (pension policies, in other words) where you have chosen the 'Return of Purchase Price' option.

We will see more on the new measures for annuity policies in the next instalment of CoverNote.

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



Up in the line: Nvidia has seen its weightage in the S&P500 index rise from 1.4% to 7% in 2024. REUTERS

S&P 500's 7 shooting stars

Despite historically high interest rates typically leading to poor stock performance, S&P 500 has defied the trend with a remarkable 24.5% return, driven by the 'magnificent seven' tech giants

STOCK SYNDROME

Anand Srinivasan
Sashwath Swaminathan

A well-seasoned investor generally correlates historically high interest rates with poor stock performance. A higher interest rate typically signals higher borrowing costs and lower business profits. As the risk-free rate of return rises due to higher interest rates, the expected return on equities rises as it is a riskier asset, commanding greater returns and adding greater downward pressure on prices to account for this expectation.

Moreover, heavily indebted companies also face higher interest payments, which sometimes leads to an excessive burden, leading to bankruptcy or insolvency.

Thus, when the interest rate in the U.S. had been raised to 5.5%, the highest it had been in over 20 years, the assumption was that the returns on equities should remain muted at best and reflect a decline at worst. The S&P 500 initially posted poor performance in comparison with its 2021 highs.

Strange deviation

However, in a strange deviation from the general expectation, the S&P 500 had posted a return of 24.5% over the past 12 months (as of the time of writing this piece).

However, when taking a closer look at the outperformance of the S&P 500 over the past year, it is evident that most of the gains in the index come from a



Nvidia alone rallied by over 172% during the past year. Other star performers such as Meta (59%), Amazon (45%) and Alphabet (50.5%) also outperformed the index

select few performers.

Specifically, the "magnificent seven" companies, which include Nvidia, Microsoft, Apple, Alphabet, Amazon, Meta, and Tesla, were some of the top performers in the index. Nvidia alone rallied by over 172% during the past year. Other star performers such as Meta (59%), Amazon (45%) and Alphabet (50.5%) also outperformed the index and inflated the S&P 500's return over the past year.

On the other hand, the S&P 500 equal weight index, which is identical to the S&P 500 index other than that it continues to maintain equal weights of all its constituents regardless of market cap value, has only posted a return of 10.7% (Note: the magnificent 7's outperformance continues to affect the equal weight index too).

The S&P 500 uses a free-float market capitalisation-weighted methodology, which, in simple terms, assigns a more significant index weightage to a company that has a larger market capitalisation. This mechanism favours companies that perform well. When a company's stock price rallies, its market capitalisation naturally sees an increase, which leads to its index consti-



S&P 500 uses a free-float market capitalisation weighted methodology, wherein it assigns significant weightage to a company with larger market capitalisation

tuent weightage increasing. This increase in the weightage leads to a more significant portion of the passive flow to index funds being directed towards the company's stock, pushing it further and leading to a positive feedback loop. For example, Nvidia, which has posted a 700% increase in its stock price since 2022, has seen its weightage in the S&P 500 index rise from 1.4% to 7% in 2024. The rest of the index has lagged behind the magnificent seven, with most sectors (especially those such as real estate, which heavily depend on interest rate cycles) posting poor returns over the past year.

Certain chip-making and technology companies' outperformance stems from the positive attention Artificial Intelligence (AI) has gotten over the past two years. It is undeniably true that the advancements in generative AI over the past few years have been remarkable. However, as investors, it is essential to ask a few critical questions before jumping into the AI stock rally. A recent report by the Goldman Sachs Research Newsletter raises vital questions about whether the advancements made in generative AI justify the

valuations we see today. It states that AI capacity is expensive to build/implement and run, which contrasts with other technology displacements, such as the dot com revolution, which was cheaper than the architecture it sought to displace. Moreover, AI does not currently benefit from network effects where the value of the technology increases with a more significant number of people using it, such as social media platforms. Finally, the report states that it remains unclear what the actual use case of this technology will be. Therefore, it is essential to exercise caution when dealing with companies swept up in the AI hype cycle.

In summary, despite historically high interest rates typically leading to poor stock performance, the S&P 500 has defied this trend with a remarkable 24.5% return, driven primarily by the "magnificent seven" tech giants. However, as reflected by the S&P 500 Equal Weight Index, the broader market shows a more modest 10.76% return, indicating that most sectors, especially those sensitive to interest rate changes, have lagged. This disparity underscores the influence of market-cap weighting in indices. Caution is advised for investors caught up in the AI hype, as high costs and uncertain value propositions raise questions about current valuations. Instead, opportunities may lie in undervalued sectors of the market.

(Anand Srinivasan is a consultant, Sashwath Swaminathan is a research assistant at Aionion Investment Services)

A new asset class?

THINKINVESTOR

SEBI's proposal to introduce an investment product that fits between MFs and PMS is an investment vehicle that could invest in asset classes such as equity and bonds and their derivatives

Venkatesh Bangaruswamy

Recent media reports state that the SEBI is mulling a new asset class for investors that is positioned between mutual funds and portfolio management services (PMS). Is the market regulator introducing an asset class, or is it proposing a new investment product? In this article, we discuss two important investment concepts – asset class and strategies – and their relevance to your investment decisions.

Asset allocation is your most important investment decision. This refers to the proportion of savings you invest in different asset classes. Your asset allocation decision is more important than selecting products to invest in each asset class. Therefore, defining asset class is important.

An asset class refers to a group of securities that have similar characteristics. Stocks listed on the exchange are all driven by systematic, or market risk. Therefore, we can group all stocks together as an asset class called equity. Similarly, you can group all interest-bearing securities as bonds. At a macro level, you have traditional and alternative asset classes. The traditional asset class consists of equity, bonds, and arguably real estate. The alternative asset class includes commodities, antiques, and currency.

What about private equity and hedge funds? Private equity typically refers to investing in shares of unlisted companies. But equity (shares) is already classified as an asset class. It is true that private equity has some characteristics that are unavailable in public equity (listed stocks). That said, private equity is also priced using public equity metrics. Also, private equity is another way of taking exposure to equity as an asset class. Therefore, it would be best to refer to private equity as an alternative strategy to investing in equity. A thumb rule to apply is that correlation between asset classes must be low in normal markets. Hedge funds are investment vehicles like mutual funds. SEBI's proposal to introduce an investment product that fits between mutual funds and PMS is an investment vehicle – one that could invest in asset classes such as equity and bonds and their derivatives.

Conclusion

The term asset class is often used liberally. Its importance lies in how you structure your portfolio. Suppose you decide to allocate your savings 60 per cent to equity and 40 per cent to bonds. You could then choose to have your equity exposure in both public and private equities. Finally, you can decide to choose mutual funds, PMS, or the proposed product as an investment vehicle.

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

Bank Fixed Deposit Rates

Bank Name	Interest Rates (%)			
	Highest Slab	1-year Tenure	3-year Tenure	5-year Tenure
Small Finance Banks				
AU Small Finance Bank	8	7.25	7.5	7.25
Equitas Small Finance Bank	8.5	8.2	8	7.25
ESAF Small Finance Bank	8.25	6	6.75	6.25
Jana Small Finance Bank	8.25	8.25	8.25	7.25
NorthEast Small Finance Bank	9	7	9	6.25
Suryoday Small Finance Bank	8.65	6.85	8.6	8.25
Ujjivan Small Finance Bank	8.25	8.25	7.2	7.2
Unity Small Finance Bank	9	7.85	8.15	8.15
Utkarsh Small Finance Bank	8.5	8	8.5	7.75
Private Sector Banks				
Axis Bank	7.2	6.7	7.1	7
Bandhan Bank	7.85	7.85	7.25	5.85
City Union Bank	7.25	7	6.5	6.25
CSB Bank	7.75	5	5.75	5.75
DBS Bank	7.5	7	6.5	6.5
DCB Bank	8.05	7.1	7.55	7.4
Federal Bank	7.4	6.8	7	6.6
HDFC Bank	7.25	6.6	7	7
ICI Bank	7.2	6.7	7	7
IDFC First Bank	7.75	6.5	7.25	7
IndusInd Bank	7.75	7.75	7.25	7.25

Bank Name	Interest Rates (%)			
	Highest Slab	1-year Tenure	3-year Tenure	5-year Tenure
Public Sector Banks				
Jammu & Kashmir Bank	7	7	6.5	6.5
Karur Vysya Bank	7.5	7	7	7
Karnataka Bank	7.25	7.1	6.5	6.5
Kotak Mahindra Bank	7.4	7.1	7	6.2
RBL Bank	8	7.5	7.5	7.1
SBM Bank India	7.75	7.05	7.3	7.75
South Indian Bank	7.25	6.7	6.7	6
Tamilnad Mercantile Bank	7.5	7	6.5	6.5
YES Bank	8	7.25	7.25	7.25
Public Sector Banks				
Bank of Baroda	7.25	6.85	7.15	6.5
Bank of India	7.3	6.8	6.5	6
Bank of Maharashtra	7.25	6.75	6.5	6.5
Canara Bank	7.25	6.85	6.8	6.7
Central Bank of India	7.3	6.85	6.5	6.5
Indian Bank	7.25	6.1	6.25	6.25
Indian Overseas Bank	7.3	6.9	6.5	6.5
Punjab National Bank	7.25	6.75	7	6.5
Punjab & Sind Bank	7.3	6.3	6	6
State Bank of India	7.1	6.8	6.75	6.5
Union Bank of India	7.25	6.8	6.7	6.5

