



**THIRD-HIGHEST EVER**  
GST collections cross  
₹1.82 lakh cr. in July  
BUSINESS » PAGE 15



**NEW PARLIAMENT BUILDING**  
Leaking roof  
triggers  
Opposition  
attacks  
NEWS » PAGE 13



**MULTIPLE CLOUDBURSTS**  
Four dead, 49 missing  
in Himachal Pradesh  
NEWS » PAGE 12

**PARLEY**  
**Is Centre being iniquitous in State transfers?**  
*Is Opposition's concern about bias valid?*  
OPINION » PAGE 9



**CRUISE CONTROL**  
Lakshya moves into the quarterfinals  
SPORT » PAGE 18

## Swapnil guns down third shooting medal for India



**On target:** It was Swapnil Kusale's turn on Thursday to win a shooting medal in Paris after Manu Bhaker and Sarabjot Singh. He won a bronze in the 50-metre rifle 3 position event. RITU RAJ KONWAR



**SAMMAAN CAPITAL**  
Ab hoga desh ka sapna poora, Sammaan Se!  
Jiyo Sammaan Se  
Formerly known as **Indiabulls HOME LOANS**  
Indiabulls Housing Finance Limited

**Jonathan Selvaraj**  
PARIS

Swapnil Kusale had an Olympic debut to remember, winning a bronze – India's third medal of the Games – in the men's 50m rifle 3 position event on Thursday. The 29-year-old from Kambalwadi, near Kolha-

pur, was lying in fifth place at the end of the kneeling and prone segments of the event – a whole one point behind the third-place shooter. He would then find his rhythm in the standing position even as those around him lost theirs. Jiri Privratsky of the Czech Republic, who was

in the fourth place, and Jon Herman Hegg of Norway, who was in the lead at the start of the series, both fell behind him and Swapnil held on to take a career-defining medal behind Serhiy Kulish of Ukraine and Liu Yukun of China.

**FULL REPORT**  
» PAGE 17

## States can sub-classify SCs for quotas: top court

Supreme Court holds that sub-categorisation within a class is a constitutional requirement to secure substantive equality, if the social position of the constituents is not comparable

**Krishnadas Rajagopal**  
NEW DELHI

In a 6:1 majority judgment on Thursday, a seven-judge Constitution Bench of the Supreme Court, headed by Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud, held that the States have the right to sub-classify Scheduled Castes notified in the Presidential List to provide them more preferential treatment in public employment and education.

Referring to how a nine-judge Bench in the *Indra Sawhney* case had held it constitutional to classify the backward class into "backward" and the "more backward", Chief Justice Chandrachud said the same principle would apply to the SCs.

"The principle of sub-classification will be applicable to Scheduled Castes if the social position of the constituents among the castes/groups is not comparable... Sub-categorisation within a class is a constitutional requirement to secure substantive equality," he said.

### Why sub-classification?

Here are the salient points of the Supreme Court judgment:

- Scheduled Castes are not an 'indivisible monolith'
- They are composed of heterogeneous groups of castes, races or tribes with varying degrees of backwardness
- The States can further classify them, if there is a rational principle for differentiation and if the rational principle has a nexus with the purpose of sub-classification
- States have to produce data to support their claim that a sub-class required more beneficial treatment

He, however, remained silent on introducing the creamy layer principle to the SCs and STs.

### 'Creamy layer principle'

Four of the seven judges on the Bench separately said the government should extend the "creamy layer principle" to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, as in the case of the Other Backward Classes (OBC) category. It was necessary to exclude affluent individuals or families from the benefits of reservation and make room for the underprivileged within these classes, they said.

"The State must evolve a policy for identifying the

creamy layer even from the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes so as to exclude them from the benefit of affirmative action. In my view, only this and this alone can achieve the real equality as enshrined under the Constitution... Can a child of IAS/IPS or civil service officers be equated with a child of a disadvantaged member belonging to Scheduled Castes, studying in a gram panchayat/zilla parishad school in a village," Justice B.R. Gavai asked.

The view was backed by Justices Vikram Nath, Pankaj Mithal and Satish Chandra Sharma. Chief Justice Chandra-

chud's joint opinion with Justice Misra that it was constitutionally permissible for the States to sub-classify groups among Scheduled Castes was backed by four other judges. Justice Gavai opined that the unequals have to be treated unequally to bring "real equality".

"It is the duty of the State to give preferential treatment to the backward class of citizens who are not adequately represented," Justice Gavai said.

Justice Bela Trivedi remained the lone dissenter on the Bench, saying the States did not have the power to tinker with the Presidential List of Scheduled Castes.

The Constitution Bench judgment followed a reference made to the seven-judge Bench in 2020 to examine the constitutionality of the Tamil Nadu Arunthachiyars Reservation Act, 2009 and the Punjab Scheduled Castes and Backward Classes (Reservation in Services) Act, 2006.

**CONTINUED ON**  
» PAGE 12

### IN BRIEF



#### 'Railways will soon add 2,500 general coaches'

**NEW DELHI**  
Union Railways Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said on Thursday that the national transporter would add nearly 2,500 coaches in general compartments in the coming months. » Page 13

#### Shahi Idgah row: HC dismisses Muslim side's plea

**NEW DELHI**  
The Allahabad HC on Thursday dismissed the petition filed by the Shahi Idgah committee challenging maintainability of 18 lawsuits initiated by Hindu devotees seeking worship rights and even removal of the mosque in Mathura. » Page 14

#### Six die after Delhi receives torrential rain

**NEW DELHI**  
Six persons died in Delhi in the 24-hour period ending at 5.30 p.m. on Thursday, during which the city received over 100 mm of rainfall. » Page 2

## No one alive in Wayanad disaster zone: Army

**E.M. Manoj**  
MEPPADI (WAYANAD)

The teams engaged in rescue and search operations at landslide-hit Chooralmala in Wayanad have recovered 189 bodies – 85 men, 76 women and 27 children – and 100 body parts from various locations, the Revenue Department said. The gender of a deceased is yet to be identified.

All those stranded in the area have been evacuated and shifted to hospitals and relief camps, Major General V.T. Mathew, Sub-area General Officer Commanding, Kerala and Karnataka, who is coordinating the Army's rescue operations, said.

Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan visited the site and



**Massive efforts:** NDRF and Fire and Rescue personnel searching for bodies at Chooralmala in Wayanad on Thursday. THULASI KAKKAT

interacted with the officials of the Central forces. At an all-party meeting chaired by Mr. Vijayan, Major General Mathew informed the government that the odds were that no one was left alive in the disaster zone. The Army completed the construction of a Bailey

bridge linking Mundakkai and Chooralmala on Thursday.

Forest officials rescued several families stranded in a cave deep inside a forest following a landslide near Attamala. Braving heavy rain, the rescue team carried children to safety with

the help of ropes.

As many as 234 individuals rescued from the disaster zone were shifted to various hospitals. The Kerala State Disaster Management Authority and other agencies are working relentlessly to speed up rescue operations and provide relief to those in need, despite the inclement weather.

### Death toll rises

Unconfirmed reports put the death toll at 295. Forensic experts have carried out post-mortem examination of 252 bodies and body parts. As many as 153 bodies and body parts were retrieved from various places along the banks of the Chaliyar river in Malappuram district. More than 1,800 per-

sonnel of the Indian Coast Guard Disaster Relief Team, the Indian Army, Navy, NDRF, SDRF, Military Engineering group, Territorial army, Fire and Rescue Services from Tamil Nadu and Kerala and local authorities, apart from the volunteers of various NGOs, are active in rescue operations.

Congress leaders Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra visited the landslide-affected people on Thursday. West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee announced that two Trinamool Congress MPs would visit Wayanad to help in relief and rehabilitation.

**MORE REPORTS**  
» PAGE 5

## T.N. fisherman dies in bid to evade arrest by Sri Lanka

**Meera Srinivasan**  
**L. Srikrishna**  
COLOMBO/RAMESWARAM

An Indian fisherman from Tamil Nadu died early on Thursday after his fishing boat capsized in Sri Lankan waters while resisting arrest by a Sri Lankan Navy patrol vessel, authorities said in Colombo.

While a search operation is under way to find another fisherman, the Sri Lankan Navy arrested two others from the capsized boat.

India summoned a senior Sri Lankan diplomat in New Delhi to register its "strong protest" over the incident, while leaders of

### India summoned a senior Sri Lankan diplomat in New Delhi to register its 'strong protest'

the fishing community in Rameswaram demanded that the government register a murder case against Sri Lankan Navy personnel.

Confirming the development, Sri Lankan Navy spokesperson Captain Gayan Wickramasooriya told *The Hindu* that the fishermen had resorted to "aggressive manoeuvres" when the Navy patrol units attempted to apprehend their boat on charges of il-

legal fishing in Sri Lankan waters.

"There were 10 to 15 Indian trawlers early this morning (August 1, 2024). When our patrol boat tried capturing one, the fishermen on board tried to escape. Their boat capsized, and the four fishermen fell into the sea. One was seriously injured and taken to the hospital in Punguduttivu [off Jaffna peninsula], where he died. One more fisherman is missing, a search operation is on. Two were rescued safely and are in our custody," he said.

**CONTINUED ON**  
» PAGE 12

## CRPF to replace 2 battalions of Assam Rifles in Manipur; plea to review move

**Vijaita Singh**  
NEW DELHI

The Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) is all set to replace two battalions of the Assam Rifles in the hill districts of Churachandpur and Kangpokpi in violence-hit Manipur, a government official told *The Hindu*.

Around 2,000 personnel of the oldest paramilitary force will be moved to the Jammu region.

Tribal groups have opposed the move. The Kuki Students' Organisation (KSO) said "Assam Rifles af-

ter years of effort and dedication won the hearts and minds of the hill people".

Ever since ethnic violence erupted in the State on May 3, 2023, the deployment of the Assam Rifles and State police in vulnerable areas has been a bone of contention between the tribal Kuki-Zo people and the Meitei community.

Meitei civil society groups and MLAs have said in many "sensitive areas", the Assam Rifles personnel are not responsive and remain mute spectators when unarmed civilians are fired

upon. In January, 34 MLAs passed a resolution stating, "These forces and their leadership (chain of command) need to give strict instructions and be held accountable and replaced with forces that have the ability to act by returning suppressive fire when they observe that unarmed civilians are being fired upon, to enable civilians to get to cover and safety."

The Kuki-Zo groups said the decision is against the will of the local population and the government needs to reconsider the move.

## IMD forecasts above-normal rain in Aug., Sept.

**Jacob Koshy**  
NEW DELHI

Amid rain-triggered landslides killing over 200 people in Wayanad of Kerala, and intense spells battering Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) has forecast above-normal rain in August and September.

August, the second rainiest monsoon month, is expected to receive normal rainfall, and September more rainfall than the average 17 cm every year if the IMD forecast of an "above-normal second half" of the



**Knee-deep in trouble:** Autorickshaws struggle to negotiate a waterlogged road in New Delhi. SHASHI SHEKHAR KASHYAP

monsoon comes true. "The rainfall averaged over the entire country from August to September is likely to be above normal

(>106% of the Long Period Average (LPA)," the agency said in a statement on Thursday. In recent years, rainfall

has been increasing in September and this could damage standing crops.

"Our weather models suggest that La Nina or La Nina-like conditions are likely to develop towards the end of August. So this could mean more rain in September [than normal]," said Mrutyunjay Mohapatra, Director-General, IMD. Unusually heavy rain in September and October, when the monsoon officially retreats, can alter winter sowing and spike air pollution in northern India.

July, the rainiest monsoon month, recorded 30.5 cm of rainfall when

averaged across the country, or nearly 9% more than normal. This is in line with the agency's forecast on Thursday, when it said that rain during the month would be "above normal", meaning 6% or more than usual.

Indications that Kerala would receive very heavy rain were issued beginning July 29, Mr. Mohapatra said. "We issued an orange alert on the 29th, which is a sign to authorities to take preparatory action. States should not wait for a red alert. Following that on July 30 early morning, we issued a red alert," he said.

## 3 die from electrocution in Gurugram's IFFCO Chowk

The Hindu Bureau  
GURUGRAM

Three pedestrians were electrocuted to death after they came in contact with a high-voltage wire on a waterlogged footpath near IFFCO Chowk Metro Station late Wednesday evening, said the Gurugram police on Thursday. The deceased have been identified as Wasim, 55, of Delhi's Sangam Vihar; Jaipal, 34, of

Haryana's Mahendragarh; and Devesh of U.P.'s Unnao.

The wire was snapped by an uprooted tree and fell onto the footpath, said the police, adding that the three, who worked at separate firms in Manesar, were electrocuted while walking to the metro station.

An officer said the incident did not appear to be a case of negligence and occurred due to the uprooting of the tree.

# 24-hour-long nightmare: 6 persons died after city received torrential rain

3 persons died from electrocution, 2 drowned, and one lost his life in a roof collapse in 24-hour period during which Delhi received 100 mm of rainfall; Capital likely to receive light rain today

Alisha Dutta  
Samridhi Tewari  
NEW DELHI

Six persons died in Delhi in the 24-hour period ending at 5.30 p.m. on Thursday, during which the city received over 100 mm of rainfall.

Three of the victims died from electrocution, two drowned in a drain, and one person lost his life in a house collapse.

2,945 traffic jam calls The Delhi police said their control rooms received 2,945 calls related to traffic jams, 127 related to waterlogging, 27 regarding building collapse, and 50 about trees falling during the 24-hour period.

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) said the city's primary weather station at Safdarjung recorded a rainfall of 107 mm.

The weather station at Pusa Road near Old Rajinder Nagar, where three students drowned in a coaching centre's basement on July 27, received 86 mm of rainfall, causing waterlogging outside the institute again. The IMD termed the rain spell "extremely in-



A man died in north Delhi's Sabzi Mandi after the roof of his house collapsed following the heavy downpour. SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

ill-equipped to rescue the two and that it was their family, not the police, which rushed the mother and son to Lal Bahadur Shastri Hospital, where they were declared dead on arrival.

The police have lodged an FIR under 106 (I) (death due to negligence) of the BNS.

In the second incident, a 12-year-old boy got electrocuted while returning home from his tuition in Dwarka's Bindapur area. A senior officer said the boy ventured into a waterlogged road near his residence after waiting a long time for the rain to stop. He

died after coming in contact with live wires hanging from a wall near his residence. Subsequently, he was taken to Indira Gandhi Hospital, where he was declared dead on arrival.

The area discom, BSES, said its team had shut off power in the area following the rain and that no electrical leakage was found at the premises.

Another case of death from electrocution was reported from south-east Delhi's Jaitpur, where Prabhath, 28, died on the terrace of his house. DCP (South East) Rajesh Deo said Prabhath went to his terrace while it was raining and suffered an electric shock due to current leaking from his water tank alarm system.

In the third case, Anil, 18, suffered a fatal shock near his accommodation in south Delhi's Sangam Vihar. DCP (South) Ankit Chauhan said Anil, who worked as a rag-picker, had gone out to buy vegetables when he collapsed near his house.

A fatality was also reported from north Delhi's Sabzi Mandi, where Anil Gupta died from injuries sustained after the roof of his house collapsed.

## 'Not me': MCD, DDA spar over who is in charge of drain where mother, son drowned

Satvika Mahajan  
NEW DELHI

A day after a woman and her eight-year-old son drowned in a drain after a heavy rain spell, the Delhi Development Authority (DDA) and the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) traded charges over the incident, with each agency claiming that the responsibility of maintaining the drain lay with the other.

Tanuja and her three-year-old son Priyansh slipped and fell into a waterlogged drain near Khoda Colony in Ghazipur around 8 p.m. on Wednesday.

While the civic body claimed that "the DDA has constructed the drain", the urban body said, "The tragic incident happened in the area pertaining to MCD".

The deaths also prompted a war of words between the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) and the BJP. AAP's Rajya Sabha member Sanjay Singh said the deaths were not accidents but a "murder". Delhi BJP chief Virendra Sachdeva said the incident highlighted how the city's sewage and stormwater drainage systems "have completely collapsed".

The Congress said Delhi Ministers should take emergency steps to prevent the recurrence of such incidents instead of "indulging in blame games".

As per the statement issued by the DDA, the total length of the drain along the Khoda Colony is 1,350 metres. Out of this, 1,000 metres was handed over to the MCD a "considerable time ago", it said. "The remaining 350 metres of the drain... is under the jurisdiction of the DDA," stated the urban body.

On the other hand, Mayor Shelly Oberoi said, "As per sources, the drain belongs to the DDA. We will give orders to officials to investigate the matter and present a report."

AAP held a protest against the Lieutenant-Governor, who is also the DDA Chairperson, near the site of the incident. "The DDA under the L-G is directly responsible for this incident," said Mr. Singh.

Hitting back, Mr. Sachdeva said, "Not even a single truck of silt was disposed of by the Irrigation Department, the PWD, and the DJB. This indicates that no de-silting work has taken place."

### CLASSIFIEDS MART

TO ADVERTISE VISIT  
www.thehinduads.com  
CALL: 011-43579738 # 011-43579797

### EDUCATIONAL

### GENERAL

SOCIOLOGY EVALUATORS required. Send resume to socioca2@gmail.com

### PERSONAL

### CHANGE OF NAME

I, Chatar Singh R/O J-1401, Rivera, Eldeco Green Meadows, Pocket C Sec P1, Greater Noida, UP 201308 declare that the name of my Son is Purshotham Singh and his DOB is 09/04/2010.

I, Chatar Singh s/o Joge Ram R/O J-1401, Rivera, Eldeco Green Meadows, Pocket C Sec P1, Greater Noida, UP 201308 declare that my another name is Chatar Singh and Chatar Singh and Chatar Singh are one and the same person.