Home Loan Interest Rates

Name of Lender	Loan Amount (Rs.)		
	Upto 30 lakh	Above 30 lakh & upto 75 lakh	Above 75 lakh
Public Sector Banks			
State Bank of India	8.50-9.85	8.50-9.85	8.50-9.85
Bank of Baroda	8.40-10.65	8.40-10.65	8.40-10.90
Union Bank of India	8.35-10.75	8.35-10.90	8.35-10.90
Punjab National Bank	8.45-10.25	8.40-10.15	8.40-10.15
Bank of India	8.40-10.85	8.40-10.85	8.40-10.85
Canara Bank	8.50-11.25	8.45-11.25	8.40-11.15
UCO Bank	8.45-10.30	8.45-10.30	8.45-10.30
Bank of Maharashtra	8.35-11.15	8.35-11.15	8.35-11.15
Punjab and Sind Bank	8.50-10.00	8.50-10.00	8.50-10.00
Indian Overseas Bank	8.40-10.60	8.40-10.60	8.40-10.60
Central Bank of India	8.45-9.80	8.45-9.80	8.45-9.80
Private Sector Banks			
Kotak Mahindra Bank	8.70*	8.70*	8.70*
ICI Bank	8.75*	8.75*	8.75*
Axis Bank	8.75-13.30	8.75-13.30	8.75-9.65
HSBC Bank	8.50*	8.50*	8.50*
South Indian Bank	8.70-11.70	8.70-11.70	8.70-11.70
Karur Vysya Bank	9.00-11.05	9.00-11.05	9.00-11.05

Name of Lender	Loan Amount (Rs.)		
	Upto 30 lakh	Above 30 lakh & upto 75 lakh	Above 75 lakh
Housing Finance Companies (HFCs)			
Karnataka Bank	8.50-10.62	8.50-10.62	8.50-10.62
Federal Bank	8.80*	8.80*	8.80*
Dhanlaxmi Bank	9.35-10.50	9.35-10.50	9.35-10.50
Tamilnad Mercantile Bank	8.60-9.95	8.60-9.95	8.60-9.95
Bandhan Bank	9.16-15.00	9.16-13.33	9.16-13.33
RBL Bank	8.90*	8.90*	8.90*
CSB Bank	10.49-12.34	10.49-12.34	10.49-12.34
HDFC Bank Ltd.	8.75*	8.75*	8.75*
City Union Bank	8.25-9.50	8.50-10.00	8.75-10.50
Housing Finance Companies (HFCs)			
LIC Housing Finance	8.50-10.35	8.50-10.55	8.50-10.75
Bajaj Housing Finance	8.50*	8.50*	8.50*
Tata Capital	8.75*	8.75*	8.75*
PNB Housing Finance	8.50-14.50	8.50-14.50	8.50-11.45
GIC Housing Finance	8.80*	8.80*	8.80*
SMFG India Home Finance	10.00*	10.00*	10.00*
Aditya Birla Capital	8.60*	8.60*	8.60*
ICI Home Finance	9.20*	9.20*	9.20*

*Onwards Rates as on July 17 Source:Paisabazaar.com

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

ISTANBUL

Turkiye ready to build Cyprus naval base 'if necessary': Erdogan



Turkiye's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said on Sunday that his country was ready to build a Cyprus naval base "if necessary", 50 years after Turkish forces invaded the now-divided island. "If necessary, we can construct naval structure in the north" of the divided island, Anadolu news agency reported him as saying. AFP

SHUSHA

Azerbaijan proposes document on principles of peace with Armenia



Azerbaijan is proposing to sign a document with Armenia on the basic principles of a future peace treaty as an interim measure as they wrangle over a broader deal, a senior Azerbaijani official said on Sunday. Both countries have repeatedly said they want to sign a peace treaty to end the conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh. REUTERS

KUALA LUMPUR

Malaysia detains oil tanker which fled after collision with a vessel



Malaysia has detained a large oil tanker, *Ceres I*, that collided with another vessel off its coast and fled the scene, the Coast Guard said on Sunday. The Sao Tome and Principe-flagged *Ceres I* tanker had collided with the Singapore-flagged *Hafnia Nile* two days ago, causing both ships to catch fire, the Coast Guard added. AFP

MOSCOW

Russia says it intercepted U.S. bomber planes over the Arctic



Russia said on Sunday that it scrambled fighter jets to prevent two U.S. strategic bomber planes from crossing its border over the Barents Sea in the Arctic. "The crews of the Russian fighters identified the aerial target as a pair of United States Air Force B-52H strategic bombers," it said. AFP

'I took a bullet for democracy,' says Trump in first rally since shooting

The Republican presidential nominee dismissed concerns raised by critics that he is a threat to democracy; he also alleged that the Democratic Party is trying to overthrow the results of their primaries to dump President Joe Biden from the ballot

Press Trust of India
WASHINGTON

Former U.S. President Donald Trump in his first campaign rally since surviving an assassination attempt has dismissed concerns raised by critics that he is a threat to democracy, telling a large crowd in Michigan that he "took a bullet for democracy".

In the rally in Michigan on Saturday, Mr. Trump, who is the Republican presidential nominee for the November 5 elections, was joined by his running mate J.D. Vance.

More than 12,000 people piled into the Van An-



Rising support: Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump holds a public campaign rally in Michigan on Saturday. AFP

del Arena in Grand Rapids to see him and his running mate.

"They keep saying he's a threat to democracy. I'm saying, What did I do to de-

mocracy? Last week I took a bullet for democracy," Mr. Trump said, referencing an often-used Democrat talking point.

Mr. Trump's comments

come one week since the former President survived an assassination attempt while campaigning in Pennsylvania.

He was shot in the ear less than 10 minutes into his speech, prompting him to be escorted off stage. One attendee and the shooter died during the attack while two others were injured.

The former President also spoke about Project 2025, which his rivals and the Opposition Democratic Party claim is an initiative that threatens democracy.

"I don't want to know anything about it. But what they do is misinformation and disinformation," he

said, as he distanced himself from it.

Overseen by the conservative Heritage Foundation, the multi-pronged initiative includes a detailed blueprint for the next Republican President to usher in a sweeping overhaul of the executive branch.

Mr. Trump also alleged that the rival Democratic Party is trying to overthrow the results of their primaries to dump incumbent President Joe Biden from the ballot.

On Sunday, Mr. Biden announced that he will end his candidacy for re-election in 2024, saying "it is in the best interest of my party and the country".

Houthis pledge 'huge' response to Israeli strike

Agence France-Presse
Reuters
HOEDEIDA

Yemen's Houthi rebels on Sunday promised a "huge" retaliation against Israel following a deadly strike on the port of Hodeida, as violence sparked by the Gaza war gripped the region.

Israel bombed the Palestinian territory, Lebanon and Yemen in quick succession this week in response to attacks from Iran-backed militant groups.

On Sunday, Houthi military spokesperson Yahya Saree said the rebel's "response to the Israeli aggression against our country is inevitably coming and will be huge".

Dozens have been killed since Saturday across Gaza, the civil defence agency



Still burning: Satellite image of burning oil tanks in the port of Hodeida on Sunday, a day after Israeli strikes. AFP

said, including in strikes on homes in the central Nuseirat and Bureij areas.

The deadly strikes in Gaza came hours after Hezbollah and its ally Hamas said they fired at Israel from south Lebanon.

Eilat targeted

Israeli air defences intercepted a surface-to-surface missile fired from Yemen on Sunday, the military

said, and Houthi movement said it had targeted the Israeli Red Sea city of Eilat with multiple missiles.

The Israeli military said its Arrow 3 missile defence system had shot down the projectile before it crossed into Israeli territory.

Before the interception, air raid sirens had sounded in Eilat, sending residents running for shelter.

Nepal PM Oli wins vote of confidence in Parliament

Press Trust of India
KATHMANDU

Nepal's newly appointed Prime Minister K.P. Sharma Oli comfortably won a vote of confidence in Parliament on Sunday, nearly a week after he was sworn in to lead a coalition government in the Himalayan nation.

Mr. Oli secured 188 votes in favour of the Vote of Confidence motion tabled by him while 74 votes were cast against the motion. Out of a total of 263 members of the House of Representatives, who were present, one member abstained.

Mr. Oli, 72, required 138 votes out of a total of 275 votes to pass the floor test in the House of Representatives (HoR).

Responding to issues raised by the HoR members, Mr. Oli said, "I was



K.P. Sharma Oli

not and will not get involved in corruption neither will tolerate if any one practices so."

He said that the two larger parties "Nepali Congress and CPN-UML came together to maintain political stability, checking corruption and bring good governance".

"This coalition government will create a reliable ecosystem for stability, development and good governance," Mr. Oli asserted.

China, Philippines reach deal in effort to stop clashes at shoal

Associated Press
MANILA

China and the Philippines reached a deal they hope will end confrontations at the most fiercely disputed shoal in the South China Sea, the Philippine government said on Sunday.

The Philippines occupies Second Thomas Shoal but China also claims it, and increasingly hostile clashes at sea have sparked fears of larger conflicts that could involve the United States.

The crucial deal was reached on Sunday, after a series of meetings between Philippine and Chinese diplomats in Manila and exchanges of diplomatic notes that aimed to establish a mutually acceptable arrangement at the shoal without conceding either side's territorial claims.

"Both sides continue to

China has disputes with several nations over borders, many of them in the South China Sea

recognise the need to de-escalate the situation in the South China Sea and manage differences through dialogue and consultation and agree that the agreement will not prejudice each other's positions in the South China Sea," the Department of Foreign Affairs in Manila said.

China has disputes with several governments over land and sea borders, many of them in the South China Sea, and the rare deal with the Philippines could spark hope that similar arrangements could be forged by Beijing with other rival countries to avoid clashes.

Taiwan must protect its sovereignty, know its own history, says President

Reuters
TAIPEI

Taiwan must protect its sovereignty and know its own culture and history, President Lai Ching-te said on Sunday, rejecting what he said was the previous mistaken belief the island could serve as a base to "retake" China.

Mr. Lai, who took office in May, and his ruling Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) champion Taiwan's separate identity from China, a position that frequently angers Beijing

which views the island as an inviolable part of Chinese territory.

Speaking to the DPP's annual convention, Mr. Lai said those who fought to bring democracy to Taiwan - martial law only ended in 1987 - had a clear understanding of the island's place in the world.

They "did not hesitate to shed blood and used their lives to debunk the mistaken idea that 'Taiwan is a base to retake the mainland', and instituted the national policy of putting Taiwan first," said Mr. Lai,



Lai Ching-te

who is also DPP chairman. Chiang Kai-shek and his defeated Republic of China government fled to Taiwan in 1949 after losing a civil

war with Mao Zedong's communists. Chiang hoped to regroup his forces on Taiwan and attack China to destroy Mao's People's Republic of China. Chiang died in 1975 without achieving that dream.

Mr. Lai said Taiwan had different priorities.

"Now, our responsibility to unite the people, oppose annexation [by China] and ensure national sovereignty," he said, speaking in Taiwanese, also known as Hokkien, rather than the main language of government, Mandarin.

THE HINDU GROUP

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EASILY DONE

Pakistan women register a facile victory over Nepal



ACC
Pakistan crushed Nepal by nine wickets to register its first win in the women's Asia Cup T20 tournament in Dambulla on Sunday. **The scores:** Nepal 108/6 in 20 overs (Sita Magar 26, Puja Mahato 25, Kabita Joshi 31) lost to Pakistan 110/1 in 11.5 overs (Gull Feroza 57, Muneeba Ali 46 n.o.). **Toss:** Pakistan. **PoM:** Gull

TWO TO TANGO

Harmanpreet's guidance helped me back myself, says Richa



ACC
Richa Ghosh opened up about her partnership with skipper Harmanpreet Kaur against UAE on Sunday. "Whenever I am playing with Harry [Harmanpreet] *di*, she tells me how the ball is coming on and how to play the shots. Whenever I get the opportunity, I want to back myself," she said.

ON THE PODIUM

Maini wins his Formula 2 sprint race in Hungary



SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT
Kush Maini (Invicta) posted his maiden win in the FIA Formula 2 Championship when he topped the sprint race at the Hungaroring, Budapest, on Saturday, after Richard Verschoor, who had finished first, was disqualified due to a technical infringement.

TRIUMPHANT

Nadal stumbles in the final, Borges wins Nordea Open



AFP
Rafael Nadal's winning run at the clay-court Nordea Open in Bastad ended on Sunday when the Spaniard was beaten by Nuno Borges 6-3, 6-2 in the final. The seventh-seeded Portuguese player broke Nadal's serve five times on his way to a first ATP tour victory. It was Nadal's first summit clash since the 2022 French Open.

Pogacar pedals to a third Tour de France title



REUTERS
Pogacar...regaining the crown.

REUTERS
NICE

Tadeo Pogacar became the first rider to achieve the Giro d'Italia-Tour de France double since 1998 when he claimed his third Tour title on Sunday, cementing his domination by winning the final stage for his sixth stage success.

The Slovenian beat defending champion Jonas Vingegaard of Denmark and Belgian Remco Evenepoel, who were second and third overall and on the final stage, respectively.

Eritrea's Biniam Girmay won the green jersey for the points classification with Richard Carapaz of Ecuador taking the polka dot jersey for the mountains classification.

Pogacar's UAE Team Emirates won the team's classification, while Evenepoel, who won stage seven, the other time trial stage, won the white jersey for the best young rider in his first participation in the Tour.

Harmanpreet, Richa fifties help India dominate UAE

The duo helps the side to its highest-ever T20I total of 201 before Deepti and fellow-bowlers have the opposition in a bind to seal a clinical win for the Women in Blue

Press Trust of India
DAMBULLA

Contrasting fifties from skipper Harmanpreet Kaur and Richa Ghosh were complemented nicely by the bowlers as India notched up a massive 78-run win over UAE in its second match of the women's Asia Cup T20 tournament here on Sunday.

Invited to bat, Harmanpreet played the anchor's role to perfection with a 47-ball 66, while Richa produced a late charge with an unbeaten 29-ball-64 to power defending champion India to 201 for five, its first-ever 200-plus score in T20Is.

The bowlers, led by Deepti Sharma (two for 23), then produced a clinical show to limit UAE to 123 for seven as India inched closer to the semifinals. With two wins in as many games, India occupies the top spot in group-A with four points and has a Net Run Rate of +3.298.

Chasing the daunting total, opener Esha Rohit Oza scored a 36-ball 38 (5x4, 1x6) but UAE never was in the chase as it kept losing wickets at regular intervals.

Renuka Thakur, Tanuja Kanwar (who replaced the injured Shreyanka Patil), Pooja Vastrakar and Radha Yadav scalped one wicket each.



ACC
Leading from the front: Skipper Harmanpreet anchored the Indian innings with a measured half-century.

SCOREBOARD

INDIA		UAE BOWLING	
Shafali Verma c Theertha b Samaira 37 (18b, 5x4, 1x6), Smriti Mandhana c Riniha b Kavisha 13 (9b, 1x4, 1x6), D. Hemalatha b Heena 2 (4b), Harmanpreet Kaur run out 66 (47b, 7x4, 1x6), Jemimah Rodrigues c Riniha b Kavisha 14 (13b, 12x4, 1x6), Pooja Vastrakar (not out) 0 (0b); Extras (w-5): 5; Total (for five wkts. in 20 overs): 201.	5-181 (Harmanpreet, 19.1).	Samaira 4-0-42-1, Khushi 1-0-15-0, Kavisha 4-0-36-2, Heena 4-0-40-1, Vaishnavi 3-0-28-0, Esha 2-0-26-0, Indhuja 2-0-14-0.	(9b, 1x4), Rithika Rajith run out 6 (7b); Extras (w-5): 5; Total (for seven wkts. in 20 overs): 123.
FALL OF WICKETS		FALL OF WICKETS	
1-23 (Smriti, 2.2 overs), 2-52 (Shafali, 4.6), 3-52 (Hemalatha, 5.1), 4-106 (Jemimah, 11.4),		1-11 (Theertha, 4.2), 2-24 (Riniha, 5.2), 3-36 (Samaira, 7.3), 4-76 (Esha, 12.3), 5-95 (Khushi, 15.3), 6-107 (Heena, 17.4), 7-123 (Rithika, 19.6).	
INDIA BOWLING		INDIA BOWLING	
1-23 (Smriti, 2.2 overs), 2-52 (Shafali, 4.6), 3-52 (Hemalatha, 5.1), 4-106 (Jemimah, 11.4),		Renuka 4-0-30-1, Tanuja 4-0-14-1, Pooja 4-1-27-1, Deepti 4-0-23-2, Radha 4-0-29-1.	
		Toss: UAE; PoM: Richa.	India won by 78 runs.

Paes and Amritraj inducted into the Hall of Fame

Avon Sengupta
NEWPORT (USA)

It was an 'India Day' in New England as Leander Paes and Vijay Amritraj were formally inducted into the International Tennis Hall of Fame as its 265th and 267th members. Joining them was veteran tennis journalist Richard Evans, a chronicler of 200 Majors, and the biographer of Amritraj.

Welcoming them to the illustrious club were many of the game's greatest and fellow Hall of Famers, including 18 Grand Slam winner Christ Evert, her greatest rival and friend Martina Navratilova, Andre Agassi, Stan Smith, and WTA founding member Rosie Casals.

Indian colour

The hallowed Horseshow grass court, venue of the original US National Championships between 1881 and 1914, resembled an Indian wedding party as loud cheers, hoots and whistles celebrated the new inductees.