### LEGAL NOTICE

District and Sessions Judge, Shahdara, KKD IN THE COURT OF Sh. Deepanker Mohan District Judge-04, (Shahdara District) Room No.306, 3rd Floor, Karkardooma Courts, Delhi-110032 PC/1/2024 Shobha Pahwa Vs The State of Govt. of NCR of Delhi Next Date: 20-08-2024

1. Smt. Shobha Pahwa W/o Sh. Raj Kumar Pahwa R/O House No. X/927, Prem Gall 3A, Gandhi Nagar, Delhi-110031.

VERSUS

1. The State (Govt. of NCR of Delhi) Through Its Chief Secretary, Delhi Secretariat, L.P. Estate, Delhi

2. Kanta Rani W/o Sh. Anup Kumar R/O House No. X/927, Prem Gall No.2, Gandhi Nagar, Delhi-110031.

3. Smt. Tushi Devi W/o Late Sh. Shyam Lal R/O House No. X/945, Prem Gall No.3, Gandhi Nagar, Delhi-110031.

4. Smt. Dayanwati W/o Sh. Tej Pal R/O House No. 196, Ward No.11, Near Gas Agency & Gurudwara, School, Asand, Himachal Pradesh.

5. Smt. Keshar W/o Sh. Ram Prakash Mehta R/O House No.173, Ward No.11, Near Gas Agency & Gurudwara, School, Asand, Himachal Pradesh.

6. Smt. Bhagwati Bajaj W/o Sh. Prem Bajaj R/O House No. X/945, Prem Gall No.3C, Gandhi Nagar, Delhi-110031.

7. Smt. Mohini Devi W/o Sh. Ranjit Mehta R/O 8/13, Geeta Colony, Delhi-110031.

Citation for publication of petition under Section 27(a) of the Indian Succession Act, for grant of Probate in respect of Will dated 16.05.2002 of Late Sh. Teerath Ram S/o Khema Ram, R/O IX/793, Prem Gall 3 E, Murtani Mohalla, Gandhi Nagar, Delhi-110031.

Whereas the date 20.08.2024 has been fixed for hearing of the case, notice is hereby given that person having any interest in the said petition concerned may if he/she desire in this Court on 20.08.2024 at 10 am and see the proceedings.

GIVEN under my hand and the seal of this court on this 17.02.2024.

District Judge-04 (Shahdara District) Karkardooma courts, Delhi-110032

### PUBLIC NOTICE

### PUBLIC NOTICE

Subject: Confirmation of Ownership of M-261, Greater Kailash - II, New Delhi-110048 in respect of 100% upon share Smt. Darshan Khanna W/o Sh. Parshotham Kumar Khanna (Sh. P.K. Khanna) Smt. Darshan Khanna was the owner of the subject cited property to the extent of 100% share, as per record she died on 27 April 2014 and she had executed an unregistered Will, leaving behind the only first class legal heir, namely Sh. Rajiv Khanna (Sole Surviving Son) and there is no other legal heir except him. Sh. Rajiv Khanna S/o Sh. Parshotham Kumar Khanna (Sh. P.K. Khanna), R/O No. 61, Greater Kailash - II, New Delhi - 110048, as the sole legal heir and owner of the subject cited property, intends to obtain a House Construction Loan from ICICI Bank Limited, Sushant Lok Branch, 025A, Unitech Trade Centre, Sector Road, Gurgaon - 22002, against the mortgage of the title deed of the subject cited property. If any person is having objection against the ownership title of Sh. Rajiv Khanna and / or to the mortgage of the title deed of the subject cited property, he/she may submit objections in writing to the Credit Manager, ICICI Bank Limited, Sushant Lok Branch, along with supporting documents within 30 days from the date of publication of this notice. Otherwise the Credit Manager, ICICI Bank Limited, Sushant Lok Branch will disburse the House Construction Loan against the mortgage of the title deed of the subject cited property as per its policy and may not entertain subsequent claim if any.

Legal Heir: Rajiv Khanna

For enquiries on announcements in CLASSIFIEDS MART please contact our office at the following number between 10a.m. to 8p.m.

New Delhi : 011- 43579797

For Placing Advertisements Online log on to

www.thehinduads.com

### EDUCATIONAL

### GENERAL

**HISTORYS.BALIYAN** REGULAR OFFLINE / ONLINE CLASSES | WEBSITE: INSIGHTDELHI.COM | SEATS ARE LIMITED, ENROL IMMEDIATELY

NEW BATCHES COMMENCE 12 AUG. INSIGHT 73, OLD RAJINDER NAGAR NEW DELHI - 110060 011-45090051, 9818333201

### Office of the Superintending Engineer, 3rd Circle, HPPWD, Solan. Himachal Pradesh Public Works Department.

#### NOTICE INVITING TENDER (NIT)

On the basis of e-procurement notice issued by Chief Engineer, Shimla Zone HPPWD Nigam Vihar Shimla on behalf of Governor of Himachal Pradesh invites the percentage rate bids, in electronic tendering system, for construction of bridges under Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana-III for each of the works including their maintenance for five years from the eligible and approved Contractors registered with HP PWD, in the appropriate class (A) or equivalent category in CPWD/ MES/ Railways and other State Govt. and Central Govt. Departments. Non-registered bidders may submit bids; however, the successful bidders must get registered in appropriate class with appropriate authorities before signing the contract.

| S. No | Division | Package No. | Name of Road  | Estimated Cost Excluding GST (Rs in Lakh) | Total Cost excluding GST (Rs in Lakh) | Bid Security (Rs in Lakh) | Completion Period |
|-------|----------|-------------|---|---|---------------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|
| 1     | Arki     | HP-11-176A  | Construction of 4.0m Span RCC T-Beam Bridge over Arki Khad at Sayarda pul at RD-2/430   | 260.58                                    | 0.62                                  | 261.20                    | 5.22              |
| 2     | Nalagarh | HP-11-168A  | C/O 2 Span (16 M each RCC T-beam bridge over Bhatoli khad at RD 3/355 on link road from Reru Jhirivaba Aduwal Janduri (T-05) from Km 0/0 to 8/205 Under PMGSY-III (Batch-II)          | 299.16                                    | 1.92                                  | 301.08                    | 6.02              |
| 3     | Nalagarh | HP-11-166A  | C/O RCC T-beam bridge three Span (19.75 M each) over Kotla kalan Khad at RD 4.935 on link road from Baroona to Phalahi (T-08) from Km 0/0 to 5/500. Under PMGSY-III (Batch-II)        | 490.52                                    | 1.13                                  | 491.65                    | 9.83              |
| 4     | Nalagarh | HP-11-167A  | C/O 2 Span (22 M each RCC T-beam bridge over Retar khad at RD 5/160 on link road from Palli Ratar Thala Rajwain Chanabari (T-15) road from Km 0/0 to 6/220 Under PMGSY-III (Batch-II) | 377.92                                    | 1.58                                  | 379.50                    | 7.59              |

- Date of release of Invitation for Bids through e-procurement: 02.08.2024.
- Cost of Bid Form: Cost of Bid form is Rs. 5000/-in the shape of Demand Draft in favour of Executive Engineer, HPPWD, Division Arki & Nalagarh.
- Availability of Bid Document and mode of submission: The bid document is available online and bid should be submitted online on website www.pmgstenders.gov.in. The bidder would be required to register in the web-site which is free of cost. For submission of bids, the bidder is required to have valid Digital Signature Certificate (DSC) from one of the authorized Certifying Authorities (CA). "Aspiring bidders who have not obtained the user ID and password for participating in e-tendering in PMGSY may obtain the same from the website: www.pmgstenders.gov.in. Digital signature is mandatory to participate in the e-tendering. Bidders already possessing the valid digital signature issued from authorized CAs can use the same in this tender. \* Non-registered bidders may submit bids; however, the successful bidders must get registered in appropriate class with appropriate authorities before signing the contract.
- Submission of Original Documents: The bidders are required to submit (a) original Demand Draft towards the cost of bid document and (b) original bid security in approved form and (c) original affidavit regarding correctness of information furnished with bid document as per provisions of Clause 4.4B(a) (ii) of ITB with Superintending Engineer, 3rd Circle HPPWD, Solan, on a date not later than three working days from the date of opening of technical qualification part of the Bid, either by registered post or by hand.
- Last Date / Time for receipt of bids through e-tendering: Last date /time for receipt of bids through e-tendering of above mentioned works are as follows:-

| Sr. No. | Package No.                                     | Last date/time for receipt of bids through e-tendering. |
|---------|---|---|
| 1.      | HP-11-176A, HP-11-168A, HP-11-166A & HP-11-167A | 30.08.2024 at 11:00 AM                                  |

- The site for the work is available.
- Only online submission of bids is permitted, therefore; bids must be submitted online on website www.pmgstenders.gov.in. The technical qualification part of the bids will be opened online at 11:30 A.M Hours on above mentioned date in the office of Superintending Engineer, 3rd Circle HPPWD Solan by the authorized officers. If the office happens to be closed on the date of opening of the bids as specified, the bids will be opened online on the next working day at the same time.
- The bidder is not required to quote his rate for routine maintenance. The rates to be paid for routine maintenance are indicated in the Bill of Quantities. Further, the payment for routine maintenance to the contractor shall be regulated based on his performance of maintenance activities. All the required materials like Cement/Steel/Bitumen/Explosive etc shall be arranged by Contractor at his own level.
- The bids for the work shall remain valid for acceptance for a period not less than ninety days after the deadline date for bid submission.
- To qualify for a package of contract made up of this for which bids are invited in the same NIT, the bidder must demonstrate having experience and resources sufficient to meet the aggregate of the qualifying criteria for the individual contracts.
- Other details can be seen in the bidding documents. The Employer shall not be held liable for any delays due to system failure beyond its control. Even though the system will attempt to notify the bidders of any bid updates, the Employer shall not be liable for any information not received by the bidder. It is the bidders' responsibility to verify the website for the latest information related to the tender.

(Er. Ajay Sharma)  
Superintending Engineer, HPPWD, 3rd Circle Solan  
Tel 01792-220675, Fax 01792-223802  
E-mail hp-sol@nic.in  
For Chief Engineer HPPWD Shimla  
Nirman Bhawan, Nigam Vihar Shimla -171002

HP / 1178/24-25 HIM SUCHNA AVAM JAN SAMPARK

### कार्यपालक अभियंता का कार्यालय ग्रामीण विकास विशेष प्रमंडल, बोकारो

ई-विनिदा आमंत्रण सूचना  
ई- अल्पकालीन निविदा सूचना संख्या - RDD/SD/BOKARO/23/2024-25  
1. कार्य की विस्तृत विवरणी :

| क्र० सं० | कार्य का नाम   | प्राक्कलित राशि | अग्रगण की राशि | परिमाण विपत्र का मूल्य | कार्य पूर्ण करने की अवधि |
|----------|--|-----------------|----------------|------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1        | बोकारो जिला अंतर्गत नावाडीह प्रखण्ड, पंचायत भंडरा के रासायनिक मंगलागौरी मंदिर के पास जमुनिया नदी पर पुल निर्माण। (लम्बाई 135.56 मी०) | 53445300.00     | 1069000.00     | 10000.00               | 24 माह                   |

- वेबसाइट में निविदा प्रकाशन की तिथि - 08.08.2024
- ई-निविदा प्रारंभ की तिथि एवं समय - दिनांक 08.08.2024 से दिनांक 16.08.2024 को अपराह्न 5:00 बजे तक
- ई-निविदा खोलने का स्थान - कार्यपालक अभियंता का कार्यालय, ग्रामीण विकास विशेष प्रमंडल, बोकारो।
- ई-निविदा खोलने की तिथि एवं समय - 20.08.2024 अपराह्न 2:00 बजे
- ई-निविदा आमंत्रित करने वाले पदाधिकारी का नाम एवं पता :- कार्यपालक अभियंता, ग्रामीण विकास विशेष प्रमंडल, बोकारो।
- ई-निविदा प्रकोष्ठ का दूरभाष सं० - 06542 291060 (संबंधित कार्यपालक अभियंता का दूरभाष नम्बर)
- परिमाण विपत्र की राशि घट-बढ़ सकती है तदनुसार अग्रगण की राशि देय होगी।
- निविदा शुल्क एवं अग्रगण की राशि केवल Online Mode द्वारा स्वीकार्य होगी।
- निविदा शुल्क एवं अग्रगण की राशि का ई-मुगतान जिस खाता से किया जायेगा, उसी खाते में अग्रगण की राशि वापस होगी। अगर खाता को बंद कर दिया जाता है तो उसकी सारी जवाबदेही आपकी होगी।

विस्तृत जानकारी के लिये वेबसाइट [www.jharkhandtenders.gov.in](http://www.jharkhandtenders.gov.in) एवं कार्यालय की सूचना पट्ट पर देखा जा सकता है।  
कार्यपालक अभियंता  
ग्रामीण विकास विशेष प्रमंडल, बोकारो  
PR 331524 Rural Development (24-25)\_D

### NORTH EASTERN RAILWAY

#### OPEN TENDER NOTICE NO. S/DEE-TRD-BBS-2024-25-T11 DATE-31.07.2024

Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer/TRD, North Eastern Railway, Varanasi for and on behalf of President of India, invites sealed "OPEN" E - Tender for the following work:- S.No.-:01., Name of work:- 25 KV OHE Electrification in connection with Varanasi-Prayagraj Rambhag (UP Line) Renewal of Left Rail (Dented)-48 km, (TWS-CMS-22 set & curved switches-1 set) between Km 228/5-276/5 of Varanasi Division N.E. Railway. Tender reference no.- Sr DEE-TRD-BBS-2024-25-T11. Approx. Cost (in Rs.):- ₹ 11,57,210.11, Earnest money (in Rs):- ₹ 23,200/-, Cost of tender documents (in Rs.)-Nil. E-Tender closing date and Time:- 22.08.2024 up to 14:45 Hrs. Completion period:- 6 Months. \* E-tender online will be submitted up to 14:45 Hrs on date 22.08.2024. \* For full details and submission of bid kindly visit the Official website of Indian railway i.e. www.ireps.gov.in. Divisional Electrical Engineer/TRD CP/RO/EL-101 Varanasi Do Not Smoke Bidi/Cigarette in train

### EAST CENTRAL RAILWAY

#### E-TENDER PUBLICATION NOTICE

Open Tender Notice No. : SPJ-Snt-S-14-2024 DRM (S&T)/Samastipur invites open e-tender on behalf of president of India for following work.  
1. Name of work with its location : Provision of Self restoring/Auto change over fuse alarm system and ELD at balance stations of SPJ division. 2. Approx. cost of the work : Rs. 1,63,71,880.70/- (Rupees One Crore Sixty Three Lakh Seventy One Thousand Eight Hundred Eighty and Seventy paise Only). 3. Earnest Money/ Bid Security to be deposited : Rs. 2,31,900.00/- (Rupees Two Lakh Thirty One Thousand Nine Hundred only). 4. Date & Time for submission of tender & opening of tender : 19/08/2024 up to 16:00 Hrs. 19/08/2024 at 16:30 Hrs. 5. Details of website where full details of tender may be seen : www.ireps.gov.in For further details please visit the website www.ireps.gov.in. Railway reserves the right to postpone/cancel tender or to modify the tender.  
Divisional Rail Manager (S&T) E. C. Railway, Samastipur PR/00812/SPJ/S&T/T/24-25/32

### OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE

#### DEATH ANNIVERSARIES

#### IN GRATITUDE

#### For Her Love, Wisdom and Grace



Smt. Kala Kaarthikeyan  
Forever our inspiration  
From D.R.Kaarthikeyan Family & Friends

#### In Memory of your loved ones

To dedicate a space in this section, Please contact:

011-43579797  
from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.

For Placing Advertisements Online log on to

www.thehinduads.com

DONATE EYES - GIFT SIGHT

# Delhi University releases admission schedule for undergraduate courses

First list for seat allocations will be declared on August 16; webinars, help desks and chatbot facilities to help candidates fill their preferences for programmes and colleges, say DU officials

**The Hindu Bureau**  
NEW DELHI

Delhi University (DU) on Thursday released its schedule for allocation-cum-admissions for undergraduate courses, kicking off the second phase of the Common Seat Allocation System (CSAS) under which candidates can mark their preferences for colleges and programmes on the DU dashboard.

While the university was expected to have started classes for first-year students by now, the admission process was pushed due to a month-long delay in the announcement of the Common University Entrance Test (CUET) results by the National Testing Agency, which is grappling with multiple controversies. University officials said they would try to speed up admissions to compensate for the inadvertent delay.

## Jam-packed admission cycle

Students can select preferences under the second phase

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>August 1-7:</b> Filling of programme and college preferences | <b>August 16:</b> Declaration of first allocation list              |
| <b>August 9:</b> CSAS auto-locks preferences                    | <b>August 16-18:</b> Window for candidates to accept allocated seat |
| <b>August 11:</b> Declaration of simulated ranks                | <b>August 16-20:</b> Colleges to verify and approve applications    |
| <b>August 11-12:</b> Window to change preferences               | <b>August 21:</b> Last date of online fee payment                   |



While the university was expected to have started classes for first-year students by now, the admission process was pushed due to a month-long delay in the announcement of the Common University Entrance Test (CUET) results by the National Testing Agency, which is grappling with multiple controversies. University officials said they would try to speed up admissions to compensate for the inadvertent delay.

The first phase of admissions will remain open alongside the second phase, and both will shut at 4.59 p.m. on August 7, DU said in a press release. The portal on which students can mark their preferences will auto-lock the candidates' choices by August 9, following which a simulated rank will be released by the university on August 11. These ranks, officials said, are to help students gauge the probability of their allocation to a particular programme. Subsequently, students will be

provided with an option to reorder their preferences and programme preferences between August 22 and 23, after which the university will release its second list on August 25. A similar process will continue until all seats across colleges are filled.

## Helping hand

DU's Admission Branch has established help desks, a chatbot and an email facility to assist candidates in the admission process, officials said. A series of webinars will also be held to explain the process of filling preferences and mapping Class 12 subjects to CUET papers at 12 p.m. on Friday. Meanwhile, the University Grants Commission on Thursday said that Central universities which have seats remaining after the completion of their admission process will be able to conduct their own entrance examination or admit candidates through other qualifying examinations.

# 'SUV driver implicated in overenthusiasm'

**Ishita Mishra**  
NEW DELHI

Stating that he was "implicated in overenthusiasm", a Delhi court on Thursday granted bail to Manuj Kathuria, the SUV driver arrested for his alleged role in the drowning of three Civil Services aspirants inside the basement of a coaching centre in Old Rajinder Nagar on July 27.

During the proceedings, the Delhi police told the court that they have decided to drop harsher charge of culpable homicide not amounting to murder against Mr. Kathuria.