The Indians, in vibrant sarees and crisp *bandhgallas*, were everywhere, outnumbering the more stoic, buttoned-up members of the club. It was a splash of Bollywood into an old-school Wimbledon tea party, and the setting was chaotically beautiful.

Navratilova, who won two of her 59 Majors partnering Paes, introduced the 18-time Grand Slam winner as a player who played tennis "the way



REUTERS
Recognising excellence: Paes, Evans, and Amritraj pose proudly after receiving their medals.

most of us would like to play."

"He has got that off-speed serve, big forehand, the sliced backhand where it lands exactly where you don't want to land. When he comes to the net, big forehand volley, reflexes like a leopard; he runs every ball down and if he can't, he dives for it. And if all else fails, he smiles and then everybody's heart melts," said Navratilova.

"Leander, it was truly my honour to play against you. I enjoyed it a lot more when I played with you. You have done your family proud; you have done our sport proud and most of all you have done India proud."

Paes, dressed in a cream-coloured *sherwani* and the Padma Shri and Padma Bhusan proudly pinned to jacket, said: "It is a privilege to be on this stage with these people who have inspired me every single day of my life.

"They are not just Grand Slam winners, but

have shaped the world we live in. I thank all of you for giving this Indian boy hope."

Amritraj, winner of 28 tour-level titles, was introduced by his son Prakash, who called him "my greatest hero, who also happens to be my father."

Amritraj reached the Wimbledon singles quarterfinals as a 19-year-old in 1973 and became the first Asian to join the ITF in the contributor's category.

"When I was given the news that this year I will be inducted, a feeling came over me that I had never experienced. Tennis has allowed me to meet people I never thought I would meet, and it has given me more things than I could have possible imagined. It will always be a part of our lives and always bring families, communities and countries together," said Amritraj. "This is not just an honour for me, my parents, my family, but for my fellow Indians, my country."

Schauffele wins his second Major with an immaculate display

BRITISH OPEN

Reuters
TROON

American Xander Schauffele emerged from a tightly-bunched leaderboard to win the 152nd British Open with a supreme blemish-free final-round 65 at Royal Troon on Sunday.

Beginning the day among a group of players one stroke behind leader Billy Horschel, World No. 3 Schauffele was in total control as he produced an immaculate display to finish nine under par.

When Schauffele tapped in his par on the 18th green the Claret Jug was his even if South Africa's Thriston Lawrence, who had earlier shared the lead, was still to finish his round.

Justin Rose, bidding to become the first Englishman to win the Open since Nick Faldo in 1992, was left to ponder what might have been as he finished two shots back in tied second place having barely put a



REUTERS
Smacking success: Schauffele conjured up a blemish-free final round to get a hold on the Claret Jug.

foot wrong over the weekend.

Horschel birdied the 18th to join Rose on seven-under and Lawrence was fourth on six under with American Russell Henley fifth and Ireland's 2019 Open champion Shane Lowry sixth.

The 30-year-old Schauffele had not won a Major until dominating this year's PGA Championship in May when he finished

on a record 21-under-par to edge out Bryson DeChambeau. He took his newfound swagger to the Ayrshire coast to claim the Open in superb fashion.

American domination

Schauffele's victory means the last seven Majors have all been won by Americans and for the first time since 1982. Americans have swept all four Majors in a season.

England seals series with a thumping win

WI IN ENGLAND

Agence France-Presse
NOTTINGHAM

England thrashed the West Indies by 241 runs in the second Test at Trent Bridge on Sunday to take an unassailable 2-0 lead in a three-match series.

The West Indies, set 385 to win, collapsed to 143 all out on the fourth day, with 20-year-old off-spinner Shoabib Bashir taking Test-best figures of five for 41.

Root, Brook hit tons

Earlier, the Yorkshire duo of Joe Root (122) and Harry Brook (109) made hundreds in England's second innings of 425.

West Indies had actually led by 41 runs on first innings after making 457 in reply to England's 416.

It was an encouraging display by the tourists, who had been twice bowled out cheaply during an innings and 114-run defeat in the first Test at Lord's.

But after England pacesman Chris Woakes made



GETTY IMAGES
Bashir celebrates one of his five wickets.

the initial breakthrough on Sunday, the West Indies batters proved powerless to resist Bashir. The third and final Test starts at Edgbaston on Friday.

The scores: England 416 & 425 in 92.2 overs (Duckett 76, Pope 51, Root 122, Brook 109, Searles 4/97) by West Indies 457 & 143 in 36.1 overs (Brathwaite 47, Holder 37, Bashir 5/41). **PoM:** Pope England won by 241 runs, leads three-match series 2-0.

Piastri drives to his first win ahead of teammate Norris

HUNGARIAN GP

Agence France-Presse
BUDAPEST

Oscar Piastri took his maiden Formula One win in Sunday's Hungarian Grand Prix with Lando Norris in second for a McLaren 1-2.

Mercedes' Lewis Hamilton completed the podium at the Hungaroring where McLaren locked out the front row of the grid for the first time since 2012.

"Amazing day for us as a team. Oscar controlled the race and he deserved it today," said Norris, who had been urged by his team to let Piastri through in the closing laps.

"This is really the day I dreamed of as a kid. It was a bit complicated at the end," said Piastri, referring to the repeated demands from the team to Norris to let him through for the win.

Max Verstappen, who still leads the championship from Norris, finished fifth after a tetchy race



AP
Well done! Norris applauds Piastri on the latter's triumph.

when he had to give a place back to pole-sitter Norris at the start after going wide as Piastri took the lead at the first corner. A late lunge by Verstappen past Hamilton forced his Red Bull off the track, with the stewards reviewing the incident.

The results: 1. Oscar Piastri (McLaren) 1:38:01.989, 2. Lando Norris (McLaren) +2.141, 3. Lewis Hamilton (Mercedes) +14.880, 4. Charles LeClerc (Ferrari) +19.686, 5. Max Verstappen (Red Bull) +21.349, 6. Carlos Sainz Jr. (Ferrari) +23.073, 7. Sergio Perez (Red Bull) +39.792, 8. George Russell (Mercedes) +42.368, 9.

Yuki Tsunoda (RB) +77.259, 10. Lance Stroll (Aston Martin) +77.976, 11. Fernando Alonso (Aston Martin) +82.460.

One lap: 12. Daniel Riccardo (RB), 13. Nico Hulkenberg (Haas), 14. Alexander Albon (Williams), 15. Kevin Magnussen (Haas), 16. Valtteri Bottas (Sauber), 17. Logan Sargeant (Williams), 18. Esteban Ocon (Alpine), 19. Zhou Guanyu (Sauber); DNF: Pierre Gasly (Alpine).

The standings (top 5) Drivers: 1. Verstappen 265 pts., 2. Norris 189, 3. LeClerc 162, 4. Sainz 154, 5. Piastri 149;

Constructors: 1. Red Bull 389 pts., 2. McLaren 338, 3. Ferrari 322, 4. Mercedes 241, 5. Aston Martin 69.

IN BRIEF



Nine-year-old Indian racer Atiqa Mir creates history

Atiqa Mir, a nine-year-old Indian racer, created history at the Le Mans Kart International circuit by becoming the first female racer in the world to win a race in the RMCIT-Rotax Challenge International Trophy. She achieved this by winning Race 2 in the heats of the Micro Max Category. Starting 10th in qualifying heat race 1, she finished ninth. In race 2, Atiqa demonstrated top pace and maturity, setting a series of fast, consistent lap times and making some great passes to secure first place and create history in the famous Le Mans Circuit.



Harithashree wins four ITF junior titles in Kenya

Harithashree Venkatesh had a fruitful outing in Nairobi, Kenya, winning three ITF junior singles titles and a doubles crown, spread over three weeks. The 15-year-old dropped only one set – in the final – against compatriot Janvi Asawa. Harithashree beat Bicene Benzaied of Tunisia to win the singles titles in the second and third tournaments. She will next compete in the National junior championship in Chennai, followed by the ITF junior tournaments in Chennai and Bhuvanagiri.

The results: J60 Nairobi, Kenya, July 15-20 (final): Harithashree Venkatesh bt Bicene Benzaied (Tun) 6-4, 6-4. **J30 Nairobi, July 8-13 (final):** Harithashree bt Bicene Benzaied (Tun) 6-3, 6-1. **Doubles (final):** Harithashree & Janvi Asawa bt Ishi Maheshwari & Giulia Russo (Ita) 2-6, 7-6(3), [12-10]. **J30 Nairobi, July 1-6 (final):** Harithashree bt Janvi Asawa 2-6, 6-1, 6-3.

Indian boys to face South Korea in quarterfinals

The Indian boys' team advanced to the quarterfinals of the World junior squash championships in Houston on Saturday. The boys will meet fourth seed South Korea. The girls who had already qualified will take on third-seeded Malaysia. The boys beat Canada 2-0 in the pre-quarterfinals, while the girls finished second in Group-D after losing to Hong Kong 1-2 in their final league match. Shaurya Bawa, who won individual bronze, rallied to beat Youssef Sarhan in a five-gamer, while K.S. Arihant avenged his individual event loss to Ewan Harris with an impressive win.