Additional Sessions Judge Rakesh Kumar granted him bail subject to furnishing a personal bond and surety bond of ₹50,000 each, observing that the other alleged offences against him were "bailable". The court was hearing an appeal against the denial of bail to Mr. Kathuria by a magisterial court. The court, while pronouncing the bail order of Mr. Kathuria, also noted the reply filed by the Delhi police in the matter: "During further investigation, as carried out in the pre-

ceding 48 hours, it has transpired that the ingredients of Section 105 (culpable homicide not amounting to murder) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), at this stage, [has] not been sufficiently established."

The police said that Section 105 of the BNS can be better assessed when the expert team from Indian Institute of Technology Delhi visits the spot and submits its findings after inspection. "Thus, as of now, the primary offence against the accused is of Section 281 of the BNS (rash driving or riding on public way) for which the court may kindly pass appropriate orders as deemed fit," the police added. "From the perusal of the record, it appears that he was implicated in overenthusiasm while he has been charged for the offence under Section 105 of the BNS, 2023 which is non-bailable," the court noted.

The court, however, directed the accused "not to pass any comments regarding the case to print and electronic media in any manner".

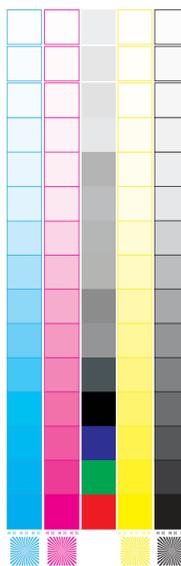
# Police spot suspect in Gokalpuri road rage case

**Press Trust of India**  
NEW DELHI

A day after a woman was shot dead by an unidentified man in a road rage incident in Gokalpuri, the Delhi police have spotted a suspect travelling on a two-wheeler in CCTV footage, officers said, adding that 12

teams have been formed to nab him.

The woman, Simranjeet Kaur, 30, was killed after a verbal spat broke out between her husband and the accused after their two-wheelers almost brushed each other. Kaur's two sons aged 12 and four were also present at the spot.



**Timings DELHI**

|                          |            |           |
|--------------------------|------------|-----------|
| <b>FRIDAY, AUG. 02</b>   | RISE 05:44 | SET 19:12 |
|                          | RISE 03:16 | SET 18:00 |
| <b>SATURDAY, AUG. 03</b> | RISE 05:45 | SET 19:11 |
|                          | RISE 04:17 | SET 18:46 |
| <b>SUNDAY, AUG. 04</b>   | RISE 05:45 | SET 19:10 |
|                          | RISE 05:18 | SET 19:25 |

**Delhi Weather** max min

|            |    |    |
|------------|----|----|
| Delhi City | 38 | 30 |
| Safdarjang | 38 | 30 |
| Palam      | 38 | 30 |

**Delhi Palam Today**  
34°C Day will be warm. Spell of moderate rain and thundershower with strong winds will occur.

**Delhi Palam Tomorrow**  
35°C The weather will be warm and uneasy. Spell of light rain and thundershower with gusty winds will occur.

© Copyright Skymet Weather 2024  
All rights reserved.

# Olympian given two days to vacate Civil Lines home

**Satvika Mahajan**  
NEW DELHI

An Olympian and his Commonwealth medallist wife were among the several re-

sidents asked to vacate their homes at Khyber Pass in Civil Lines within two days by the Land and Development Office (L&DO) of the Ministry of Housing

and Urban Affairs. The L&DO notice stated that the land had been "unauthorisedly occupied by squatters". Samaresh Jung, who is also the coach of the

national shooting team, and Anuja Jung said they had no clarity on the matter. "How can families living here for 75 years vacate by Sunday?" Mr. Jung said.

**TO ADVERTISE PLEASE CONTACT**  
**Mr. N SELVA KUMAR**  
**PH: 9820350726**  
selvakumar.n@thehindu.co.in  
**THE HINDU**  
India's National Newspaper

**विशेष शाखा पुलिस मुख्यालय भोपाल**  
क्रं. वि.शा./स्टोर/2024-25 (271), भोपाल दिनांक-29.07.2024  
**निविदा सूचना का शुद्धि पत्र / (CORRIGENDUM)**  
विशेष शाखा पुलिस मुख्यालय की निविदा सूचना क्रमांक SB/Store/2024-25 (207), Bhopal Dated 19.06.2024 द्वारा उपकरण Monocular & Other O3 Items के क्रय हेतु ई-निविदा सूचना जारी की गई है। उपरोक्त आमंत्रित ई-निविदा के माध्यम से क्रय किये जाने वाले उपकरण के समय-सारणी में "आंशिक संशोधन" के संबंध में "शुद्धिपत्र" (Corrigendum) जारी किया गया है जो website <https://mptenders.gov.in/nicgep/aaap> पर तथा विभाग की वेबसाइट [www.mppolice.gov.in](http://www.mppolice.gov.in) पर उपलब्ध है।  
उप पुलिस महानिरीक्षक, गुप्तवार्ता, म.प्र. भोपाल  
दूरभाष क्रं. 0755-2443654  
Email: sec25-sb@mppolice.gov.in  
G-14248/24

**EOI NOTICE**  
No.Hort. F.P./132/PMKSY(OI)/2021-22/01  
The Director of Horticulture & Food Processing, Assam invites Expression of Interest (EOI) through e-Procurement Portal: <https://assamtenders.gov.in> for "Empanelment of Manufacturing Companies/Brand owner Companies for supply of Petrol Pump sets for Shallow Tube Well / Bore Well/ Open Well/Pond/River/ Storage Tank etc. under the scheme PMKSY-Per Drop More Crop- Other Interventions during the Year 2024-25 to 2026-27."  
The e-Bidding document is made available on the said Portal from 2.00 pm on 01.08.2024 up to 1:00 PM on 21.08.2024. The online submission of bids through e-Procurement Portal: <https://assamtenders.gov.in> will open from 10.00 am on 13.08.2024 and will close at 5:00 PM on 21.08.2024. The authority will not be liable for any delay in submission of bid and system errors (if any).  
**Director,**  
**Horticulture & Food Processing**  
**Assam:Khanapara:Guwahati-22**  
**Janasanyog /C/1781/ 24/2-Aug-24**

**कार्यपालक अभियंता का कार्यालय**  
**ग्रामीण कार्य विभाग, कार्य प्रमण्डल, गोड्डा**  
**ई-पुनर्निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना**  
ई०-निविदा संख्या:- 08/2024-25/RWD/EE/GODDA दिनांक: 30-07-2024  
कार्य का विवरण: मुख्यमंत्री ग्राम सड़क योजना अन्तर्गत कार्यपालक अभियंता, ग्रामीण कार्य विभाग, कार्य प्रमण्डल, गोड्डा द्वारा निम्न विवरण के अनुसार e-procurement पद्धति से निविदा आमंत्रित की जाती है।

| क्रम सं० | आईडीसी फिकेशन संख्या / वैकेज संख्या | कार्य का नाम  | प्राकलित राशि (रुपये में) |           | कार्य समाप्ति की तिथि / अवधि                   | टेन्डर कोल            |
|----------|-------------------------------------|---|---------------------------|-----------|--|-----------------------|
|          |                                     |   | अंक में                   | अक्षर में |  |                       |
| 1        | RWD/EE/GO DDA/ 58/2023-24           | पंचायत पिपरा ग्राम मुख्य सड़क से जुड़ा होने हेतु हटियाई तक पथ का निर्माण कार्य (लंबाई-2.705 कि०मी०) | 2,57,98,900.00            |           | दो करोड़ सन्तानव लाख अठारह हजार नौ सौ ०० मात्र | 12(बारह) माह द्वितीय  |
| 2        | RWD/EE/GO DDA/ 81/2023-24           | पकड़ीखुटा से मालीगंजा माया गोलकुड़ा तक पथ का निर्माण कार्य (लंबाई 5.500 कि०मी०)                     | 7,60,69,100.00            |           | सात करोड़ सात लाख उनहत्तर हजार एक सौ ०० मात्र  | 18(अठारह) माह द्वितीय |

- वेबसाइट में निविदा प्रकाशन की तिथि:- 05.08.2024
- ई-निविदा प्राप्ति की अंतिम तिथि एवं समय:- 22.08.2024 अपराह्न 5.00 बजे तक।
- निविदा खोलने की तिथि एवं समय:-29.08.2024 अपराह्न 11.30 बजे।
- निविदा आमंत्रित करने वाले पदाधिकारी का नाम एवं पता:- कार्यपालक अभियंता, ग्रामीण कार्य विभाग, कार्य प्रमण्डल, गोड्डा।
- ई-निविदा प्रकोष्ठ का मोबाइल नं०:- 9973573276
- परिमाण विपत्र की राशि घट-बढ़ सकती है तदनुसार अग्रधन की राशि देय होगी।
- निविदा शुल्क एवं अग्रधन की राशि केवल Online Mode द्वारा स्वीकार्य होगी।
- निविदा प्रकोष्ठ करने वाले पदाधिकारी का नाम एवं पता:- कार्यपालक अभियंता, ग्रामीण कार्य विभाग, कार्य प्रमण्डल, गोड्डा।
- अगर खाता को बैंड कर दिया जाता है तो उसकी सारी जवाबदेही आपकी होगी।
- विस्तृत जानकारी के लिए वेबसाइट [jharkhandtenders.gov.in](http://jharkhandtenders.gov.in) में देखा जा सकता है।

कार्यपालक अभियंता  
ग्रामीण कार्य विभाग, कार्य प्रमण्डल, गोड्डा  
PR 331336 Rural Work Department(24-25)#D

**कार्यपालक अभियंता का कार्यालय**  
**ग्रामीण कार्य विभाग, कार्य प्रमण्डल, हजारीबाग**  
**ई- निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना**  
**ई-निविदा सं० :- 06/2024-25/RWD/EE/HAZARIBAG दिनांक :- 29.07.2024**  
कार्यपालक अभियंता, ग्रामीण कार्य विभाग, कार्य प्रमण्डल, हजारीबाग द्वारा निम्न विवरण के अनुसार e-procurement पद्धति से निविदा आमंत्रित की जाती है।

**1.कार्य की विवरणी :-**

| क्र० सं० | आईडीसी फिकेशन संख्या / वैकेज संख्या | प्रयोजन   | कार्य का नाम  | प्राकलित राशि (रुपया में) |           | कार्य समाप्ति की अवधि                              |
|----------|-------------------------------------|-----------|---|---------------------------|-----------|--|
|          |                                     |           |   | अंक में                   | अक्षर में |  |
| 1        | RWD/HAZ/ MMGSY/03/ 2024-25          | चलकुशा    | पी०डब्ल्यूडी० पथ चौड़े से करमाटांड तक पथ निर्माण कार्य (लंबाई-3.00 कि०मी०)                                    | 3,63,95,000/-             |           | तीन करोड़ तीससह लाख पचासह हजार रुपये मात्र         |
| 2        | RWD/HAZ/ MMGSY/04/ 2024-25          | विष्णुगढ़ | ग्राम सारकुदर में पानी टंकी से उच्च विद्यालय सारकुदर माया हरिजन टोला तक पथ निर्माण कार्य (लंबाई-2.600 कि०मी०) | 3,82,77,800/-             |           | तीन करोड़ बेरासी लाख सत्तरह हजार आठ सौ रुपये मात्र |
| 3        | RWD/HAZ/ MMGSY/05/ 2024-25          | विष्णुगढ़ | ग्राम खरकी शहिद-सोहर मोहर चौक से कांतीकरण रोड तक पथ निर्माण कार्य (लंबाई-1.400 कि०मी०)                        | 1,76,51,800/-             |           | एक करोड़ छिहत्तर लाख पचासह हजार आठ सौ रुपये मात्र  |
| 4        | RWD/HAZ/ MMGSY/06/ 2024-25          | विष्णुगढ़ | ग्राम चटकरी से उच्चाघाना माया रोहिनियांडांड तक पथ निर्माण कार्य (लंबाई-2.000 कि०मी०)                          | 2,50,65,600/-             |           | दो करोड़ पचास लाख पैंसह हजार छः सौ रुपये मात्र     |

- वेबसाइट में निविदा प्रकाशन की तिथि :-10.08.2024
- ई-निविदा प्राप्ति की अंतिम तिथि एवं समय :-22.08.2024 अपराह्न 5.00 बजे तक।
- निविदा खोलने की तिथि, एवं समय :-23.08.2024 अपराह्न 5.30 बजे।
- निविदा आमंत्रित करने वाले पदाधिकारी का पदनाम एवं पता :-कार्यपालक अभियंता, ग्रामीण कार्य विभाग, कार्य प्रमण्डल, हजारीबाग।
- ई-निविदा प्रकोष्ठ का दूरभाष सं०-06546-265286।
- विस्तृत जानकारी के लिए वेबसाइट [jharkhandtenders.gov.in](http://jharkhandtenders.gov.in) में देखा जा सकता है।

कार्यपालक अभियंता,  
ग्रामीण कार्य विभाग, कार्य प्रमण्डल, हजारीबाग  
PR 331393 Rural Work Department(24-25).D

**BANARAS LOCOMOTIVE WORKS, VARANASI-221004**  
Bid No. E-40/2024-25 E-TENDERS Date: 25.07.2024  
E-Tenders are invited for & behalf of the President of India for the supply of following items. Only E-offer will be accepted for which vendors must have Class III Digital Signature and registration on IREPS. The details of tenders are in the following sequence-S. No., Tender No. (Due Date), Description and Quantity. S.N. 01: 05245084B, (13.08.24), Self Brake ERS, 01 No. S.N. 02: 05245065B, (13.08.24), Spare Parts for Voltas, 01 Set. S.N. 03: 05241145, (13.08.24), Electrode Size 6.3x450 MM, PL. No76011434, 500 Nos. S.N. 04: 05241144, (13.08.24), Metal ARC Welding, PL. No 76011410, 7000 Nos. S.N. 05: 05235291A, (16.08.24), Aluminium Oxide, 150 Nos. S.N. 06: 05245008C, (16.08.24), Heating Element, 20 Nos. S.N. 07: 05241146, (16.08.24), Mild Steel Plates, PL. No. 90402649, 05 MT. S.N. 08: 05241103, (16.08.24), Lead Wire Holder, PL. No 15610895, 207 Nos. S.N. 09: 05241063, (16.08.24), (i) Piston Holder, PL. No 15610196, 23 Nos. (ii) Hook and Calmp, PL. No 15610238, 03 Nos. (iii) Bracker Lifter, PL. No 15610240, 04 Nos. (iv) Timing Gauge, PL. No 15610263, 44 Nos. (v) Holding Fix, PL. No 15610317, 02 Nos. S.N. 10: 05231252, (19.08.24), Battery Package, PL. No 76901890, 164 Nos. S.N. 11: 05245113A, (19.08.24), 50 Degree Profile Milling Cutter, 02 Set. S.N. 12: 05245137, (20.08.24), Multi V Opening die, 01 No. S.N. 13: 05245138, (20.08.24), End Mill Cutter Kit DIA 20 MM, 02 Set. S.N. 14: 10231303/A, (27.08.2024), Water Pump Repair Kit Part No -16070124, 1526 Nos. S.N. 15: 06241127, (20.08.2024), Developmental Tender for Starter Motor, Part No. 18090011, 30 Nos. S.N. 16: 06241071, (21.08.2024), Connector Plug, Part No. 18360105, 04 Nos. S.N. 17: 06241036A, (20.08.2024), Terminal Lug, Part No. 18340465, 60 Nos., Part No. 18340430, 14 Nos., Part No. 18340519, 11 Nos., Part No. 18340209, 14 Nos. Part No. 18341068, 29 Nos. S.N. 18: 05241034A, (26.08.2024), Plug CPC 23-22M, Part No. 18360221, 51 Nos. S.N. 19: 07245297A, (22.08.2024) Anti Carb Paste For Deep Carburizing, 30 Kgs. S.N. 20: 07245288, (19.08.2024), Supply, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of Network Video Recorder (NVR), 2.00 Nos. S.N. 21: 03241102 (21.08.24), Rubber Gasket, PL. NO. 29258406, 29258418 4936 Nos. & 617 Nos. All other terms & condition shall remain unchanged. The details of above Tenders are available on website [www.bw.indianrailways.gov.in](http://www.bw.indianrailways.gov.in) and [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in) CORRIGENDUM, S.N. 22: 04241018A, Bid No. : E-26/2024-25, Rev. 01, Existing due Date : 25.07.2024, Revise due Date : 12.08.2024 S.N. 23: 04241032, Bid No. : E-21/2024-25, Rev.01, Existing due Date : 31.07.2024, Revise due Date : 07.08.2024 S.N. 24: 06241795A, Bid No. : E-12/2024-25, Rev.01, Existing due Date: 06.08.2024 Revise due Date : 14.11.2024 S.N. 25: 06241746, Bid No. :E-28/2024-25, Rev. 01, Existing due Date: 29.07.2024 Revise due Date: 18.11.2024 S.N. 26: 06241865, Bid No. : E-28/2024-25, Rev. : 01, Existing due Date: 06.08.2024 Revise due Date: 25.11.2024 S.N. 27: 06231074, Bid No. : E-34/2024-25, Rev.:01 Existing due Date : 22.10.2024 Revise due Date :12.08.2024.  
**PRO/BLWS-42** **PCMM**  
[www.banaraslocomwork](http://www.banaraslocomwork) "Website : <http://bw.indianrailways.gov.in>"

**भारतीय विज्ञान शिक्षा एवं अनुसंधान संस्थान भोपाल**  
**Indian Institute of Science Education and Research Bhopal**  
भोपाल बायपास रोड, भोपी भोपाल - 462066 (मध्य-प्रदेश)  
Bhopal By-pass Road, Bhauri Bhopal-462066 (Madhya Pradesh)  
**e-TENDER NOTICE**  
For complete details and any corrigendum etc. Please visit [www.iiserb.ac.in/Tender](http://www.iiserb.ac.in/Tender) and [www.eprocure.gov.in](http://www.eprocure.gov.in). e-Tenders can be submitted only on [www.tenderwizard.com/IISERB](http://www.tenderwizard.com/IISERB).  
Sr. No. Name of the Item (s)/Work Tender No. Due Date  
1 Supply of H100 GPU Server. IISERB/SP/2024-25/45 dated 01/08/2024 22/08/2024  
Stores and Purchase Officer