The results: Boys: Pre-quarterfinals: India bt Canada 2-0 (Arihant K.S. bt Ewan Harris 15-13, 12-10, 8-11, 11-2; Shaurya Bawa bt Youssef Sarhan 12-14, 9-11, 11-7, 11-3, 11-1). **Girls: Group-D:** India lost to Hong Kong 1-2 (Nirupama Dubey lost to Helen Tang 4-11, 10-12, 2-11; Anahat Singh bt Ena Kwong 11-8, 9-11, 11-5, 11-7; Shameena Riaz lost to Ka Huen Leung 4-11, 9-11, 10-12).

LIVE TELECAST

Women's Asia Cup: Star Sports 3 & Hotstar, 2 & 7 p.m.
TNPL: Star Sports 1 (SD & HD) & FanCode, 7.15 p.m.

Tarun scores the winner for India

FOOTBALL
Sports Bureau
NEW DELHI

Tarun Kumar scored the match-winner in India's 4-3 victory over Denmark in the Gothia Special Olympics Trophy football tournament in Sweden. The Indian team had earlier beaten Finland 3-0, Germany 6-0, Hong Kong 6-0 and Denmark 3-1 in the league phase. The team played Denmark once again in the final. Tarun, a tenth standard student of Justice Tankha Memorial Rotary Institute

for Special Children in Jabalpur, was groomed by his mother Sangeeta Thakur who took him for football training for the last four years despite limited means. The school founded by Rajya Sabha MP, Vivek Krishna Tankha supported Tarun wholeheartedly right from a young age, and even drafted national level coach Prabhat Rahi to train him. Congratulating Tarun and all the others who were instrumental in his success, Vivek Krishna assured all further support for the lad who had drifted from hockey to football.

Focus is 'speed work' and staying away from injuries, says Reetika

The World under-23 champion travels every week to Sonipat to grapple with men at the Navy centre under the guidance of coach Kuldeep Singh, as finding women sparring partners in her weight group is not easy



Y.B. Sarangi
KOLKATA

World under-23 champion Reetika Hooda, the first Indian woman to qualify for the wrestling heavy weight 76kg, relies on her tried and tested method of training, for her Olympics debut in Paris.

Unlike Olympic-bound wrestlers who train abroad, Reetika has chosen to train under the watchful eyes of her personal coach Mandeep Singh at the Chaudhary Chhoturam Stadium in her hometown Rohtak.

"I have trained under my coach's guidance and tasted success, including qualifying for the Olympics. I tried training in Hungary, but the weather



Familiar environment: Reetika, with her personal coach Mandeep, has chosen to train in her hometown Rohtak instead of travelling abroad. FILE PHOTO

did not suit me, and there were issues related to food. So, I prefer training at home," the Navywoman told *The Hindu*. Reetika, who is backed

by the Reliance Foundation, is careful in the final phase of her preparations. Besides, she is trying her best to get an accreditation for her coach Mandeep.

"The focus is on staying away from injuries. Whenever I feel tired, I take a break so that the body does not get tight. Otherwise, there is a chance of

picking up an injury. The focus is not hard work, but speed work.

"Since finding women sparring partners in 76kg is difficult, I train with men. Every week I go to Sonipat to train at the Navy centre under coach Kuldeep Singh."

Reetika, who earlier competed in 72kg and won an Asian bronze medal last year, jumped four kilograms up with the Olympics in mind. Now, she has grown in confidence after securing a quota place from the Asian qualifying event in Bishkek in April.

A determined Reetika, who comes from a family of Armymen, said: "I beat some reputed wrestlers, to whom I had lost earlier, in the trials. Getting a quota place has boosted my confidence. I understand that the level of competition in the Olympics will be much higher than the world under-23 level. World under-23 silver medallist (Kennedy Blades of the USA) and I qualified for the Olympics because we were capable. I don't bother about the draw and seedings, and look to give my best."



Yuki and Olivetti with the doubles trophy. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Yuki-Olivetti pair clinches Gstaad ATP title

Sports Bureau

Third-seeded Yuki Bhambri and Albano Olivetti overcame a slow start to beat Ugo Humbert and Fabrice Martin 3-6, 6-3, [10-6] in the doubles final of the €651,865 ATP tennis tournament on clay in Gstaad, Switzerland, on Sunday.

The title was worth 250 ATP points and €30,610 for the Indo-French pair.

In the \$60,000 ITF women's event in Portugal, Prarthana Thombare won the doubles title with Arianne Hartono.

Other results: \$60,000 ITF women, Evansville, USA:

Doubles (final): Alicia Linana (Esp) & Melany Krywoj (Arg) bt Hiroko Kuwata (Jpn) & Sahaja Yamalapati 6-2, 6-0.

Coach Bartonietz dismisses Neeraj's fitness concerns ahead of Paris Games

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

The adductor niggles that has troubled Neeraj Chopra in the past couple of months "is fine" now and the reigning Olympic champion has entered the high intensity phase of his Paris preparations, his German coach Klaus Bartonietz said, dismissing concerns surrounding the Indian star's fitness.

The 26-year-old, who scripted history by winning the javelin throw gold at the Tokyo Olympics, is once again the country's best bet for a top podium finish in the Paris Games beginning on July 26.

But his season has been far from perfect in terms of fitness. Bartonietz, however, insisted that things are back on track.

"Everything is according to plan. At the moment, no issue with that (adductor niggles), it's fine, it looks good, hoping to remain like that till the Olympics," the coach, who has been with Chopra for close to five years, said in an exclusive interview from Antalya, Turkey where they



All is well: Bartonietz feels Neeraj, who is into high-intensity preparations for the Olympics, is fine. FILE PHOTO: K.R. DEEPAK

are currently based for training. "It's just over two weeks left in the Olympics, so the intensity of training is high. He is having full throwing sessions."

Chopra has maintained that he is focusing more on training than competitions this time. He is working on strengthening his blocking leg to mitigate pressure on his groin.

"Yes. Generally, javelin

throw is all about it (having fast runway and blocking well). It's very hard to throw far with a poor runway. More the energy you bring with that, the better it is," said the German biomechanics expert.

Chopra competed in five events before Tokyo but in only three ahead of the Paris Games. His coach does not see anything wrong in cutting down

competitions.

Asked about Chopra opting out of the Paris Diamond League on July 7, Bartonietz said, "There were some minor issues, not worth risking by going there. "The venue (of Paris Diamond League) was also not the Olympic stadium (where Chopra will compete on August 6 and 8) anyway, so we decided not to take chances."

Pariat, Abhay extend their domination

MOTORSPORTS

Sports Bureau
CHENNAI

Teenagers Jaden Rahman Pariat and Abhay Mohan won both races in the MRF F2000 and MRF F1600 categories in the MRF MMSC fmsci Indian National Car Racing Championship third round at the Madras International Circuit (MIC) here on Sunday.

With one round remaining, both of them are in a good space to clinch the championship titles in their respective categories.

Provisional results (all 10 laps unless mentioned): MRF F2000: Race-2: 1. Jaden Rahman Pariat 15:48.421s; 2.



Abhay Mohan.

Chetan Surineni 16:13.812; 3. Akhil Agarwal 16:23.584. **Race-3 (8 laps):** 1. Pariat 12:45.676; 2. Chetan 13:00.405; 3. Akhil 13:07.807. **MRF F1600: Race-2:** 1. Abhay Mohan 17:26.053; 2. Zahan Commissariat 17:29.637; 3. Monith Kumaran 17:31.157. **Race-3 (8 laps):** 1. Abhay 13:55.948; 2. Monith 14:05.481; 3. Saishiva Sankaran 14:07.197. **Indian Touring Cars: Race-2:** 1.

Biren Pithawalla (Team N1) 19:07.820; 2. Deepak Ravikumar (Team Performance Racing) 19:13.510. **Race-3 (8 laps):** 1. Biren 15:29.920; 2. Deepak 15:31.302; 3. Anant Pithawalla (N1 Racing) 15:38.100. **Indian Junior Touring Cars: Race-2:** 1. Hatim Shabbir (Team Performance Racing) 19:36.631; 2. Yug Italiya (N1 Racing) 19:48.982; 3. Dean Mascarenhas (DB Motorsports) 20:01528. **Race-3 (8 laps):** 1. Hatim 15:41.300; 2. Srinivas Teja 15:44.905; 3. Yug Italiya 15:56.309. **Super Stock: Race-2:** 1. Bala Prasath (DTS Racing) 20:58.260; 2. Justin Singh (Redline Racing India) 20:58.386; 3. Angad Matharoo 21:04.759. **Race-3 (8 laps):** 1. Justin 16:49.050; 2. Angad 17:04.842; 3. Bala Prasath 17:05.324. **MRF Saloons (Toyota Etios): Race-2:** 1. Kesara Godage

(Redline Racing India) 20:53.702; 2. Anirudha Aravind (Redline Racing India) 21:00.207; 3. Tarushi Vikram (Redline Racing India) 21:03.048. **Race-3 (8 laps):** 1. Godage 16:39.241; 2. Anirudha 16:40.086; 3. Diana Pundole (Redline Racing India) 16:41.460. **Polo Cup: Race-2:** 1. Dhruv Chavan 19:27.389; 2. Ojas Surve 19:29.874; 3. Aditya Patnaik 19:30.348. **Race-3 (8 laps):** 1. Patnaik 15:36.664; 2. Chavan 15:38.699; 3. Surve 15:39.687. **Race-4:** 1. Chavan 19:29.079; 2. Patnaik 19:30.259; 3. Surve 19:30.834. **Formula LGB 1300: Race-2:** 1. Viswas Vijayaraj (DTS Racing) 18:53.663; 2. T.S. Diljit (DTS Racing) 19:01.197; 3. Neev Datta (MSport) 19:02.725. **Race-3 (8 laps):** 1. Viswas 15:09.240; 2. Diljit 15:09.684; 3. Bala Prasath 15:10.103.

1. CON AMORE PLATE (DIV. I) (1,100m), (Terms) Maiden, 3-y-o only (Cat. II), 12:45 p.m.: 1. Amigo (4) Mohit Singh 56, 2. Anemol (12) Neeraj 56, 3. Blazing Saddle (2) P. Sai Kumar 56, 4. Desert Hero (11) Kuldeep Singh (Sr) 56, 5. Nonpariel (9) A.A. Vikrant 56, 6. Rolls Royce (5) R.S. Jodha 56, 7. Sargent (1) Mukesh Kumar 56, 8. Anahita (3) G. Naresh 54.5, 9. Brilliant Blue (7) P. Trevor 54.5, 10. Cutie Pie (10) Rafique Sk. 54.5, 11. Linda (6) Ashad Asbar 54.5 and 12. Star Of Night (8) Sandesh 54.5. **1. STAR OF NIGHT, 2. ANEMOL, 3. BRILLIANT BLUE**

2. CON AMORE PLATE (DIV. II) (1,100m), (Terms) Maiden, 3-y-o only (Cat. II), 1:15: 1. Aashritha Pet (7) P. Sai Kumar 56, 2. Bellingham (4) Akshay Kumar 56, 3. Country's Fire (1) Mukesh Kumar 56, 4. Espionage (3) Kuldeep Singh (Sr) 56, 5. Gatman (12) Mohit Singh 56, 6. Talking Stick (6) Santosh Raj 56, 7. Uchhahishravas (5) G. Naresh 56, 8. Always Special (8) Ashad Asbar 54.5, 9. Clarity (10) P. Trevor 54.5, 10. Genai (11) R.S. Jodha 54.5, 11. Jungle Girl (2) Arjun 54.5 and 12. Skyward (9) B.R. Kumar 54.5. **1. BELLINGHAM, 2. CLARITY, 3. GATMAN**

3. SCARLET PRINCE PLATE (1,400m), 3-y-o and upward, rated 20 to 45 (Cat. III), 1:45: 1. Pinatubo (16) Surya Prakash 60, 2. Warwick (2) Ashad Asbar 60, 3. Ampere's Touch (5) Neeraj 59, 4. Quality Warrior (12) Mukesh Kumar 59, 5. Dapper Look (15) Akshay Kumar 58.5, 6. Oliver's Mount (6) Afroz Khan 58.5, 7. Duke Of Tuscany (1) P. Trevor 58, 8. Star Forever (3) P. Sai Kumar 58, 9. Queen Empress (4) B.R. Kumar 57.5, 10. Crown Witness (7) Santosh Raj 57, 11. Sucker Punch (14) G. Naresh 56.5, 12. Exclusive Spark (9) Mohit Singh 55.5, 13. See My Attitude (13) P. Ajeeth Kumar 52, 14. Wandring Warrior (10) Rafique Sk. 51, 15. London Bell (8) Md. Ekram Alam 50.5 and 16. Tortilla Chip (11) Ajay Kumar 50. **1. DUKE OF TUSCANY, 2. DAPPER LOOK, 3. AMPERE'S TOUCH**

4. ADILABAD PLATE (1,100m), 3-y-o and upward, rated 20 to 45 (Cat. III), 2:15: 1. Dal's Destiny (10) P. Sai Kumar 62, 2. Calista Girl (9) Shivansh 61.5, 3. Deccan Spirit (11) Mohit Singh 59.5, 4. Fatuma (7) Rafique Sk. 59, 5. Born Brave (3) Akshay Kumar 58.5, 6. Calistoga (1) Afroz Khan 58.5, 7. Imperia (6) Deepak Singh 57.5, 8. Golden Inzio (5) Kuldeep Singh (Sr) 55, 9. Noble Heart (4) Likhit Appu 54.5, 10. That's My Love (10) Abhay Singh 53.5, 11. Eminence (2) Md. Ekram Alam 53, 12. Lights On (15) R.S. Jodha 53, 13. Rochelle (13) P. Sai Kumar 53, 14. Black Power (16) Md. Ismail 52.5, 15. Dal's Champion (12) Surya Prakash 51.5 and 16. Battle On (14) Santosh Raj 50. **1. DECCAN SPIRIT, 2. CALISTOGA, 3. BORN BRAVE**

5. P.M. BOKDAWALLA MEMORIAL CUP (DIV. II) (1,200m), 3-y-o and upward, rated 40 to 65 (Cat. III), 2:50: 1. Ragnorok (8) Kuldeep Singh (Sr) 62.5, 2. Briar Ridge (13) A.A. Vikrant 62, 3. Reigning Beauty (9) Mukesh Kumar 61, 4. I. Yes Boss (1) P. Ajeeth Kumar 59.5, 5. Amyra (15) M. Mark 58.5, 6.

Kenaf for first division of Osman Sagar Cup

HYDERABAD: Kenaf, from trainer L. D'Silva's yard, who placed second in her last start, is expected to redeem herself in the upper division of the Osman Sagar Cup, the chief event on Monday (July 22) the opening day of the Hyderabad Monsoon races. There will be no false rails.

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Blazing Gun (2) Mohit Singh 57.5, 7. Wind Sprite (7) B.R. Kumar 56.5, 8. Detective (6) Arjun 55.5, 9. Splendour On Grass (4) Ajay Kumar 55.5, 10. Worcester (16) Afroz Khan 55, 11. Knotty Senoria (4) Ashad Asbar 54, 12. Miracle Mary (10) Sandesh 54, 13. Classical Music (12) Kuldeep Singh (Sr) 53.5, 14. Encore (3) Md. Ekram Alam 53.5, 15. Hopping Star (11) G. Naresh 53 and 16. Kalki (14) Abhay Singh 50. **1. KALKI, 2. MIRACLE MARY, 3. BLAZING GUN**

6. OSMAN SAGAR CUP (DIV. II) (1,200m), 3-y-o and upward, rated 60 to 85 (Cat. II), 3:20: 1. Kingston (5) Md. Ekram Alam 60, 2. Shadow Of The Moon (4) Mukesh Kumar 60, 3. High Command (6) Kuldeep Singh (Sr) 59.5, 4. Last Wish (3) Ashad Asbar 57, 5. High Reward (8) R.S. Jodha 56.5, 6. Miss Little Angel (1) Ajay Kumar 54.5, 7. Enabling (7) Arjun 53.5, 8. N R I Superpower (2) Abhay Singh 53, 9. Sun Dancer (9) Afroz Khan 52.5 and 10. Alexina (10) Santosh Raj 52. **1. MISS LITTLE ANGEL, 2. HIGH COMMAND, 3. LAST WISH**

7. OSMAN SAGAR CUP (DIV. I) (1,200m), 3-y-o and upward, rated 60 to 85 (Cat. II), 3:50: 1. Best Buddy (6) Md. Ekram Alam 60, 2. Painted Apache (2) Ashad Asbar 59, 3. Thanks (3) Shivansh 58.5, 4. Great Guns (8) P. Sai Kumar 57, 5. Anzio (7) P. Trevor 56.5, 6. Lucky Zone (4) Surya Prakash 53.5, 7. Kenaf (1) Afroz Khan 53, 8. Miss Marvellous (10) Abhay Singh 52, 9. Maverick (5) Likhit Appu 50.5 and 10. Miss Maya (9) Akshay Kumar 50.5. **1. KENAF, 2. ANZIO, 3. GREAT GUNS**

8. P.M. BOKDAWALLA MEMORIAL CUP (DIV. I) (1,200m), 3-y-o and upward, rated 40 to 65 (Cat. II), 4:20: 1. Malibu (1) M. Mark 62, 2. Mark My Day (10) R.S. Jodha 62, 3. Proud Mary (12) Deepak Singh 61.5, 4. Adhbut (11) Mukesh Kumar 59.5, 5. Midsummer Star (5) P. Sai Kumar 59.5, 59.5, 6. Magnum (7) Afroz Khan 58, 7. Red Snapper (8) Abhay Singh 56.5, 8. Burgundy Black (2) Surya Prakash 54.5, 9. Exclusive Luck (6) Md. Ismail 54.5, 10. Just Incredible (3) Rafique Sk. 54.5, 11. Nucleus (15) Mohit Singh 54, 12. Sangreal (16) Santosh Raj 54, 13. Wallop And Gallop (13) P. Ajeeth Kumar 54, 14. Divine Prophecy (9) Sandesh 53, 15. Fara (14) G. Naresh 53 and 16. Pontefract (4) Md. Ekram Alam 53. **1. DIVINE PROPHECY, 2. MIDSUMMER STAR, 3. PROUD MARY**