**HIMACHAL PRADESH PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB) (E-Procurement Module)**  
The Executive Engineer, Tissa Division, HPPWD Tissa H.P. on behalf of Governor of H.P. invites the percentage Rate bids, in electronic tendering system, from the eligible class of contractors registered with HPPWD for the works as detailed in the table.

| Sr. No. | Name of work   | Estimated Cost (Rs.) | Earnest Money (Rs.) | Cost of tender form (Rs.) | Class   | Compl-ition period |
|---------|--|----------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------|--------------------|
| 1       | Construction of Junas to Mulwas road Km 0/0 to 1/500 (SH-Formation Cutting between Rd 0/0 to including dumping places.)                        | 1518488.37           | 30369.77            | 500.00                    | D & C   | 7 months           |
| 2       | M/T & C/D work on link road to village Vedyal km 0/0 to 1/600(SH- C/o 900 mma dia hume pipe culvert at Rd 0/855 & 1/080 along with wing walls) | 990058.70            | 19810.00            | 350                       | D and C | Three months       |

**1.KEY DATES:**  
1. Starting Date for downloading 03-08-2024 at 10.00 AM  
2. Deadline for submission of Bid 12-08-2024 at 11.00 AM  
3. Date of Technical bid opening 12-08-2024 at 11.30 AM  
The undersigned has right to extend or cancel the bids without declaring any reasons there-of.  
The Bidders are advised to note other details of tenders from the department website [www.hptenders.gov.in](http://www.hptenders.gov.in)  
Executive Engineer,  
Tissa Division, HPPWD Tissa, Pin-176316  
Email-[ee-tis-hp@gov.in](mailto:ee-tis-hp@gov.in)  
On behalf of Governor of Himachal Pradesh  
HP / 1195/24-25

**Govt. of Jharkhand**  
**OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER**  
**Field Survey Division, Advance Planning, Road Construction Department, Nirupan Bhawan, 4th floor, 56-Set Chowk, Doranda, Ranchi-834002**  
**e-mail--- eercdapsdran-jhr@nic.in**  
**e-Procurement\_Very Short Notice**  
**2nd CALL**  
e-Tender Reference No. -RCDFSD/AP/RAN/09/24-25 Dated 31.07.2024

| No. | Name of Work   | Consultancy services for preparation of complete Land Acquisition Proposal with ownership details and computation of cost of acquired land as per latest guidelines, Resettlement and Rehabilitation Proposal & Forest Diversion Proposal including clearance of all stages as required for Serailidi (Musabani-Dumaria-Ashla-Koyma, ODR road) to Narsingbahal via Morla upto Orissa Border road at Jamshedpur in the state of Jharkhand, from Consultants empanelled in Category-I with the Road Construction Department, Government of Jharkhand vide letter no -3063(S) W.E dated 22-08-2022 are allowed to bid.                           |
|-----|--|---|
| 1-  |  |   |
| 2-  | Tentative Length   | 14.175 Km   |
| 3-  | Work completion time   | 60 Days   |
| 4-  | Cost of Tender Document & Earnest Money Deposit (EMD)                | Cost of Tender Document - Rs.5,000/- (Rupees Five Thousand)(Non-Refundable) through online mode only. EMD - Rs- 20,000/- (Rupees Twenty Thousand) through online mode only. As per the Departmental Letter no.-4652(S) dated 06.10.2023, cost of tender document and Earnest Money Deposit will be received in online mode only through e-procurement portal ( <a href="https://mptenders.gov.in">https://mptenders.gov.in</a> ) by internet banking/ NEFT/ RIGS facility as per Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) issued by Information Technology & e-Governance Department, Government of Jharkhand vide letter no- 120 dated 03.10.2023. |
| 5-  | Date and Time of Publishing of Tender on official website            | 02.08.2024, 05.00 PM  |
| 6-  | Last date and Time of submission of Tender (With Tender Fee and EMD) | 12.08.2024, 12.30 PM  |
| 7-  | Date and Timing of Bid opening                                       | 13.08.2024, 12.30 PM  |
| 8-  | Tender Inviting Authority  | Executive Engineer, Field Survey Division, Advance Planning, RCD, Ranchi, Nirupan Bhawan, 56 set Chowk, Doranda, Ranchi-834002, Mobile No-9431591027  |
| 9-  | Mode of Bid Submission   | e-Tendering ( <a href="http://jharkhandtenders.gov.in">http://jharkhandtenders.gov.in</a> )   |
| 10- | PR No  | 329906 Road (24-25). D  |

For further information please go through the website <http://jharkhandtenders.gov.in>  
Executive Engineer  
Field Survey Division, A.P  
Road Construction Department, Ranchi  
PR 331491 (Road)24-25\*D

**Your feedback will keep us Cleaner, Sharper and Bolder**  
Call our toll-free number **1800 102 1878**  
Or write to us at [customercare@thehindu.co.in](mailto:customercare@thehindu.co.in)  
Scan the QR code to register your feedback  
**THE HINDU** **thehindubusinessline.**  
**FRONTLINE SPORTSTAR**  
**THE HINDU AT THE GAMES PHOTO CONTEST**  
**Turn to the sports pages to participate in today's quiz**

## IN BRIEF



## Jharkhand govt. preventing me from visiting Pakur: Sarma

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Thursday accused the Jharkhand government of preventing him from visiting Gopinathpur village in Pakur district, where a clash between two groups had taken place. "...If a CM cannot visit there, one can imagine the condition of the common people," Mr. Sarma told reporters in Dumka en route to Pakur. He later visited KKM College hostel, where a clash between tribal students and the police took place on the night of July 26, leaving 15 people, including six police personnel, injured. The Assam Chief Minister met the tribal students and said he also planned to inspect areas where tribal land was allegedly seized by Bangladeshi infiltrators. PTI

## Shinde flays Uddhav over 'challenge' to Fadnavis

Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde on Thursday took a swipe at Shiv Sena (UBT) chief Uddhav Thackeray over the latter's dare to Deputy CM Devendra Fadnavis and said those talking of challenging others must realise if they have the strength to do so. Mr. Thackeray had on Wednesday challenged Mr. Fadnavis, saying "either you will be there, or I will". Mr. Shinde said no one should speak of "finishing others completely" in politics. "Those who talk of giving a challenge should realise where we stand. For that one needs strength. Just like making random comments, no one can finish the other one." PTI

## 18 BJP MLAs suspended for 'hooliganism' from Jharkhand Assembly

They had staged a sleep-in protest earlier and also trooped into the Well of the House, disrupting proceedings; Leader of the Opposition Amar Kumar Bauri alleges 'dictatorship' by the Speaker

Amarnath Tewary  
PATNA

As many as 18 Bharatiya Janata Party MLAs were suspended for indulging in "hooliganism" in the Jharkhand Assembly by Speaker Rabintra Nath Mahto on Thursday. They were suspended till 2 p.m. on Friday.

They had protested against the eviction of party MLAs by marshals of the Assembly on Wednesday following Chief Minister Hemant Soren's "refusal to reply to their queries".

The BJP MLAs staged a protest in the Assembly lobby after being marshalled out from the Well of the House. Several protesting MLAs spent the night in the lobby near the entrance of the Assembly building, sleeping on bed covers and blankets rolled out on the floor, and ate food brought from outside.

As proceedings began on Thursday, the protesting BJP legislators trooped



In protest: BJP MLAs spent Wednesday night sleeping in the lobby of the Jharkhand Assembly as a mark of protest during the ongoing monsoon session. PTI

into the Well again, demanding resignation of the CM and also tore up some documents. Members of both the ruling and Opposition parties exchanged heated words and amid the din, Mr. Mahto suspended 18 BJP MLAs. When they refused to leave the House, marshals were called in again to remove them.

Mr. Mahto later said, "I'm deeply saddened by the conduct of BJP MLAs... It is a black day in the 24

years of the State's legislative history."

He also accused the BJP legislators of "hooliganism and ruckus" inside the Assembly and said that the House ethics committee "would probe the issue and submit a report [to him] within a week".

Leader of the Opposition in the Assembly Amar Kumar Bauri alleged "dictatorship" by the Speaker, while BJP MLAs called the Speaker's action "murder

of democracy". Mr. Bauri added, "We did not bomb the House... We only followed Bapu's principle of ahimsa (non-violence)."

Mr. Bauri and BJP MLA Neelkanth Munda staged a walkout from the House.

Ruling alliance leaders said that the Opposition members have been creating a ruckus in the House as election in the State is not far away and they want to derive electoral mileage out of it.

## Rajasthan may enact UCC, says Law Minister

The Hindu Bureau  
JAIPUR

The BJP government in Rajasthan is considering bringing a Bill for enactment of the Uniform Civil Code (UCC). A time frame for its introduction is yet to be decided, though the State government is studying a similar Bill passed in Uttarakhand, where the legislation to establish a common set of personal laws has been enacted.

Parliamentary Affairs Minister Jogaram Patel said in the Assembly here on Thursday that the Bill would be brought at an "appropriate time" after considering all the aspects. "We will take into account all the relevant factors before introducing the Bill... The matter is under consideration," he said.

Mr. Patel, who also holds the Law and Justice portfolio, made the statement during the Question Hour in response to a query of BJP legislator Kalicharan Saraf.

While the House was informed about tabling of the Bill after thorough evaluation during the ongoing budget session, two Ministers had promised earlier this year that the UCC

Two Ministers had earlier promised that the law would be implemented shortly in the State

would be implemented shortly in the State.

Public Health Engineering Minister Kanhaiya Lal and Education Minister Madan Dilwar had stated after the Uttarakhand Assembly passed the Bill that a similar law would be enacted in Rajasthan.

Though the BJP's election manifestos have promised the UCC's implementation over the years, the State government has so far not held any consultations with the stakeholders, including the Opposition Congress and other parties, in this respect. It has also not invited suggestions from the public for the draft Bill.

Uttarakhand is the first State to enact the UCC, while BJP-ruled Gujarat, Assam, and Madhya Pradesh have announced their plans to implement it. Union Home Minister Amit Shah had also said a UCC would be implemented within the next five years if the BJP returned to power.

## Killing of Atiq Ahmed, brother in custody not result of police negligence, says judicial panel

The Hindu Bureau  
LUCKNOW

The judicial commission set up to investigate the killing of gangster-turned-politician Atiq Ahmed and his brother Ashraf in custody in Uttar Pradesh has ruled out "police negligence".

The report of the commission - chaired by Allahabad High Court Judge (retired) Arvind Kumar Tripathi - was tabled in the Uttar Pradesh Assembly on Thursday, the last day of the monsoon session.

The commission, in its report, concluded that the incident occurred suddenly and it was "impossible for the police team to save the

duo, or to capture and kill the attackers".

"The incident was not the result of police negligence. It occurred suddenly and the reaction of the police personnel who were present at the time of the incident was normal. They didn't have time to react any differently. The entire incident happened in nine seconds. Neither could they save Atiq and Ashraf nor were they in a position to capture and kill the attackers," stated the report.

Media's role questioned  
The report also questioned the role of the media, considering that the three assailants posed as journalists.

The commission also suggested the media to "observe certain restraints while covering such incidents". "The horrific incident was recorded by the media and broadcast live on television channels. [That] this would bring tremendous notoriety to the attackers was in their minds," stated the report.

The accused - Lavlesh Tiwari, 22, Arun Maurya, 18, and Sunny, 23 - had opened fire on the former MP and his brother near the entrance of the Moti Lal Nehru Mandaliya Chikitsalaya in Prayagraj when they were brought by the police for medical examination on April 15, 2023.

## PMK functionary murder case: NIA searches 15 places

The Hindu Bureau  
TIRUCHI

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) on Thursday conducted simultaneous searches on the premises of persons suspected to be associated with five absconding offenders in the PMK functionary V. Ramalingam murder case in Tiruchi, Thanjavur, Tiruvarur, Nagapattinam, Mayiladuthurai, and Karaikal districts.

Carried out by multiple teams of the NIA, the searches at 15 locations led to the seizure of digital devices and documents connected to the case. Ramalingam was murdered on February 5, 2019, at Paku

Vinayakam Thoppu in Thanjavur, allegedly by members of the Popular Front of India (PFI).

The accused had allegedly conspired to kill Ramalingam as he intervened in the forcible conversion of underprivileged persons by a PFI team of Arivagam in Theni.

The NIA investigation established that the violence was unleashed to strike fear among those who opposed the PFI, the agency said in a release.

The NIA had filed a chargesheet against 18 accused persons, including the five absconding persons, in August 2019 before the NIA Special Court in Chennai.

## Maratha community has 'exceptional backwardness', State commission tells HC

Purnima Sah  
MUMBAI

The Maharashtra State Commission for Backward Classes (MSCBC) on Thursday informed the Bombay High Court that there is an "exceptional backwardness" among the Maratha community.

The commission submitted data to the Bench collected through a survey conducted of 1.58 crore households in the State.

Earlier this year, the High Court had directed the MSCBC, headed by former HC judge Sunil Shukre, to file an affidavit responding to petitions that challenged Maratha reser-

Backward Classes panel says it has carried out quantitative research and gone through reports submitted by previous committees

vation.

Following that order, Asharani Patil, Member Secretary of the MSCBC, had filed an affidavit on July 30 before a full Bench comprising Chief Justice Devendra Upadhyaya, and Justices Girish Kulkarni and Firdosh Pooniwalla.

The affidavit read, "The study revealed that the Maratha community was being

looked down upon in the State. It was found that there was exceptional backwardness among the Maratha community. The financial position of the vulnerable Maratha community was very low even in comparison with the open category non-creamy layer class and therefore deserved special protection. The rising percentage of suicides, of which 94% are from the Maratha community, had been highlighted as a disturbing trend."

The MSCBC said it has carried out a quantitative research and gone through the reports and recommendations presented by the previous committees.

## A barefoot yatra upends commute, tramples on shop owners' business as it passes through

## SPOTLIGHT

Ishita Mishra

Just off the Delhi-Haridwar highway in Uttar Pradesh lies Raipur Nagli village, where the homes are half-built and open drains flow outside them. In a room the size of an office cubicle, 12 men have gathered to mourn the death of 23-year-old Mohit Kumar. In the corridor between, Mohit's photograph bears offerings of rice and curd. The mustard oil-filled *diya* does nothing to deter the flies from swarming around.

"We have faced three tragic deaths in the family now, all on the highway. My nephew, my mother, and now him," says Vakeel Kumar, Mohit's brother.

He says the Muzaffarnagar police - under whose jurisdiction Raipur Nagli falls - asked his sister, who is unlettered, to sign an affidavit, but they had no idea what it said.

Mohit, an e-rickshaw driver, was allegedly

thrashed by a group of *kanwariyas* on their yearly religious pilgrimage last week after his vehicle brushed past them on the highway, his family says. He succumbed to his injuries on July 28 after spending five days in hospital.

The police, however have not lodged an FIR, and have instead issued a press statement saying that Mohit met with an accident as he was inebriated and suffered a leg injury.

"The *kanwariyas* and the public only gathered at the spot after the incident, and Mohit, who was suffering from other ailments, died during treatment. The family gave us all this in writing, in an affidavit," the statement said.

*Kanwariyas*, the devotees of the Hindu god Shiva, carry water ranging from a litre to whatever is humanly possible from the river Ganga to their hometowns across north India. Their journey, made barefoot, can last anywhere up to 10 days. While the peak time lasts the couple of weeks



Floats along the yatra route range from depictions of Shiva to DJ stages. SHASHI SHEKHAR KASHYAP



leading up to Shivaratri, this year falling on August 2, the season extends through the Hindu month of Shravan, which is dedicated to Shiva.

"The *kanwariyas* were intoxicated, not Mohit," says Vakeel. The men in the room lament how the *yatra* has become a spectacle where young men go to participate in rabble-rousing behaviour supported by the government.

State support  
The Muzaffarnagar police were the first to issue a controversial order in July this

year, which stated that all eateries located along the Kanwar Yatra route display the names of their proprietors and those working there outside their shops.

The BJP government in U.P. soon extended this across the State, while the Uttarakhand government, also led by the party, said a similar decision had been taken on July 12.

The move sparked outrage, with many expressing horror at the implicit targeting of Muslims. The Supreme Court stayed the orders on July 26.

Mohd. Parvez, 46, from

Meerut, was allegedly thrashed by the *kanwariyas* on July 26. An FIR was lodged this time, but no arrest has been made. Parvez, who is still recovering from wounds, says, "They just saw my skullcap and started beating me."

Another Muslim family too faced the ire of the devotees, who vandalised their car on the expressway for allegedly breaking a *kanwar*, the vessel in which Ganga water is carried. These, incidentally, are traditionally made by people from the Muslim community.

Newspaper reports tell of at least 12 other incidents of *kanwariyas* subverting the law, including one where the devotees vandalised a dhaba after its owner did not disclose to them that it also sold non-vegetarian food.

## Sea of saffron

Below the Delhi-Meerut Regional Rapid Transit System, half of the road has been marked off for the devotees. Despite being allocated a substantial area to walk, many of the the saffron-clad *kanwariyas* stray to the side that faces incoming traffic.

Deepu Sonkar, a *kanwariya* from Delhi's Sabzi Mandi locality, carefully adjusts the Shiva-Parvati picture on his *kanwar*. "I am carrying 58 litres of water on my shoulders," he says. It is his 26th year of making the trip from Haridwar to Delhi, where he does what is unmentionable in this setting: selling meat. He cannot say the word here, because it may upset the 'purity' of the area.

Vinay Kumar Pandey, who teaches Hindu scriptures at Banaras Hindu University, says, "There is no mention of the Kanwar Yatra in the Vedas or Puranas, even in the Shiva Purana." He says the *yatra* has gained momentum only over the past couple of decades.

## Highway to heaven

Small dhabas, most safely named after Shiva, have been forced to accommodate the *kanwariyas*. Food plazas and larger eateries have decided to remain shut voluntarily - some with a cloth across their façades, similar to how mosques and liquor vendors on the highway have shrouded themselves.

Abhinav Chaudhary, who owns the Namaste Midway highway halt in Mansoorpur, Muzaffarnagar district, says he incurs a loss that runs into several lakhs during the *yatra*. "It is not that we disrespect the *kanwariyas*, but it's impossible to control them inside any closed area where oth-

er customers are also sitting," he says, adding that he has no option but to shut the hotel.

Most *kanwariyas* rest either on the roadside or in one of the camps that crop up every couple of kilometres, some run by the government, others by private entities. At dusk, the mood among the devotees changes. Camps are filled with the smell of incense, and sometimes cannabis. On the road, floats of various sizes begin a parade, including mobile DJ stages, which belt out deafening tunes.

In the midst of about 1,000 exuberant devotees spread across a camp, an elderly man with a white skullcap wheels his bicycle through, making himself small to avoid touching anyone. He has a nervous air, and indicates that he will halt at the end of the line of floats, which seems endless. Above, a metro train whizzes silently by.

READ FULL STORY  
» <https://bit.ly/3A3XdRg>

# What early warning did Kerala have?

In response to a calling attention motion on Wayanad landslides in Parliament, Home Minister Amit Shah makes several claims on early warning systems in India and how they are utilised to alert the Kerala government ahead of the tragedy

**The Hindu Bureau**  
CHENNAI

In his response to a calling attention motion on Wayanad landslides in Parliament on Wednesday, Union Home Minister Amit Shah made several claims on early warning systems in India and how they were utilised to alert the Kerala government ahead of the tragedy.

“On July 18, an early warning was issued saying that Kerala will receive more than normal rainfall in western coastal area. On July 23, it was reframed to very heavy rainfall. On July 25, the warning was made more specific to ‘heavy to very heavy’ rainfall,” Mr. Shah said in the Lok Sabha.

## Flash flood risk

An India Meteorological Department (IMD) press release dated July 18 issued an outlook for a flash flood risk in northern parts of Kerala, among other places, until 11.30 a.m. on July 19. The extended range forecast, also issued on the same day for July 18-31, carried no mention of Kerala for the period, however.

An IMD press release published on July 23 warned of “very heavy rainfall at isolated places” in Kerala and Mahe on July 25 (suggesting action), and heavy rainfall over isolated/some places in Kerala and Mahe from July 23-27.

The visual sub-division-wise weather warnings under this forecast carried an orange alert for Kerala for July 25 and a yellow “watch” alert for July 23,

24, 26, and 27. A yellow alert doesn’t specifically call for action.

The press release published on July 25 said “scattered to fairly widespread light to moderate rainfall accompanied with thunderstorm and lightning [was] very likely over Kerala and Mahe (and other places) over the next five days”, and heavy rainfall very likely at isolated places over Kerala and Mahe from July 25-29. Visual warnings, as depicted on maps, also showed a yellow alert for Kerala.

The extended range forecast for July 25 to August 7 predicted “scattered to fairly widespread light to moderate rainfall accompanied with thunderstorm and lightning very likely over Kerala and Mahe [and other places], as well as heavy rainfall very likely at isolated places during the week”.

## Orange alert

The July 29 press release by IMD issued an orange alert for very heavy rainfall at isolated places over Kerala and Mahe on July 29. The landslides occurred in the early hours of July 30.

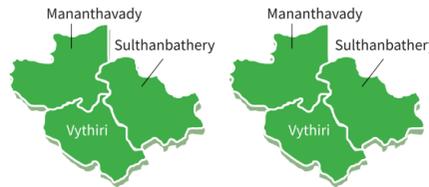
A red alert for July 30 was issued in the press release published at 1.10 p.m., after the landslides had occurred. This press release also carried an orange alert for Kerala and Mahe for July 31 and August 1.

The Agricultural Meteorology Division of IMD, Pune, or Agromet, issued a forecast on July 26 for Wayanad predicting 15 mm

## Sparring over forecasts

The landslide forecast bulletin issued for the Wayanad district on July 29 predicted low possibility of occurrences of landslides

**Day 1:** (valid from July 29, 2024 14:30 to July 30, 2024 14:30) **Day 2:** (valid from July 30, 2024 14:30 to July 31, 2024 14:30)



| Forecast level | Description   |
|----------------|---|
| Very high      | Very high possibility of occurrences of landslides in many locations (widespread)       |
| High           | High possibility of occurrences of landslides in one or many locations (localised)      |
| Moderate       | Moderate possibility of occurrences of landslides. Isolated landslide events may occur. |
| Low            | Low possibility of occurrences of landslides, a few small landslides may occur          |

of rain in the district on July 30, the day when the landslides occurred after extremely heavy rainfall. Fifteen millimetre of rainfall is not cause for worry, according to the IMD’s categorisation.

## Above normal rain

In its extended range forecast issued on July 25, the IMD’s Meteorological Centre in Thiruvananthapuram predicted “cumulative above normal rainfall” for Kerala from July 26 to August 1, but did not raise any alarms or issue any warnings.

The August 2-8 period was predicted to bring normal rainfall to the State.

The district rainfall forecast issued by the Thiruvananthapuram Met Centre

on July 26 predicted “light to moderate” rainfall for Wayanad district on July 30.

## No warning from IMD

Mr. Shah also said in the Rajya Sabha that an early warning for rainfall of more than 20 cm and possible landslide was issued to Kerala on July 26. The IMD press release published on the day carried no such warning. As in the previous editions, it carried a ‘yellow’ watch alert under visual sub-division-wise weather warnings.

After Mr. Shah’s remarks, Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan also said that the forecasts issued by the IMD, the Geological Survey of India (responsible for issuing alerts

related to landslides), and the Central Water Commission (for issuing alerts on river-related floods) were off the mark.

## Not in public domain

Mr. Vijayan also shared an image titled “Experimental Rainfall Induced Landslide Forecast Bulletin” for Wayanad district, issued on July 29 for two days. The bulletin predicted a “low possibility” of occurrences of landslides.

This information is not available in the public domain.

Mr. Shah also said in the Lok Sabha that “before 2014, there was only one way to respond to disasters – relief and rehabilitation.” This is incorrect. India set up the National Monsoon Mission in 2012 (now called the ‘Monsoon Mission’ or MM) to improve India’s monsoon prediction capabilities. According to the Ministry of Earth Sciences, the first phase of MM, called MM-I, was completed successfully in 2017.

MM-II began in September 2017 to focus on “predicting weather/climate extremes and development of climatic applications based on monsoon forecasts, especially in the field of agriculture, hydrology and energy sector, while continuing model development activities”.

MM-II is a part of Atmosphere and Climate Research – Modelling Observing Systems and Services (ACROSS). The Budget allocation for ACROSS plummeted in 2024 by ₹50 crore.

## Army moved materials and men from far and wide

**Dennis S. Jesudasan**  
CHENNAI

It was around 4.30 a.m. on Tuesday that the Indian Army’s senior officers in Chennai received the first call about two landslides in Kerala’s Wayanad district. Within a few hours, the headquarters of the Army’s Dakshin Bharat area in Chennai put together a comprehensive rescue and relief plan and mobilised personnel, sniffer dogs and equipment from as far as Delhi and Meerut.

“We were able to move our personnel within a few hours of receiving information,” a senior Army officer told *The Hindu*. By 12.30 p.m. on Tuesday, personnel of the 122 Battalion of the Territorial Army were at the site. Reinforcements were sent in following their inputs.

Personnel from the Madras Engineer Group moved Bailey bridge parts from Bengaluru and reached the area by 2 a.m. on Wednesday, an officer said. “As the Bailey bridges from Bengaluru could be used only in limited stretches, bridge components were flown in from Delhi.”

It took about 25 vehicles to move the components of the bridges to the site. “There were challenges. There was no electricity, it was raining and trucks with men and equipment had to negotiate a challenging terrain in the dark.”

As of Thursday afternoon, over 470 Army personnel were involved in the rescue efforts, he said.

## Bibhav acted as if some goon entered CM’s residence: SC

**Press Trust of India**  
NEW DELHI



**Troubled waters:** An SC Bench posted Bibhav Kumar’s bail plea for hearing next Wednesday. FILE PHOTO

“Is this kind of goon supposed to work in the CM’s residence?” the Supreme Court asked on Thursday as it came down heavily on Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal’s aide Bibhav Kumar who is alleged to have assaulted AAP MP Swati Maliwal earlier this year.

A Bench of Justices Surya Kant, Dipankar Datta and Ujjal Bhuyan posted Mr. Kumar’s bail plea for next Wednesday and told senior advocate Abhishek Singhvi that the court was shocked with the details of the incident recorded by the Delhi High Court.

Mr. Kumar has challenged the July 12 order of the Delhi High Court denying him bail in the case and claimed the allegations against him are false. He has also said his custody was no longer required as the probe was over. The apex court issued notice to the Delhi government on his plea.

“Is CM’s residence a private bungalow? Is this kind of ‘goon’ supposed to work in the CM’s residence?” the Bench asked Mr. Singhvi, who said there were non-serious injuries and the FIR was lodged after three days of the incident on May 13.

## Expresses concern

In its scathing remarks, the Bench also asked Mr. Singhvi what Ms. Maliwal, AAP’s Rajya Sabha MP, calling the police helpline during the assault incident indicated. “Every day we grant bail to

contract killers, murderers, robbers but the question is what kind of incident...” the Bench said, while asserting that the manner in which the incident had taken place bothered it. “He [Mr. Kumar] acted as if some ‘goon’ had entered the official residence of CM.”

“We are shocked. Is this a way to deal with a young lady? He [Mr. Kumar] assaulted her even after she told about her physical conditions,” it said in its scathing remarks.

Mr. Kumar, a political secretary to Kejriwal, has been in judicial custody for the past 75 days, Mr. Singhvi told the Bench. He allegedly assaulted Ms. Maliwal on May 13 at Mr. Kejriwal’s official residence.

While denying him bail, the High Court had said that the accused enjoys “considerable influence” and no ground was made out to grant him the relief. It cannot be ruled out that witnesses may be influenced or evidence tampered with in case the petitioner is released on bail, the High Court had said.

## T.N. govt. sets up help desk in Wayanad

**The Hindu Bureau**  
CHENNAI

The Tamil Nadu government has set up a helpline at Meppadi in Wayanad district of Kerala to locate the missing and to help those affected by the landslides. Information could be shared with IAS officers G.S. Sameeran and Johny Tom Varghese on 9894357299 and 9344723007, an official release from the Tamil Nadu government said.

The team from Tamil Nadu with personnel of the State Disaster Response Force and Fire and Rescue Services Department took part in relief operations in the disaster-hit areas in Meppadi and Chooralmala.

## Withdraw show-cause notice served on CM, Karnataka govt. tells Governor

**The Hindu Bureau**  
BENGALURU

In a major development in Karnataka politics, the Congress government on Thursday advised Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot to withdraw the show-cause notice issued to Chief Minister Siddaramaiah asking him why sanction for prosecution against him should not be given in the case of alleged irregularities in distribution of sites by the Mysuru Urban Development Authority (MUDA).

## ‘Reject petition’

The Council of Ministers also advised the Governor to reject the petition filed by activist T.J. Abraham seek-



Chief Minister Siddaramaiah during a breakfast meeting with Cabinet colleagues in Bengaluru on Thursday. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

ing sanction of prosecution in the case over allotment of 14 sites to the Chief Minister’s wife in lieu of 3.16 acres of land belonging to her being acquired by MUDA.

The Governor had given one week’s time to res-

pond to the show-cause notice, the deadline for which ended on Thursday.

Accusing the Centre of attempting to destabilise a democratically elected government in the State, Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar, who chaired a

nearly five-hour-long meeting of the Council of Ministers, as the Chief Minister recused himself from it, said: “The Centre is using the Governor to disturb the government here. This is a murder of democracy and murder of the Constitution. The Governor is showing haste in issuing show-cause notice even before going through the documents submitted by the government as well as a lengthy petition given by the complainant, both of which were given on July 26.”

He asked how sanction for prosecution could be sought without a report from the commission of inquiry, investigation, or any court order.

## Kumaraswamy does a U-turn, agrees to join BJP-led march

**The Hindu Bureau**  
BENGALURU

The uncertainty over the proposed padayatra of the Opposition parties in Karnataka ended on Wednesday with JD(S) State president and Union Minister H.D. Kumaraswamy, who had left ally BJP red-faced by opting out of it, did an about-turn on Thursday and agreed to inaugurate the foot march.

The eight-day march is being taken out from Bengaluru to Mysuru, the home district of Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, to “create public awareness” of the alleged irregularities in the Mysuru Urban Deve-

lopment Authority, diversion of funds meant for SC/STs and the scam at the Karnataka Maharsi Valmiki Scheduled Tribes Development Corporation Ltd.

Mr. Kumaraswamy had accused the BJP of planning the march without involving the JD(S), and also embarrassing him by involving its leader from Hassan, Preetham Gowda, who worked against his family by allegedly circulating pen drives containing sexual abuse videos of his nephew, Prajwal Revanna.

However, Kumaraswamy did a volte-face after the BJP central leadership convinced him to take part in the padayatra.

## NEET leak: CBI files first chargesheet against 13 accused

**The Hindu Bureau**  
NEW DELHI

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) on Thursday filed its first chargesheet against 13 accused in the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (Undergraduate), 2024 paper leak case in Patna.

The probe agency has so far arrested 40 persons, including several medical students, for their alleged involvement in the racket.

They accused have been identified by the agency as Nitish Kumar, Amit Anand, Sikander Yadvendu, Ashutosh Kumar-1, Roshan Kumar, Manish Prakash, Ashutosh Kumar-2, Akhilesh Kumar, Avdesh Kumar, Anurag Yadav, Abhishek Kumar, Shivnandan Kumar, and Ayush Raj.

The chargesheet has been submitted before a special court in Patna. The agency has invoked Sections 120B, 201, 409, 380, 411, 420, and 109 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) and substantive offences there-against them.

The case was initially registered at Shastri Nagar police station in Patna on May 5, and later transferred to the CBI on June 23. “The CBI has utilised advanced forensic techniques, Artificial Intelligence technology, CCTV footages, mobile tower location analysis, etc. to gather evidence against the accused,” said the agency.

While the investigations are under way, the agency is still piecing together all the details related to the syndicate and its key masterminds. Some more arrests in the case are likely.

## Firing ranges told to halt training as stray bullet injures woman

**Lavpreet Kaur**  
HYDERABAD

The residents of Bairagiguda here are in a state of fear after a second stray bullet injured a 34-year-old woman at her house.

The bullet is believed to have come from one of the firing ranges nearby.

Following the incident, both the Telangana State Police Academy (TSPA) and the Army Training Centre in the vicinity have been asked to halt training involving firearms.

The woman, Kadamanchi Padma, was washing clothes at her house in Vidyannagar Colony of Bairagiguda on July 30 when a bullet grazed her left ankle

and hit a wall.

On July 13, a stray bullet, said to be from the TSPA firing range, hit an apartment on the fifth floor of a building at Bairagiguda. No one was injured.

Ms. Padma’s family has been living in the area for about 12 years. “In all these years, nothing like this had happened,” she said.

A police official, on condition of anonymity, said the area around the firing ranges was barren until a few years ago. “Buildings and commercial establishments have been encroaching on the land, putting people at risk. A meeting will be convened to take a decision,” the official said.

## A.P. government to call tenders to remove Jagan’s name on land survey stones

**Sambasiva Rao M.**  
AMARAVATI

The Andhra Pradesh government is all set to call for tenders to remove the logos of the previous government on land survey stones and replace the Pattadar Passbooks (Land titling book).

In an interaction with *The Hindu* on Thursday, R.P. Sisodia, Special Chief Secretary, Special Chief Secretary to Government (Land and DM, Registration and Stamps), Revenue, said: “The government will call for the tenders to replace the Pattadar Passbooks and land survey stones in the State.”

There was a huge criticism of the former Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan

Reddy for etching his name on survey stones and his photos on private land owners’ Pattadar Passbooks. The YSRCP government, during its tenure, installed about 70 lakh marker stones and another 7 lakh stones remain unutilised. All these 77 lakh stones have the name of Mr. Jagan and hence, the State government has taken a decision to remove the name.

At the same time, the government issued more than 22 lakh Pattadar Passbooks to private land owners with a printed photo of Mr. Jagan. Now, all these 22 lakh Passbooks would be replaced.

The Revenue Department has prepared a specimen copy of the newly pro-

posed Pattadar Passbook. On the top of the front side of cover page of the new passbook, there will be a script reading as follows, “Land ownership right document and Pattadar Passbook”. At the middle of the front side of cover page, a logo of the Government of Andhra Pradesh will be printed. Below the logo, “Revenue Department, Govt. of Andhra Pradesh” will be printed. At

the bottom of the page, “Welfare of farmers, farm labourers is the government’s priority” will be printed. On the backside of the Passbook cover page, “India is great” will be printed.

On the other hand, the NDA government, in its first Assembly session, repealed the A.P. Land Titling Act brought by Mr. Jagan.

It is worth mentioning that Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu, in the run up to the elections, promised that he would erase the name of Mr. Jagan on the land survey stones, replace the Pattadar Passbooks and repeal the A.P. Land Titling Act brought by the YSRCP government.

## BRS Gadwal MLA wants to continue in Congress

**R. Ravikanth Reddy**  
HYDERABAD

Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) MLA of Gadwal, Banda Krishnamohan Reddy, who joined the Congress last month and announced his return to the BRS a couple of days back, has once again expressed his desire to continue in the Congress.

This comes after a dinner meet of Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy on Wednesday with the BRS MLAs who joined the Congress.

So far, 10 BRS MLAs have joined the Congress. Of them, Mr. Krishnamohan Reddy was the first to have returned to BRS and now taken another U-turn.

## SPOTLIGHT

Ten months ago, Shubham Mishra, 25, boarded the Prayagraj Express from Kunda in Pratapgarh district, Uttar Pradesh, to Delhi. Overwhelmed at the Capital's expanse, he sat on the Delhi Metro for the first time. "Until then, I'd only seen it in Hindi films," he says. His destination, Karol Bagh, branded by IAS Drishti, a 25-year-old coaching institute, marked the start of his Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) journey. His father, a farmer, had taken a loan of ₹1,60,000 to fund this adventure and dream.