9. TENACITY PLATE (1,200m), 4-y-o and upward, rated upto 25 (Cat. III), 4:50: 1. Catchme If You Can (1) Mohit Singh 60, 2. Exeter (13) Ashad Asbar 60, 3. American Flame (14) Akshay Kumar 59.5, 4. Muaser (15) P. Ajeeth Kumar 59.5, 5. Pancho (2) Shivansh 59.5, 6. Planet Super (16) Kuldeep Singh (Sr) 59.5, 7. Soorya Vahan (8) Ajay Kumar 59, 8. Setastar (9) M. Mark 57.5, 9. Bien Pansant (3) Surya Prakash 57, 10. If You Like It (12) B.R. Kumar 56.5, 11. Stoli (7) Md. Ekram Alam 56.5, 12. Blue Label (11) R.S. Jodha 56, 13. Reining Queen (4) G. Naresh 55.5, 14. Pair Of Wings (10) Abhay Singh 54.5, 15. Politics (6) Md. Ismail 53 and 16. Nav Lakhaa (5) Kuldeep Singh (Sr) 52.5. **1. AMERICAN FLAME, 2. MUASER, 3. EXETER**

Day's Best: KALKI
Jackpot: (i) 1, 2, 3, 4 & 5. (ii) 5, 6, 7, 8 & 9.
Mini Jackpot: (i) 3, 4, 5 & 6. (ii) 6, 7, 8 & 9.
Trebble: (i) 2, 3 & 4, (ii) 4, 5 & 6, (iii) 7, 8 & 9.
Tanala: All races.

Feisty, pugnacious and determined — Gambhir is all that and more

It's precisely these traits that should stand him in good stead as he embarks on a new, exciting challenge that should have far-reaching ramifications for Indian cricket, especially so since the former Indian opener has two and a half years as per the terms of his contract to add greater gravitas to his already not-inconsiderable legacy



K.R. DEEPAK

R. Kaushik

In his prime, Gautam Gambhir batted as if he had a point to prove, not necessarily because he enjoyed the pursuit of runs. Make no mistake, he made runs — plenty of them, generally under pressure. He was India's top scorer during its victories in the final of the T20 World Cup against Pakistan in 2007 and the 50-over World Cup against Sri Lanka in 2011, waged several in-the-trenches battle in Test cricket, most notably in Napier in 2009 and Cape Town in 2011 to secure face-saving draws, and tackled the meanest and the quickest without taking a backward step, the size of his heart in inverse proportion to his diminutive frame.

Feisty, pugnacious and determined were the words that came to mind when the left-hander was going about his business. Most left-handers fall in the elegant, graceful, aesthetically pleasing category. And while Gambhir was no Shivnarine Chanderpaul or Graeme Fowler, he most certainly wasn't David Gower or Brian Lara. Gambhir was no-fuss, intent on getting the job done and not caring if he looked good doing so. It's precisely this trait that should stand him in good stead as he embarks on a new, exciting challenge that should have far-reaching ramifications for Indian cricket.

Unlike the man he idolises and whose work ethic he tried to emulate, Gambhir takes charge of the Indian senior team with little to no previous coaching experience. Rahul Dravid's succession of Ravi Shastri as the head coach in November 2021 was on the back of four years of coaching the India 'A' and Under-19 teams.

No deterrent

Gambhir has been a mentor to IPL franchises Lucknow Super Giants and Kolkata Knight Riders, the defending champion, but he has neither a formal coaching certification nor the tenuous designation of a 'coach'. That shouldn't be a deterrent, just like it wasn't with Shastri or with Anil Kumble, whose successful one-year stint at the helm was sandwiched between Shastri's tenures as team director and head coach.

Gambhir has two and a half years, at least, as per the terms of his contract, to add greater gravitas to his already not-inconsiderable legacy. He might not have been as celebrated as his opening partner and one-time great friend Virender Sehwag, or Mahendra Singh

Dhoni or Virat Kohli — we are not even treading into the Sachin Tendulkar-Dravid-V.V.S. Laxman territory — but he has built up a volume of work second to none.

Nursing a grouse

He perhaps nurtures the grouse that he hasn't got his due, but that's how the cookie crumbles sometimes in professional sport, where glamour quotient counts for plenty and workmanlike efficiency is overlooked, almost taken for granted. Gambhir, and those who played alongside and against him, know the value he brought to the batting crease, the price he put on his wicket, the knocks he took on his body and limb, the bloody-mindedness with which he approached every innings.

Proud champions thrive in the respect of their colleagues and opponents, and while Gambhir the batter might have reason to believe he deserved a greater share of the collective limelight, he will take heart from the fact that oppositions knew they were in for a scrap — sometimes literally — when he marched out, bat in hand, helmet in place, heart bleeding for team and country.

Now in his new capacity, Gambhir has another opportunity to showcase his spunk and spirit. Unlike in the past, he won't be able to do it all on his own. He will have little say in how things unspool once the battle commences, he will oftentimes sit on the outside, frustrated and feeling a little helpless, but that really is the lot of every player-turned-coach who might have been there and done that, but can now only hope that the strategies conceived in the backroom are executed meticulously by those under his command.

It hasn't taken Gambhir long to express his 'authority', though that might not be the most appropriate word given that the Indian cricketing landscape is firm in its conviction that the captain must remain the boss and the coach must complement / augment him rather than staying up front and in the foreground. Greg Chappell found that out the hard way, and those who have succeeded him have assiduously attempted to steer clear of that approach even though India has had several celebrated former cricketers as head coaches. Gambhir will be — will have to be — the proverbial older brother with a benevolent hand around the shoulder in public, even when he is smarting on the inside and dangerously close to blowing a short fuse.

In the appointment of Suryakumar

Yadav as Rohit Sharma's successor at the helm of the 20-over outfit lies a very typical Gambhir hand, pragmatic and practical rather than emotional and sentimental. The majority believed Hardik Pandya, the Mumbai Indians skipper and Rohit's influential deputy at the T20 World Cup in the Americas, would slot in as the natural successor, but in conjunction with Ajit Agarkar's selection panel, Gambhir too was of the view that India would be better served by having a stable leadership figure who could be banked on to be available more often than not.

Hardik is one of those sportspersons burdened with a protesting, uncooperative body despite the fact that he is among the hardest working and is always at peak fitness when he isn't laid low by injuries. A promising Test career has come to a juddering halt after just 11 appearances, the all-rounder reconciled to the reality that his body won't consistently survive the rigours of five-day cricket. He has had numerous injuries, including a few freakish ones, and has played in only 46 of India's 79 T20Is since the beginning of 2022.

That, combined with the pressing necessity to manage his workload, forced the decision-makers to look elsewhere. The nod went to Suryakumar, until recently the No. 1 T20I batter in the world and the most obvious certainty when it comes to the 20-over format. Suryakumar has led India previously in seven T20s and is still learning the ropes, but he has a year and a half to grow into the role ahead of the next World Cup, in 2026 when India will seek to defend its title on home turf.

Gambhir walks straightaway into a packed schedule full of arduous outings. The six-match white-ball tour of Sri Lanka is a nice way to break him in, for in wait over the next year lie five-Test tours of Australia and England, which will bookend the 50-over Champions Trophy, being revived after seven years.

The inclusion in the One-Day International side for the Lankan sojourn of skipper Rohit and Virat Kohli has a Gambhir touch to it; India has only six ODIs before the Champions Trophy and it is imperative that the team most likely to play in that tournament stays together. Towards that end, getting Rohit and Kohli on board when they might have preferred to rest and recharge their batteries — one is only speculating here, mind — is a step in the right direction.

Of the regulars, only the peerless Jasprit Bumrah has been given a break

while the exclusion of Ravindra Jadeja, like Rohit and Kohli recently retired from T20Is, should be construed as potentially the end of his limited-overs international career.

Gambhir has inherited a somewhat ageing Test unit from Dravid, with several key components well into their 30s. Skipper Rohit is 37, Kohli will turn 36 in November, Jadeja is a seasoned 35 and his spin twin R. Ashwin, the country's second highest wicket-taker and one of Gambhir's favourites, will tick over to a ripe 38 in two months' time.

Pace ace Mohammed Shami, who hasn't played any cricket since the 50-over World Cup final on November 19, is closing in on 34. This quintet isn't just any set of five, it's a band of brothers who have been massive figures in Indian cricket for the last decade and more and have played integral roles in the country's climb to the top of the charts across formats.

Process of transition

At some stage, the process of transition will have to gather speed. During Dravid's first, original two-year tenure, only two batters — Shreyas Iyer and Yashasvi Jaiswal — burst through, with a decided emphasis on ageing, fading stars Cheteshwar Pujara and Ajinkya Rahane. Forced through a series of events during the home showdown against England earlier this year, India blooded Rajat Patidar, Sarfaraz Khan, Devdutt Padikkal and Dhruv Jurel with largely encouraging results, so in some ways, the transitory exercise has already started, at least from the batting perspective.

Rohit and Kohli are irreplaceable, of course, but how do India even start to think about a replacement, at some stage, for off-spinner supreme Ashwin? That, more than anything else, will seize the 42-year-old new head coach's attention the most. India has gotten so used to seeing Ashwin weave his magic that he has almost been taken for granted. The prospect of life in Test cricket without the engineer from Chennai is a frightening one, but time stands still for no one and life will go on. Just with who, is the big question.

Gambhir's initial term takes him beyond the 2027 50-over World Cup, which means there is so much at stake, but also so many opportunities for him to show everyone that he is the absolute right choice. Point to prove, remember? This is as good a time as any for Gambhir, the head coach, to invoke the spirit of Gambhir, the feisty, pugnacious batter.

THE GIST

▼ Gambhir takes charge of the Indian senior team with little to no previous coaching experience

▼ His initial term takes him beyond the 2027 50-over World Cup, which means there is so much at stake, but also so many opportunities for him to show everyone that he is the absolute right choice

▼ The former mentor to IPL teams LSG and KKR has inherited a somewhat ageing Test unit from Dravid, with several key components well into their 30s

▼ He also walks straightaway into a packed schedule full of arduous outings

▼ In the appointment of Suryakumar Yadav as Rohit Sharma's successor at the helm of the 20-over outfit lies a very typical Gambhir hand

Data gaps beyond India are holding monsoon forecasts back

The convenience of using the 'all-India monsoon rainfall' index for seasonal outlooks is undermined by the uncertainty India's farmers face at local levels. Our forecasts of rain weeks ahead of a date are getting better but they also increase the demand for even more accurate hyperlocal forecasts

Raghu Murtugudde

We are now in the middle of the monsoon of 2024. The season began on May 30 as expected, but its evolution thus far has sprung some surprises. The rainfall distribution looks as patchy as ever, though with some unexpected patterns. The seasonal outlook provided by the India Meteorological Department (IMD) predicted normal to above-normal rainfall based on the expectation that a La Niña is likely. La Niña, however, appears to be playing truant.

After onset, the northward movement of the monsoon trough seemed to be quite rapid. But then the trough stalled and produced a fairly dry June over large swathes of the country. The entire Western Ghats received below-normal rainfall into July. An unusual pattern of excess rain stretching from south to north persists to this day, with dry patches over large parts of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, and Odisha, as well as north-western India into Jammu and Kashmir.

A useful index with disclaimers

I have used this analogy before, and it still works well. As the sun crosses into the northern hemisphere and starts warming the Indian subcontinent like a popcorn kettle, monsoon systems pop like kernels of corn in the kettle. The temperature inside the kettle will be essentially uniform, but kernels will still pop randomly, here and there.

These kernels are like the rainfall: its patchy pattern is visible in day-to-day data as well as data averaged over the whole season and even over a whole decade.

However, the convenience of using the 'all-India monsoon rainfall' index for seasonal outlooks – as the IMD does – is undermined by the uncertainty India's farmers face at the local level. Our forecasts of rain days or weeks ahead of a given date are getting better, but they concomitantly increase the demand for, and value of, even more accurate and hyperlocal forecasts.

This demand is not only from farmers but also from water managers and energy companies, among others. We need a broader perspective of the monsoon circulation to help understand where the limitations exist and how they can be resolved.

The circulation beyond India

People know the summer monsoon as the "southwest monsoon" because the winds sweep in from the southwest over the



People know the summer monsoon as the 'southwest monsoon' because the winds sweep in from the southwest over the Arabian Sea into mainland India, across the Western Ghats. PTI

Arabian Sea into mainland India, across the Western Ghats. The western edge of the winds grazes the African highlands, and some experts have often argued that they are critical for steering the south westerly winds. The active Bay of Bengal, which is full of convective events, can be expected to 'pull' the winds towards India as well. Convection in the atmosphere refers to rain events that release condensation heat.

The heating over West Asia and even the dust from the deserts there contribute to the monsoon circulation, and its variability, as well as the changes it is experiencing due to global warming. Pakistan is very much a part of the monsoon circulation and it experiences high rainfall variability. This is because the edges of the monsoon circulation tend to be highly variable.

The land encompassed by the Himalayan foothills, and thus Nepal and Bhutan, as well as the eastern edge of the Bay of Bengal (including Myanmar), is also involved in regulating the monsoon and the transfer of its heat to the Indian subcontinent. Bangladesh is, of course, ensconced between Northeast India and mainland India. We don't pay attention to the role of heating over Bangladesh or the ocean-land-atmosphere dynamics that create the beautiful monsoon and its heartbreaking vagaries every year.

The heating centres over the subcontinent are very strong, and they maintain a sustained demand for moisture to sustain the convection centres. Indeed, the circulation that



After onset, the northward movement of the monsoon trough seemed to be quite rapid. But then the trough stalled and produced a fairly dry June over large swathes of the country. The entire Western Ghats received below-normal rainfall into July

sweeps the oceans and the subcontinent cannot be represented accurately in rainfall models unless we capture all the heating centres from Pakistan and West Asia in the west to Myanmar in the east, and the Indian Ocean from about 10 degrees south to its northern edge against the subcontinent.

Detail gaps beyond India's borders

As hard as the IMD and its labs are working to improve their monsoon forecasting abilities at all timescales, their efforts are also undermined by a lack of rainfall and other weather data over parts of the subcontinent beyond India. Satellites can help to some extent, but the amount of data available in near real-time to initiate forecasts is often quite inadequate.

These rainfall models are global for most subcontinent-scale forecasts, even though the IMD also develops regional model forecasts at the level of cities, and at the national scale. The global models ingest data about the oceans and the

planetary atmosphere to initiate forecasts, and the volume of data can appear to be large and adequate – but this is often not the case.

Monitoring the whole subcontinent

India has been fortunate enough to have a rainfall monitoring network since the 19th century, and the advantages are now bearing fruit with investments in forecasting infrastructure. At this point, we need a few important steps to reach the next level in forecast accuracy. This is also essential to sustain continuous economic growth for India, especially in terms of food, water, and energy security.

In fact, even our national security depends heavily on weather and climate forecasts – for India as well as for the country's more climate-vulnerable neighbours. Debilitating natural disasters can quickly turn into national security concerns, especially with some neighbours having to seek aid from non-allies.

India does share its forecasts with some countries, but it may benefit more by extending this strategy to also establish a broad network to monitor weather and climate across the subcontinent. Improved forecasts for the subcontinent will make everybody safer and less vulnerable. This can only mean better opportunities for safety for all, including food, water, and energy, as well as better health.

(Raghu Murtugudde is a professor, IIT Bombay, and Emeritus Professor, University of Maryland.)

THE GIST

The demand for accurate forecasts is not only from farmers but also water managers and energy companies. We need a broader perspective of the monsoon circulation to help understand where the limitations exist

The heating centres over the subcontinent maintain a demand for moisture. Circulation from the oceans and subcontinent can't be represented accurately unless we capture data from Pakistan, West Asia, Myanmar, and the Indian Ocean

India has had rainfall monitoring since the 19th century. Now we need to take a few important steps to reach the next level in forecast accuracy. This is essential to sustain economic growth

BIG SHOT



A drone view shows thousands of dead fish killed by contamination in the environment protection area of Taqua on the Piracicaba river in the state of Sao Paulo, Brazil on Thursday. REUTERS

WHAT IS IT?

Dyson sphere: an energy devourer

Arkatapa Basu

Imagine you are an astronomer looking deep into space in search of extraterrestrial life. You spot a star that is emitting infrared radiation in anomalous fashion. You zoom in and see a swarm of solar panels covering the star like a shell, quietly collecting an enormous amount of solar energy from the star. Et voila: you have found a Dyson sphere.

The Dyson sphere is named after theoretical physicist Freeman Dyson (1923-2020), who hypothesised its existence. He said that technologically advanced civilisations will have such a tremendous demand for energy that they will have to harness the entire radiative power of a star, using solar energy collectors arranged in a sphere around the orb.

Dyson also figured that these spheres would emit excess heat from the star as infrared radiation, which he said astronomers could look for as an indirect sign of intelligent life – especially life capable of building such megastructures.

Of course, not all unusual infrared radiation emissions are indicative of Dyson spheres. In May this year, scientists set out to look specifically for the signature of



Freeman Dyson said that technologically advanced civilisations will harness the entire radiative power of a star.

Dyson spheres. They scanned 5 million stars within 1,000 light years of the earth. After analysing this data, they found seven stars whose infrared radiation they could not explain. There is no conclusive evidence still, but might one of these seven stars have a Dyson sphere surrounding it?

For feedback and suggestions for 'Science', please write to science@thehindu.co.in with the subject 'Daily page'