Mishra's expectations of Delhi were shaped by movies and YouTube and Telegram channels. He imagined days filled with *chai pe charcha* (group discussions over tea) and the shared struggles of learning. He found paying guest accommodation at ₹10,000 in Old Rajinder Nagar, one of the city's UPSC hubs, once a refugee colony of the Sindh and Punjabi communities. The area has open drains in places, and the stench from them mixed with the sweat of people hard at work did not deter him. For Mishra, this was step one of The UPSC Success Story.

Old Rajinder Nagar, adjacent to the Central Ridge reserve forest, has IAS coaching institutes sharing boundaries with *kothis* (independent houses), jewellery stores, and nightclubs. The area featured in the web series *Aspirants*, the journey of friends during their time struggling through the UPSC training.

In the last seven to eight years, Old Rajinder Nagar has seen an influx of students living here. They prepare for the UPSC exam that last year saw about 10 lakh people, with a minimum of a graduate degree, vie for 1,016 posts for various central services, of which just 180 were for the Indian Administrative Service (IAS). Every eye was on Mishra when he was new in the locality: he was a potential customer – for coaching classes, rentals, books and stationery.

After seven months in the locality, he found his reality starkly different. "I live in a cramped space. Plus, there was the stress of studies and high costs," he says. He took up a part-time job as a tutor to school students, earning ₹15,000 a month.

"Many of us come to Delhi for job security and to escape unemployment," Mishra says. "With just a BA degree from a village, options are limited. The UPSC is a way to prove ourselves and change our families' situations. If not the IAS, there is banking, and the railways," he says. "Going back home is not an option."

### Three dead, many traumatised

On July 27, after heavy rain, three civil services aspirants drowned in the basement of Rau's IAS Study Circle in Old Rajinder Nagar. The basement, illegally operating as a library, got flooded. Thirty students climbed on tables and chairs to escape the rising, dirty water. The fire department, National Disaster Response Force, and Delhi Police took eight hours to rescue those who hadn't managed to climb out, and to drain out the water.

Many, like a 23-year-old from Assam, who doesn't wish to be identified lest his parents worry, escaped after he was pulled out with a rope. "It is only when the glass door broke that we were able to get out. There were glass pieces all over; we were gasping for breath," he says.

The relatives of Tanya Soni, 21, from Telangana; Nevin Delvin, 28, from Kerala; and Shreya Yadav, 25, from Uttar Pradesh, arrived in Delhi, to take home their children's bodies.

This isn't the first incident of UPSC aspirants combatting big-city infrastructure problems. On July 22, a 26-year-old was electrocuted in Patel Nagar, an area adjacent to Delhi's political power centre, after slipping on a waterlogged street and grabbing an iron gate with exposed motor wires.

In multiple colonies of Mukherjee Nagar, located just 12 km away, there are about 200 coaching institutes for students to prepare for a variety of exams besides the civil services: banking, management, medicine, and engineering. The facades of buildings are covered with advertisements for coaching institutes, so are the stairs. The area is glamorised in the Bollywood movie *12th Fail*, a real-life story about a man from Bihar who cleared the exam after some attempts.

Last year, 61 students were injured in two fires in Mukherjee Nagar. Some students were hurt in the stampede that followed, as a class of 200-250 students rushed down the stairs. Ginni Rathi, 22, is still traumatised by the incident. She was on the third floor when the fire broke out. "At that time, I was only thinking about my parents back home in Moradabad [in Uttar Pradesh]. I kept crying for help, but nobody came. When it felt like time was running out, I tried to escape using a rope, but I lost my grip and fell on an AC unit, and then to the ground." She was injured on her back, hands, and legs.

In a status report to the Delhi High Court following the Mukherjee Nagar fire, the fire department revealed that a survey of 461 coaching centres as of July 2023, found they lacked necessary fire safety measures. There were narrow and inadequate staircases, a lack of firefighting equip-



Hoardings and banners at Mukherjee Nagar, Delhi, advertising the services of UPSC coaching centres. SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

# Dreams and despair in Delhi's UPSC hub

Days after three UPSC aspirants drowned in the basement library of a coaching institute in Delhi, students protest in the streets over crumbling infrastructure, as the police, administration, and courts snap into belated action. Behind the deaths though, is the struggle of aspirants to survive Delhi, India's main exam-training hub, finds **Samridhi Tewari**



It is only when the glass door broke that we were able to get out. There were glass pieces all over; we were gasping for breath

UPSC aspirant stuck in the basement catastrophe

ment on the premises, an absence of water sources and exit routes.

The Delhi police reported that only 67 out of 583 coaching institutes in Delhi had fire safety certificates. The MCD issued 296 show-cause notices to building owners and occupiers where coaching centres were operating. Now, the fire department has identified 535 coaching centres that have violated fire safety norms.

### Delhi's dirty secrets

The Delhi Master Plan 2021 requires fire and statutory clearance for basement use in coaching centres. The MCD found that Rau's IAS coaching centre misused its basement for commercial purposes instead of for parking or storage. The stretch between Shankar and Pusa roads, which dips in front of Rau's IAS, often accumulates water during heavy rains. In a report submitted to the Municipal Commissioner, the superintending engineer of Karol Bagh zone said that the institute blocked the drainage by building extensions and ramps, causing water to flood the basement. The day of the incident, an FIR was filed under Sections 105 (culpable homicide), 106 (1) (death by negligent act), 115(2) (causing hurt), 290 (negligent conduct regarding building), and 35 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, which replaced the Indian Penal Code last month.

So far, seven have been arrested, including Abhishek Gupta, the coaching centre CEO; coordinator Deshpal Singh; basement owners Parvinder Singh, Sarvjit Singh, Harvinder Singh, and Tejinder Singh; and Manuj Kathuria, who allegedly caused a wave by driving on a waterlogged street, damaging the gate, and flooding the basement. The vehicle has been seized, and all accused are in judicial custody.

Additional Public Prosecutor Atul Srivastava opposed Kathuria's bail plea, arguing that he exacerbated the incident. Srivastava presented videos from Kathuria's social media handle showing him driving the same SUV. The prosecutor commented, "He is a *mastikhor*, aur masti mein inhone yeh sab kar diya (He is reckless and his careless behaviour led to the incident)."

Kathuria's lawyer argued that the lane was open, with water 2.5 feet high and the vehicle moving at only 15 km/h. He claimed that arresting regular people is a media show, while no government official has been held accountable.

As the court drama persisted, political parties that have offices in Lutyens' Delhi, where the security is tight and the police patrolling strict, and where tulips grow in winter, are now warring over whose fault it is.

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has accused the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP)-led Municipal Corporation of Delhi of negligence leading to the students' deaths. AAP promises strict action against those responsible. New Delhi MP Bansuri Swaraj criticised AAP in Parliament, stating, "The cause of death of these three students is the utter and absolute apathy of the AAP ruling dispensation in Delhi."

The Delhi High Court took cognisance of the matter and has ordered the MCD to produce all relevant files on Friday. The court questioned the Delhi police on why not a single MCD official has

been arrested. It ordered the MCD Commissioner to be present in court on Friday.

### Lives lost

Shreya's parents, dairy farmers from Ambedkar Nagar, learnt of her death through her uncle, Dharmendra Yadav, who himself found out about the incident through TV news channels. After calls to her went unanswered, he rushed from Ghaziabad to the PG accommodation she lived at. "I finally found her at Ram Manohar Lohia (RML) Hospital's mortuary," he says.

A BSc Agriculture graduate from Kamla Nehru Institute in Sultanpur, Shreya came to Delhi, as her parents hoped the environment would propel her towards success. "Delhi is the hub of competitive exams; we wanted her to understand how important language is, and we hoped she would pick up English. That's why we decided to send her 300 km away from us," her uncle says. For Shreya to study, the entire family pooled in money, her father took a loan as well.

Lieutenant-Governor V.K. Saxena has announced a compensation of ₹10 lakh for the families of the deceased. Nevin's uncle, Linu Raj, who was at RML Hospital to collect the body, says, "We don't need compensation. The response shouldn't just be crackdowns; it must ensure no centre operates in violation of rules."

Nevin was a PhD scholar at Jawaharlal Nehru University from Thiruvananthapuram, and his family was delighted that he was in one of India's top colleges. His father is a Deputy Superintendent of Police, and his mother

is a geography professor. "How can a reputed institution be so careless? This negligence endangers lives," Raj adds. Nevin's mother got so sick after hearing about her son that she has been hospitalised.

The UPSC Mains, the second written component of the exam, is in September. Students from various coaching institutes are on an indefinite strike, protesting government negligence. They protest daily, through the 90% humidity. Placards at the Karol Bagh protest, near Rau's IAS, read "Thanks MCD for giving us – Misery, Corruption, and Death" and "Dying for the system – the dream died."

Their demands include increased compensation for those who died, the naming and arrest of negligent officials, a government committee report, sealing and prohibiting basement use, and cleaning all drains and sewers. Students actively share their grievances with the media.

DCP (Central) M. Harsha Varshney says, "We engage with the students daily, conveying their issues to other agencies. The Delhi L-G also met them, and we've asked them to trust that their problems will be addressed."

On Wednesday, MCD Additional Commissioner Tariq Thomas admitted the civic body's failure

in the Rajinder Nagar coaching centre deaths. Interacting with the protesting students outside Rau's IAS Study Circle, Thomas said, "We have structural issues like you said and they need to be addressed systematically." He promised to take action and hold people responsible, while also saying that Delhi's growth had outpaced the master plan, contributing to the problems.

### Holding the dream

Mohammad Sharin, 21, stands in protest in a crisp white kurta. He comes from a town near Allahabad in U.P. He squats on the ground, and talks about how Delhi, the city, was a dream; so was the UPSC that he calls a "craze." He decided to become an IAS officer the day he stood at the school Bollywood superstar Amitabh Bachchan went to, and was denied admission because he didn't speak English. "I had completed Class 5, but they told me to join Class 4," he says.

Sharin arrived in Delhi alone on the Rewa Express, renting a poorly ventilated room, partitioned into cubicles with plywood. Many such rooms are not wide enough for an arm span. "I don't like it here, but the UPSC craze drives us. This is why everybody comes to fulfil their dreams. They agitate when they're let down," he says, pointing to the protesters.

He says many, like him, come to Delhi from small towns driven by the aggressive marketing of coaching centres. "When I arrived seven months ago, I was overwhelmed and scared. Everyone was handing out pamphlets and selling dreams, but how many are fulfilled?" he says.

Advertisements showcase toppers, while a protester outside Rau's IAS Study Circle questions, "What about those who didn't make it due to government neglect?" A founder-director at an IAS coaching institute admits that marketing strategies bring people from tier 1, 2, and 3 cities. "The results are also better here," he adds. He also admits that institutes earn up to ₹200 crore, and that the sector operates "with a *chalta-hai* (anything goes) attitude".

Accommodation ranges from ₹25,000-30,000 a month, while yearly coaching fees range from ₹2.5-3 lakh. In Kota, the coaching hub for medical and engineering entrance exams, students spend about ₹1.5-2 lakh on coaching. Rent is three times cheaper because it's not a metropolis. After the COVID pandemic, coaching has now opened up online, but people come to Delhi for its infrastructure and ambience.

In a basement not far from where the disaster took place, Mohan, 25, from Malda in West Bengal, lives with three others. Each time there's rain the room fills with water. He says, "I keep a current tester handy, and keep checking the walls and iron cupboards every 30 minutes when it rains." There is seepage and a musty smell because the room has little ventilation. To go to class, he must wade through sewage water. But once he gets there, he spends most of his time in the library that has air conditioning.

Mohan's cubicle has a picture of Swami Vivekananda, exam prep details, and fairy lights. "I cannot go back home now; I have a responsibility," says the physics-chemistry-maths tutor, who works part-time.



Students during a protest over the deaths of three civil services aspirants at a coaching centre in Old Rajinder Nagar area. SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA



# Kenny's comedy masterclass

Ahead of his acclaimed show *Professor of Tomfoolery* in the city on Saturday, Kenny Sebastian talks about how, despite his Malayali-Bangalorean heritage, his comedy transcends boundaries

**S B Vijaya Mary**  
vijayamary.sb@thehindu.co.in

You do not need to worry about quickly closing the window if your parents walk in while you are watching Kenny Sebastian's show on YouTube. His clean humour and sharp wit light up living rooms and stages with laughter that everyone can enjoy. It was a conscious move on his part, Kenny says. His decision to maintain a clean image in his comedy was both personal and strategic.

"I want my dad to sit and enjoy the show. I wanted my shows to be family-friendly and accessible to all. I've performed at schools, engaging with high schoolers in Bengaluru," says Kenny, adding, "The benefit is that I can connect with families and corporate audiences, which I enjoy. I wouldn't say that clean humour is superior to unfiltered jokes; it is just a personal choice. I enjoy unfiltered jokes, but I choose to focus on clean humour."

Kenny's ongoing tour, *Professor of Tomfoolery*, has been captivating audiences both

in India and abroad with his unique blend of comedy, music, and personal anecdotes. In a telephonic interview ahead of his show, he opens up about his creative process, the challenges of stand-up comedy, and the inspiration behind his latest show.

**Baring it all**  
*Professor of Tomfoolery* is a departure from his previous work. "I delve into the heavy topics of family issues and therapy. I am 33, married now, and have 14 years of experience. I felt it was time to lay it all out on stage. To keep the tone light-hearted, I approached it like a fun professor, matter-of-factly explaining complex concepts. By confidently discussing family dynamics, I help the audience relax and connect with the material. This method has made the show the most fulfilling one I've ever done."

Travelling worldwide has taught Kenny the importance of consistency. Unlike earlier tours, where he would adapt his material for different audiences, he now performs the same set word-for-word, whether he's in

Chennai, Delhi, Toronto, or Germany. "Why are people travelling to come to see you? They don't want to see you dilute the material for them," he states.

"My background is a bit unique," he says. "My dad was in the Navy, so we moved around often. Until we settled in Bengaluru, when he retired, I had never identified with any particular state. Growing up, I was used to being surrounded by people from different parts of India, and that diversity was the norm for me. As a kid, Bengaluru gave me a sense of stability and identity. However, I didn't realise I had developed a Bangalorean accent until I moved to Mumbai. Even though I now refer to myself as being from Bengaluru, I still feel

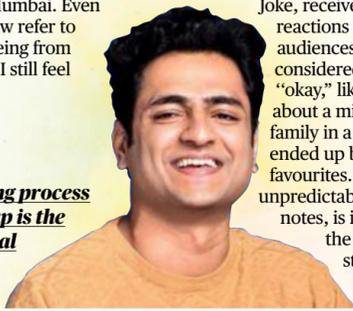
like I'm just Indian because of my varied upbringing," says Kenny, who highlights his Malayali heritage and Bangalorean identity in his shows.

**Brutal feedback**  
When asked about his favourite episodes from his vast repertoire, Kenny shares an insight into the writing process. "The writing process of stand-up is the most brutal," he remarks. "You get an idea and are so excited, but if the audience doesn't like it, you must let go of it."

He recounts how some of his most cherished sets, like the Bucket Bath and the Ostrich Joke, received lukewarm reactions from audiences and sets he considered merely "okay," like the one about a middle-class family in a restaurant, ended up being crowd favourites. This unpredictability, he notes, is intrinsic to the nature of stand-up comedy. Kenny's

**The writing process of stand-up is the most brutal**

KENNY SEBASTIAN



## STEP OUT



**Vibrant colours**  
For Sushma Mahajan, a practicing medical professional, art is cathartic and therapeutic. Her water colours include landscapes and

portraits and are displayed in hotels and homes of prominent citizens. Inspired by travels and Nature, her latest works have been curated by Alka Pande for a solo exhibition titled *This Beautiful World*.  
At Visual Arts Gallery, India Habitat Centre, Lodhi Colony; August 2 to 5; 10am to 7pm

## Life of migrants

Iranian photographer Sarah Jabbari's solo show *Select Sympathy* documents the Kashmiri community in Delhi, Mumbai and Bengaluru while constructing a narrative with objects such as artificial snow and the Chinar Tree that reminds them of their home. She has an eye for capturing the emotive details of landscapes, feelings, beliefs that surround the everyday existence of the Kashmiri Pandits.  
At Gallery Art Positive, Old Mehrauli Road, Lado Sarai; Till August 31; 11am to 7pm



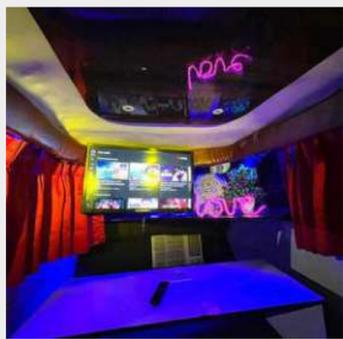
## Fluid steps

"Dance of Eternity" is a blend of powerful choreography, mesmerizing music and vibrant costumes conceived by Rini Malviya. The performance will bring to life the mythological story of Banasur, the 1000-armed asura and his devotion to god Shiva.  
At Apparel House, Sector 44, Gurugram; August 3; 6pm



## Of territories and boundaries

Cartographical Tales: India through Maps, is an exhibition of historical maps spanning 350 years, from the 17th century to 1946. Curated by Anubhav Nath, more than 100 maps, including some unseen historical maps by prominent cartographers such as Scutter, Rennell, Mortier, Lapie, Bonne, and Tallis, are on display to mark the 78th anniversary of India's independence.  
At Ojas Art, 1AQ, Near Qutub Minar, Mehrauli; Opens on August 2 till September 22; 11am to 7pm daily (closed on Mondays and national holidays).



**Car-cafe** An inside view of the Maple pod. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

## A car date

Maple pods are the new craze in Delhi-NCR as youths find the customised cars a happening go-to zone for food, music, games and also quietude

Stuti Kaya

Businessman Ayush Singh has witnessed the rapid urbanisation of his city, Delhi, and was also worried about the automobile junk generated and dumped. Two years ago, he came up with the idea of creating unique car models out of car scraps as dine-outs.

The concept of Maple Pods was thus born and became an instant hit. The air-conditioned dining space created inside customised 'car' comfortably fits six people who while munching on food can enjoy board games or watch content on the screens installed inside.

The Maple Pods provide privacy in public space, says Ayush. At present, two pods are stationed in Noida and Gurugram. Another one in Saket, Delhi, is temporarily not operational. The Maple Pod slots can be booked on the website

maplepod.com or the application can be downloaded from the Playstore on phone.

Guests can book packages ranging from two hours to six hours and depending on the number of people and occasion and the kind of food ordered, the cost varies from ₹1699 to ₹7500. To create an experience, the packages are tailored to the customer's requirements. Mostly young couples book the slots for birthday and anniversary packages or solo date packages. The games and streaming content packages are also designed as per the customer's demand.

The company has a tie-up with the cafe or restaurant where the pod is parked, and the food is ordered from there. People can even book the slot for the pod under just chill package and get their food ordered through various delivery apps.

Ayush says the concept of Maple Pods is common in several European countries and in the West where they are parked near airports, hospitals, libraries and universities for the convenience of visitors. Ayush who has come on Shark Tank, is contemplating on partnering with Airbnb in Delhi, Gurugram and Noida.

He says when he was studying in UK, a maple tree outside his room window inspired him with its changing colours through different seasons. When he conceived the pod cafes, the maple tree's transformation drove him towards his venture. "The pods were created from car scraps in different colours," he says.

Social media enthusiast and a corporate manager, Tarini Shah, says, "The idea is so cool; my friends and I love car dates. We can adjust the music, lighting and the food to our liking." College student Mihit Arora, walks in to check the Maple Pod in Noida but finds it expensive. "I would rather watch a movie and eat

popcorn at a much lesser price!" he says. "The Pod's services are still new and unique in India. Consumers may find the prices a little steep. Our idea is to blend technology and art with hospitality and entertainment and create an ambience to provide a new experience," says Ayush.

Shan Gupta

"I never imagined cycling through Delhi's streets on a Sunday morning could be such an amazing experience. The city unfolds majestically with every stroke of the pedal," says Devashree Vaidya, on the Lutyens tour offered by Delhi By Cycle (DBC), a cycle-touring company launched in 2009. The DBC also organises cycling tours across the country but its focus has remained on the Capital for over 15 years now. Promoting a sustainable way to commute, one of their most popular packages is pedalling through central Delhi, also known as Lutyens Delhi.

"When you are pedalling, you observe so many things about the city; the landscape changes every 15 minutes, your eyes capture things that you may otherwise miss while driving a car or travelling by bus," says Dhriti Bahl, one of the tour leaders.

**The changing landscape**  
"Every three kilometres, the name of the road changes, and so does the greenery; the city's roads represent India with its surroundings and cultures packed en route," she adds.

Participants assemble by 6.30am at Daryaganj, pick up the cycles, and some set off like pros navigating the lanes while others take time to get into the rhythm. Tour leaders Dhriti in front and Himanshu at the rear, ensure the cyclist's safety as the group of 24 advances.

The first pit-stop is the iconic Connaught Place, which most people are familiar with. To be there at 7am to hear about its birth and evolution takes the experience to a different level. Crossing Jantar Mantar and the new Parliament building, the next halt is at Kartavya Path. The

## Pedalling through time

Delhi By Cycle's The Lutyens Tour helps to explore the nooks and crannies of the capital city, breathe in fresh air, and discover a story waiting to be unravelled



**Driven by passion** Delhi By Cycle participants riding on Kartavya Path. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

stretch from Rashtrapati Bhawan to India Gate is mesmerising as the first rays of sun penetrate the clouds. There are other cyclists, walkers and runners weaving their way through. The DBC group takes a break to learn about historical and interesting facts about the two landmarks at the far extremes of Kartavya Path.

"People are showing an increasing interest in learning about the rich history and

culture of their city. There is a curiosity to know the story behind every road," says Dhriti. Angad Singh, an automobile parts shop owner from Punjabi Bagh, says he got to know about the bike tour on Instagram and found it interesting. "I signed up instantly. Picking up a bicycle after decades is an experience, let alone exploring the city before sunrise," he says.

**Common and quirky facts**  
The group next veers towards Agrasen ki Baoli and the Dhobi ghat before returning to Daryaganj. As the Lutyens Tour unveils the city mapped by Edwin Lutyens and Herbert Baker, the tour guides share quirky to common facts about the heart of the city with the participants, who also often pitch. In with their versions and stories that they may have heard.

Mostly young adults and

middle-aged people join the tour, but on many days, a diverse group cutting across age and professions also turns up. For 19-year-old engineering student Mansi Gupta from Gurugram, the cycle tour was an unforgettable experience. "I will recommend it to all my friends. It has multiple benefits; you breathe in fresh air, the body gets exercise, you do not carry the guilt of polluting the city," she says.

Delhi by Cycle not only aims to promote the history, culture, and aesthetics of the places visited but also to make people aware of sustainable ways to commute.

"The cycling tours are not only for fun and gathering information, they are also about protecting the environment and your health with a different perspective," says the CEO, Himanshu Shekhar.





# Is the Centre being iniquitous in State transfers?



**Pinaki Chakraborty**

Visiting distinguished professor, National Institute of Public Finance and Policy, New Delhi

**PARLEY**

**F**ollowing the Union Budget, Opposition Chief Ministers have boycotted and walked out of the NITI Aayog meeting chaired by the Prime Minister alleging that the Centre is discriminating against non-NDA States. Is the Centre being iniquitous in State transfers? Pinaki Chakraborty and R. Ramakumar discuss the question in a conversation moderated by **Jasmin Nihalani**. Edited excerpts:

**Do you think the opposition's concerns about bias in resource allocation are valid?**

**Pinaki Chakraborty:** A couple of things need to be kept in mind when we talk about biases. Post-economic liberalisation, the Budget has substantially declined as a tool to allocate resources to States by the Union government. It is no longer a public sector scheme-based allocation that determines the resource flow to the States. However, this year's Budget speech devoted a significant amount of time about schemes for Bihar and Andhra Pradesh. The fiscal implications of such schemes need to be assessed. In the context of aggregate resource flow to the States, I think the fiscal implication of such schemes is very limited.

**R. Ramakumar:** There are different types of transfers from the Centre to States: devolution of taxes, loans, finance commission grants and, non-finance commission grants, which are essentially discretionary grants. This is where the real problem lies. In discretionary grants, there are no criteria to decide on how much each State should get. Consequently, an element of arbitrariness creeps in, which is not healthy for the spirit of cooperative fiscal federalism.

If you look at the last 10 years, there were many announcements of packages made for selected States, coinciding with political developments, but no rationale was provided for these decisions and how the concerned amounts were arrived at. We see a continuation of this phenomenon in this Budget.

**Critics say that the NITI Aayog which replaced the Planning Commission has been reduced to creating indices and ranking States, fostering competitive federalism. Do you think it should be given more powers?**

**PC:** Abolition of the Planning Commission was done in a context. It was largely considered by most States, as an institution which was giving transfers and remained outside the transfer mechanism envisaged in the Constitution. So, the discussion about planning for development and transfers became a contentious issue. Greater



Prime Minister Narendra Modi chairs the NITI Aayog meeting, at Rashtrapati Bhavan Cultural Centre, in New Delhi, on Saturday. ANI

flexibility to the States through untied resources was considered as an alternative. When devolution to the States was increased to 42%, the idea was they would have greater flexibility in planning because the flow of money was untied and due to increased devolution. Given the rise in inter- and intra-regional inequality, NITI Aayog can give capital grants through a consultative process with the States without introducing an element of rigidity as seen in centrally sponsored schemes (CSS).

**RR:** Earlier States had complaints about transfers determined by the Planning Commission as it was not a constitutional body. Yet it played an important role in using public investment to address regional inequalities and as an institutional interlocutor between the Centre and the States. So even if the States had complaints about transfers, there was at least a forum that they could engage with. This is no more the case with the NITI Aayog.

The National Development Council has also been disbanded. The NITI Aayog has no powers. It is a skeleton with no financial prowess; it is just a think tank with no powers of enforcement. Its powers have been transferred to the Ministry of Finance, which makes all the decisions on transfers outside the Finance Commission (FC) recommendations.

What we need is a new, credible body, which should not be seen as politically influenced, and as one where States can sit with the Centre and discuss matters professionally and transparently. Above all, all transfers outside the FC recommendations must be free from discretion and also be rule-based transfers.

**On the distribution of Union tax resources among States, one side says that the States that contribute more should have a higher share while others say that distribution should be done to provide comparable levels of services across the country. What should the 16th FC do to allay the concerns of the States that perform better?**

**PC:** Considering collection or origin as criteria for



The NITI Aayog has no powers. It is a skeleton with no financial prowess; it is just a think tank with no powers of enforcement

**R. RAMAKUMAR**

tax devolution cannot solve the issue. All the major taxes are collected in a few important business locations. Propagating such an argument will lead to large-scale increase in inequality in resource distribution.

But if due to an increase in per capita income ranking, certain States witness a continuous decline in transfers and that creates challenges for their fiscal stability, then it needs to be addressed through a mechanism of grants.

Also, all State-specific needs may not be possible to address through a devolution formula as it is to address fiscal inequality. Per capita income always would get a very high weightage. And States with high incomes are not going to benefit because of that. So, if we have a State-specific need, I think the ideal way would be to provide grants. States should make a case for needs and challenges they have and how much money is required to address those challenges, with the FC.

**RR:** I agree that one devolution formula cannot be to the satisfaction of all the States. So, you need to use grants judiciously to ensure that post devolution differences across States are hammered out. The devolution share itself must also rise in the divisible pool to 50%.

**The share of cesses and surcharges levied have significantly increased in the gross tax revenues. Should the revenue from them be shared with States or should the Centre reduce its reliance on them?**

**PC:** Cesses and surcharges have only increased over time. But, the Constitution did not envisage its continuity. It is always said that they should be for a limited period. One reason for the increase is the proliferation of CSS.

**RR:** When the share of devolution from the net proceeds was raised from 32% to 42%, the Centre tried to compensate for the fall of its share in two ways. One, by raising cesses and surcharges, which are kept outside the net proceeds. Two, by changing the spending ratio in CSS schemes by thrusting 40% of the burden on the States.

If you add the total amount of cesses and surcharges collected by this government between 2015-16, and 2024-25, it cumulatively amounts to about ₹36 lakh crore. Not a paisa from this amount has been shared with the States in an

untied format.

Cesses and surcharges are not unconstitutional, but they should be charged only for limited periods for specific purposes. However, many of them have continued over many years. Some were ended but rechristened under a different name from the next year. The other problem is that many cesses and surcharges were collected but only partly used for the purposes of their collection. So cesses must be limited in number and collected for a specific period. What the FC can do is increase the State's share in devolution from 41% to 50% because the Centre keeps all cesses and surcharges in full and does not devolve at all from its bounty of non-tax revenues like the dividends received from the RBI.

**Kerala's FM argued that the revenue deficit grants for the State have decreased, the borrowing limit has been whittled down and State has lost revenues due to the fall in its share in the divisible pool.**

**PC:** Revenue deficit grants are given to those States who as per FC assessment, have a deficit in their account, post tax devolution. If there is a gap even after devolution, the State becomes eligible for a revenue deficit. Coming to Kerala's borrowing limits, there is an asymmetry in borrowing power between the Centre and States. States have hard Budget constraints. However, State level hard Budget constraint is needed for macro stabilisation. Since macroeconomic stabilisation is a central function, the Union government also needs to reduce its deficit and debt. But saying that States and Centre should have symmetric and unrestricted borrowing power, is dangerous from the macro stability point of view. There has to be a restriction of Budget constraints at the State level. At what level is a different issue.

**RR:** Kerala faces a hard Budget constraint not because the State is fiscally irresponsible but because it has historically chosen to make critical investments in its social sector. This is why a State like Kerala would continue to need a revenue deficit grant. Many other States appear to be fiscally prudent and not needing a revenue deficit grant because they invest relatively less on the social sector. But such prudence is achieved at a social cost. On the other hand, Kerala has historically suffered in the devolution process. It must be compensated for its losses through grants. Revenue deficit grants is one type, and I hope the 16th FC continues it.



To listen to the full interview  
Scan the code or go to the link  
[www.thehindu.com](http://www.thehindu.com)

**NOTEBOOK**

## The growing problem of restricted access

The space for journalists is being squeezed in Parliament and government functions

**Vijaita Singh**

**L**ast month, as I sat down in the press gallery of the Rajya Sabha to cover Prime Minister Narendra Modi's speech, I noticed two pairs of eyes watching all the journalists gathered there. Young security personnel in grey civvies were sitting on their haunches at the edge of the gallery, closely following our hand movements as we took down notes. Two others stood by their side. The men took turns to observe us. This was perhaps the first time, after parliament security was handed over to the Central Industrial Security Force, following a security breach in December 2023, that journalists were being subjected to such intense scrutiny in the press gallery. Security personnel were present in the press galleries of the old Parliament building too, but they would observe us from a distance. What has changed is the scale of deployment and level of scrutiny.

Entry into the press gallery has been heavily restricted since COVID-19. Only two people from one organisation are allowed into the premises. After legislative business moved to the new Parliament building last year, separate entries were consigned for journalists, officials, and Members of Parliament (MPs). This was not the case in the old Parliament building. Today, journalists are frisked four times and have to walk down a long windowless corridor dotted with security cameras in order to reach the gallery.

Earlier this week, TV journalists and camerapersons were confined to an air-conditioned glass enclosure. Their movement around Parliament, or Makar Dwar, was apparently causing inconvenience to the MPs. This happened days after farm leaders who had come to meet the Leader of the Opposition, Rahul Gandhi, in Parliament, spoke with reporters.

Some may ask why journalists need to be present in Parliament at all, as Sansad TV relays the proceedings live. But TV cameras cannot capture what journalists can: interactions, camaraderie, and ban-

ter in the House. Opposition members reach out to the Treasury benches and vice-versa, and members move from their designated seats to catch up with colleagues. All this gives us a glimpse of the bonhomie in Parliament and the various equations in the corridors of power.

On July 3, minutes before Mr. Modi was to begin his speech, Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) members requested Ministers belonging to the Janata Dal (United) and the Telugu Desam Party (TDP), two of the BJP's key alliance partners, to move to the front row. The JD(U)'s Lallan Singh, who was sitting at the rear end, was requested to go to the front row, but he was reluctant to move. I noticed BJP Minister Ashwini Vaishnav hold Mr. Singh's hand and lead him to the front benches. Similarly, one of the BJP MPs offered a second-row seat to TDP Minister Ram Mohan Naidu. The idea, it seemed, was to show a united alliance.

It is not only Parliament that is squeezing the space accessible to journalists. At government functions, the refreshments corner, where reporters could meet officials for candid conversations, has also been blocked over the last decade. Usually, the Minister or the chief guest would interact with journalists in these corners after the function ended. Now, security personnel are stationed so that journalists do not dare enter the VIP enclosure. At one such function, a security personnel told me, "We have arranged tea and snacks for you at the other end." The suggestion that journalists attend events for "tea and snacks" spoke volumes about the perception of the media.

By cutting down access, politicians or the bureaucrats may heave a momentary sigh of relief; they will no longer have to be troubled by the questions posed by some journalists. However, democracies thrive and survive only when they have an inquisitive media landscape. As far as stories are concerned, they will never stop. Truth will find its way.

[vijaita.singh@thehindu.co.in](mailto:vijaita.singh@thehindu.co.in)

**PICTURE OF THE WEEK**

### Waves of glory



Brazil's Gabriel Medina reacts after getting a large wave in the 5th heat of the men's surfing round 3, during the Paris 2024 Olympic Games, in Teahupo'o, on the French Polynesian Island of Tahiti, on Monday. AFP

**FROM THE ARCHIVES**



**FIFTY YEARS AGO** AUGUST 2, 1974

### Magsaysay award for M.S. Subbulakshmi

Manila, Aug. 1: Srimathi M.S. Subbulakshmi was named winner of the 1974 Ramon Magsaysay Award for public service to-day. She was cited having performed "exalting rendition of devotional songs and magnanimous support of numerous public causes in India over four decades." The

Magsaysay Foundation Board of Trustees said Srimathi Subbulakshmi was acknowledged as "the leading exponent of classical and semi-classical songs of the Carnatic tradition." She had raised more than \$ one million for social causes with her singing of South Indian classical songs and Bhajans. "These contributions have benefited charitable foundations for the poor, hospitals, orphanages, school and music and journalism institutes," said the Award Committee. The award was the first of a series of annual Magsaysay Awards - named after the late Philippines President - to be given this week.

**A HUNDRED YEARS AGO** AUGUST 2, 1924

### Empire wireless scheme.

London, Aug. 1: The House of Commons to-day approved the agreement with Marconis, with reference to the construction of beam wireless stations for communication between Dominions Britain and India (see cable of 23rd July). Mr. Hartshorn said, it was understood an arrangement was being made with Australia and South Africa for erection of beam stations, as it was already arranged with Canada.

# Text & Context

THE HINDU

**NEWS IN NUMBERS**

**Indians who died while working in Russian armed forces**

**8** The government has received requests for the facilitation of early discharge of some Indian nationals recruited into the Russian armed forces in unclear circumstances, Minister of State for External Affairs informed Parliament. PTI

**The Indian tourists who visited Nepal in July by air**

**21,500** Indians formed the largest chunk of tourists coming by air to Nepal. Nepal received a total of 64,599 foreign tourists. PTI

**Time taken by Pan Zhanle to finish 100m free-style in Paris**

**46.4** in seconds. Pan Zhanle of China broke his own world record by winning the men's 100-metre freestyle on Wednesday night. This is China's first swimming gold medal. AP

**The Goods and Services Tax collection in the month of July**

**1.82** in ₹ trillion. This is a rise of 10.3% from the same period last year, the government said. The government had collected 1.65 trillion rupees as GST in the same month last year. REUTERS

**Average monsoon rainfall recorded in India since June 1**

**453.8** in mm. India is predicted to record above-normal rainfall in August and September, the IMD said. PTI  
COMPILED BY THE HINDU DATA TEAM

Follow us [facebook.com/thehindu](https://facebook.com/thehindu) [twitter.com/the\\_hindu](https://twitter.com/the_hindu) [instagram.com/the\\_hindu](https://instagram.com/the_hindu)

## The relevance of pumped storage projects

Why is renewable power generation subject to variations and weather changes? How do power managers decide which energy source to use? Where are some of the pumped storage projects of India situated? How do the reservoirs in Kadamparai, Tamil Nadu operate?

**EXPLAINER**

**M. Kalyanaraman**

**The story so far:**

**T**he Union Budget for 2024-25 promised that "a policy for promoting pumped storage projects will be brought out for electricity storage and facilitating smooth integration of the growing share of renewable energy with its variable and intermittent nature."

**Why is pumped storage important?**

India has planned to create an ambitious 500GW of non-fossil fuel energy by 2030. In around two years, from 2021 to 2023, it created some 23GW of non-fossil generation capacity. Out of the total 10GW added in eight months in 2023-24, 7.5GW were from wind and solar energy, pointing to how renewables will account for most of the new power generation that will be added in India. The share of actual renewable power generation will increase in times to come, but this power will necessarily vary and will be "infirm".

Indian policies have laid down that all the power that renewable sources generate should be used and their curtailment should be last priority. State-of-the-art forecasting techniques have helped to predict more accurately how much renewable power generation might vary in the course of a day. This has helped grid operators plan in advance how to increase or decrease power generation from other sources to provide steady power to the consumer. For example, hydro power generation can be quickly ramped up or down in a matter of seconds. However, coal and nuclear energy need hours of notice.

When the world's attention turned to renewables and the problem of variable power generation, many solutions were proposed for storing energy and releasing it when wind and solar power generation are down. Until then, no electricity generated was stored at a large scale.



**Power centre:** The Kadamparai Cavern Power House.

Some of the proposed energy storage methods include scaling up batteries and pumping in compressed air into large caverns and then drawing on them to generate power when required. However, much of the energy storage adopted across the world today is pumped storage that uses water. These are like super large batteries but natural and use water.

**Does India have pumped storage?**

India has 3.3GW of pumped storage. Main ones are in Nagarjunasagar, Kadana, Kadamparai, Panchet and Bhira. China leads the world with 50GW of pumped storage supporting 1,300GW of wind and solar energy. India would need to ramp up its pumped storage capacity by several times if it wants to meet its renewable power generation targets.

Pumped storage is of two types: on

river and off river. On-river is like any hydroelectric project supplied by a river. Off-river projects are those that have two reservoirs at two different levels to which the water can be pumped up or let down under gravity in a closed loop. When there is surplus power, water is pumped up from the lower reservoir to the upper, and when power is needed the water can flow down to turn the turbines and generate power. One such project is at Kadamparai, Tamil Nadu.

**How does pumped storage at Kadamparai operate?**

In Tamil Nadu, at noon on a typical day in July, wind and solar can generate half of all power. This is among the highest in the country. On a summer day, solar plants in Tamil Nadu currently produce some 5,000MW at noon. But that power

dwindles and drops to zero at sunset. Wind also has its own vagaries. Tamil Nadu has peaks of around 17,000MW to 20,000MW on a daily basis. This year in July, maximum wind power generated reached 5,499MW and maximum solar reached 5,512MW. Wind and solar energy have must-run-status in the State which means whatever energy they produce must be taken.

The Kadamparai plant in Coimbatore district that came up some 37 years ago has four units, each 100 MW. The plant has a higher reservoir that is at a height of around 380m above a lower reservoir. Each unit has a turbine generator set producing power when the water flows from the upper reservoir to the lower. The same unit can function as a pump consuming power when it pumps water from the lower to the higher reservoir. Power managers plan in advance for the next day on how much and when to operate each power plant in the State based on factors such as demand expected and forecast of wind and sunshine conditions. Typically, around noon, there is a power surplus coming from solar energy. That power is used to pump up the water at Kadamparai. Each unit needs 20% more power to operate as a pump than what it can produce as a generator. But since it is solar energy, no fuel is being burned to produce the required power.

When the Kadamparai plant is operating as a pump to store energy, it would need about an hour and a half to switch to generating mode. When stopped, it would need about half hour to start and generate a full load. When solar generation stops and the evening peak load begins after 6pm, the Kadamparai plant becomes a generator. It can produce 400MW of full power for three to four hours and help support evening peak loads. Sometimes the plant is operated at less than full load late into the night depending on the conditions. The upper reservoir has around 1 TMC feet of water. Leakages are marginal and are often replenished by natural rainfall.

**THE GIST**

India has planned to create an ambitious 500GW of non-fossil fuel energy by 2030. In around two years, from 2021 to 2023, it created some 23GW of non-fossil generation capacity.

India has 3.3GW of pumped storage. Main ones are in Nagarjunasagar, Kadana, Kadamparai, Panchet and Bhira.

Pumped storage is of two types: on river and off river. On-river is like any hydroelectric project supplied by a river. Off-river projects are those that have two reservoirs at two different levels to which the water can be pumped up or let down under gravity in a closed loop.

## On election of the European Commission president

Why did Giorgia Meloni, Italy's far right Prime Minister, disapprove of the European Council's decision on Ursula von der Leyen's candidature? What are some of the challenges ahead for the European Union?

**Garimella Subramaniam**

**The story so far:**

**O**n July 18, the newly constituted European Commission (EC), the executive arm of the European Union, elected Ursula von der Leyen, the EC's first female President, for a second term. Ms. Von der Leyen, of the centre-right European People's Party (EPP), won by a clear majority of 40 votes unlike the razor-thin nine vote margin she secured in 2019.

**How is the EC President chosen?**

The selection of the EC President entails a two-stage process in consonance with the results of the parliamentary polls. The candidate is initially proposed and elected by the European Council – comprising the leaders of the EU's 27 member countries – and subsequently put to a secret ballot in parliament. Conventionally, the Council's choice has

been a straightforward affair, determined essentially by the steady dominance of top three of the bloc's eight political groups, namely the EPP, the centre-left Socialists & Democrats (S&D) and the liberal Renew group.

Yet the decision regarding Ms. Von der Leyen's candidature was not unanimous. Brothers of Italy, the party of Giorgia Meloni, Italy's far right Prime Minister, had bagged the maximum number of seats in the EU parliamentary polls. The European Conservatives and Reformists (ECR), the far-right caucus Ms. Meloni heads, had for a short time managed to muster the numbers to be counted the third largest group in the legislature. Italy, moreover, is one of the EU's six founder members and the bloc's third largest economy. Given this formidable background, the Italian far-right caucus was straining every nerve to exert Rome's clout on the EU stage. While EU leaders and heads of the three main groups finalised Ms. Von der Leyen's

candidature, Ms. Meloni took strong exception to her exclusion from the meeting. In the end, Ms. Meloni and the hard-right Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban disapproved the decision, leaving it to the remaining 25 leaders to back the Council's nominee.

**What about the vote in parliament?**

The ripples from Ms. Meloni's abstention in the Council were felt across the board, giving momentary pause for Ms. Von der Leyen's prospects for automatic reinstatement by the legislature. There were even murmurs of the Council calling for a possible second vote in case parliament rejected her appointment.

Eventually, Ms. Von der Leyen secured 401 votes, exactly the number of seats held by the parliament's three main political groups supporting her, and well over the halfway mark in the 720-strong house. It fell to the 53 MEPs from the Green party to come to Ms. Von der Leyen's final rescue, backing for the first

time a commission nominee. The revival of the landmark Green Deal to achieve net zero emissions by 2050, in return for the party's critical support, remains to be seen. Ms. Meloni and the ECR are for now a much reduced force. A more potent threat facing EU centrists is the newly launched Eurosceptic and anti-immigrant Patriots for Europe group, which has overtaken the ECR and is now the third largest bloc in parliament.

**What will be the challenges Ms. Von der Leyen will have to face?**

The bloc's most powerful institution, the EC, speaks as a single voice on external affairs and proposes legislation covering areas that require collective action, sifting through competing claims arising from divergent national and ideological perspectives. The most complex exercise of them all is the formulation of the bloc's seven-year budget. Crucially, Ms. Von der Leyen has pledged to tie national disbursements from the EU budget to the observance of the rule of law and plans to impose conditions relating to the respect for fundamental rights for availing other funds. With far-right parties heading national governments or in coalition, democratic backsliding could be a matter of some concern in the coming years.

Ms. Von der Leyen's second term would be anything but smooth sailing, as she seeks to appease and accommodate particular political constituencies.

*The writer is Director, Strategic Initiatives, AgnoShin Technologies.*

**THE GIST**

On July 18, the newly constituted European Commission (EC), the executive arm of the European Union, elected Ursula von der Leyen, the EC's first female President, for a second term.

Yet the decision regarding Ms. Von der Leyen's candidature was not unanimous.

The bloc's most powerful institution, the EC, speaks as a single voice on external affairs and proposes legislation covering areas that require collective action, sifting through competing claims arising from divergent national and ideological perspectives.

CSDS-LOKNITI

# Mental health matters: the psychological pressures of UPSC preparation

The relentless pressure to succeed can lead to a host of complications for UPSC aspirants. When asked about their experiences with stress, loneliness, and fear of underperformance, six in 10 aspirants reported having feelings of loneliness, while seven in 10 experienced stress

**Subhas Palshikar**  
**Vibha Attri**  
**Devesh Kumar**

The recent flooding of the basement of a coaching institute in Delhi has drawn our attention to the precarious living conditions of UPSC aspirants. While the tragic event has highlighted several systemic lapses, it also alludes to the gruelling journey countless students embark on while facing academic and economic pressures. These pressures end up taking a toll on their mental health. As per the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB)'s ADSI report 2021, an alarming 35 students end up taking their lives every day. Lokniti-CSDS data reveals that about a quarter of UPSC aspirants know someone who has either harmed themselves or attempted to commit suicide due to pressure.

## Reasons for overwhelming pressure

The academic rigour required for clearing the UPSC examinations is daunting. The syllabus is vast and aspirants end up studying 10-12 hours a day, sacrificing sleep, a social life and sometimes, even basic self-care. The perpetual need to stay updated with current events adds to the burden, creating a vicious cycle of stress. In fact, our data reveals that nearly half of the students have been frequently experiencing self-induced pressure. This is further compounded by an anxiety of under-performance, which was reported by one in every three aspirants. Fierce competition and expectations from family members can add to this burden. About one-third of the students reported that they have 'often' or 'sometimes' experienced peer pressure (36%), while another quarter cited family pressure in a similar vein (24%) (Table 1).

Economically, the stakes are high. Many aspirants come from humble backgrounds, making the preparation process a significant financial investment. In our study, a significant number of students come from low-income groups. Data indicates that less than one sixth (15%) of the aspirants have a monthly family income between ₹30,000 and ₹50,000, while close to two of every 10 (17%) of the students' families earn less than ₹30,000. It is also important to note that another one sixth (16%) of UPSC aspirants have a farmer as the main earner, and a little less than one in every 10 (6%) come from families with skilled or semi-skilled workers as the main earners. These conditions are bound to trigger strong aspirations. As a result, students belonging to lower income groups were more likely to cite a good salary as the primary motive for choosing UPSC as a career path than those who have a higher family income (14% with a monthly income of less than ₹20,000 versus 5% with ₹50,000 and above).

Coaching fees further exacerbate financial pressures. Data indicates that close to half (43%) of the aspirants spend ₹1 to ₹2 lakh annually on coaching, 29% spend ₹2 to 3 lakh, while only 5% spend more than ₹3 lakh. Additional costs for housing, meals, stationery, and transport can again become cumbersome. While a majority reported having received financial support from home, one fifth

## Extreme pressure

When students are unable to cope with stressful situations, they approach a mental health professional. Alarmingly, the burden has mounted so much for students that one in every five felt the need to speak to a therapist since starting UPSC preparations

**Table 1:** The different types of pressure faced by students

|                 | Often | Sometimes | Rarely | Never |
|-----------------|-------|-----------|--------|-------|
| Family pressure | 12    | 12        | 11     | 65    |
| Peer pressure   | 14    | 22        | 11     | 53    |
| Self pressure   | 47    | 25        | 6      | 22    |

**Note:** All figures in per cent.  
**Question asked:** How often do you feel these kinds of pressure while preparing for your competitive exams – often, sometime, rarely or never?

**Table 2:** The emotions students feel while preparing for the exams

|                           | Often | Sometimes | Rarely | Never |
|---------------------------|-------|-----------|--------|-------|
| Loneliness                | 29    | 32        | 14     | 25    |
| Stress                    | 38    | 34        | 10     | 18    |
| Fear of under-performance | 36    | 30        | 11     | 23    |

**Note:** All figures in per cent.  
**Question asked:** How often do you feel the following (the contents are given in the left column of the table)

**Table 3:** How often students experience these emotions

| Emotion              | Experiencing emotions since the preparation of exams |          |           |
|----------------------|--|----------|-----------|
|                      | Increase   | Decrease | No change |
| Nervousness/ anxiety | 64   | 8        | 27        |
| Frustration          | 57   | 7        | 36        |
| Loneliness           | 54   | 16       | 30        |
| Fear                 | 53   | 16       | 30        |
| Sadness              | 53   | 10       | 37        |
| Anger                | 42   | 20       | 37        |
| Depression           | 30   | 10       | 60        |
| Jealousy             | 26   | 9        | 65        |

**Note:** All figures in per cent. Rest did not respond.  
**Question asked:** Since you started preparing for the exam, have you noticed an increase or decrease in these emotions? (The contents are given in left column of the table)

**Method Note:** The findings presented here are from a recent study conducted by Lokniti-CSDS with a sample size of 1,003 students preparing for UPSC in Delhi. The survey was carried out at three locations—Old Rajendra Nagar, Mukherjee Nagar, and Karol Bagh—between the second and third weeks of July 2024. The research team included Rishikesh, Deepa T, Tarini Sharma, Yashodhara Ranjana, Ganesh R. Kulkarni, Shuchita Singh, Vrinda Deshmukh, Kairavi, Naman Jaju, Samyak, Divyansh, and Vitthi. The survey was conducted face-to-face using a structured questionnaire, with each interview lasting 15-20 minutes. A similar study conducted in Kota had its findings published in *The Hindu* in a three-part series on November 6, 9, and 11, 2023.

**Table 4:** Overall mental health

| Overall mental health as compared to before preparing for the UPSC exam | (%) |
|---|-----|
| It has improved   | 44  |
| It has deteriorated   | 33  |
| It has remained the same  | 22  |

**Note:** All figures in per cent. Rest did not respond.  
**Question asked:** How would you rate your overall mental health now compared to before you started preparing for the UPSC exam? Has it improved or deteriorated?

**Table 5:** Ways used by the students to de-stress

| Ways used to de-stress                       | (%) |
|--|-----|
| Watching web series/TV, listening to music   | 38  |
| Going for a walk/start exercising/meditating | 33  |
| Talking to family/family/siblings            | 32  |
| Going to sleep                               | 17  |
| Start studying                               | 10  |
| Going out for a smoke                        | 4   |
| Consuming alcohol                            | 2   |
| I don't know what to do                      | 2   |
| Not stressed at all                          | 2   |
| Others                                       | 21  |

**Note:** The question was designed to allow multiple responses, meaning that a single person could provide several answers.  
**Question asked:** What would you normally do when you are extremely stressed?

**Table 6:** Coping mechanisms

| Did you feel the need to go to a therapist for mental health difficulties | (%) |
|---|-----|
| Yes, I visited a mental health professional                               | 6   |
| Yes, but I couldn't afford therapy  | 2   |
| Yes, but I didn't because of fear of being judged                         | 2   |
| Yes, but I didn't because I prefer to fight it alone by myself            | 6   |
| Yes, but, there is no access to such facilities                           | 3   |
| No  | 78  |

**Note:** Rest gave other responses  
**Question asked:** Since coaching started, did you feel the need to go to a therapist for mental health difficulties?



(20%) of the students found it insufficient. To cover the shortfall, three in 10 students engaged in part-time jobs, while 8% offered tuitions. About 20% have borrowed money and one seventh (14%) manage by cutting costs. Only one sixth (16%) turn to their parents for additional funds. This pressure was significantly more pronounced for students from low-income families.

Recent paper leaks of the NEET and UGC NET have heightened stress about the integrity of exams. While a large number of students have said that these

alleged paper leaks were planned (NEET - 63%, UGC NET - 45%), it does create anxiety about the possibility of a paper leak for the UPSC exam as well. When asked about their degree of worry, one in every three UPSC aspirants expressed the fear of a possible leak, with less than one in every five (19%) students worrying 'a lot'. Moreover, the pressure to succeed is so intense that one seventh (14%) of the students say that they have to clear the exam no matter what, whereas another 2% plan to work part time to prepare for re-examination.

## Impact on mental health

The relentless pressure to succeed, compounded by the fear of disappointing family and friends can lead to a host of complications impacting mental health. When asked about their experiences with stress, loneliness, and fear of underperformance, six in 10 (60%) aspirants reported having feelings of loneliness, while seven in 10 experienced stress and fear of poor performance (Table 2). It was important for us to distinguish whether these high levels of stress were pre-existing or a result of

UPSC preparations. In a bid to understand this, we asked the aspirants about their experiences.

Majority of aspirants reported an increase in nervousness, frustration, loneliness, fear, anger and sadness since starting their preparation (Table 3). In fact, over half the students indicated that these emotions have increased, except for anger, which was reported by four in 10 students. Although there was no significant change in feelings of depression and jealousy, a substantial proportion of students – three in 10 for each emotion – reported that these feelings had increased since the start of UPSC preparations.

Regarding their overall mental health, four in 10 students reported improvement compared to before they started preparing for UPSC. This positive change could be due to many factors like personal growth, a set routine, and motivation from being surrounded by like-minded peers with same goals. Three in 10 UPSC aspirants reported a worsening of their mental health, while two in 10 indicated that there has been no change in their mental health. (Table 4).

## Various coping mechanisms

Having a strong support system is crucial to managing stress. A majority of the aspirants reported having a confidant whom they could share their feelings with. However, one in every five (22%) indicated lacking such support.

Students cope with pressures in various ways. When asked how they de-stress during times of extreme stress, four in every 10 (38%) reported that they watch web series, TV, or listen to music. Three in 10 engage in physical exercises or meditation, while a similar proportion reach out to a family member for support. One sixth (17%) of students reported that they go to sleep when facing extreme stress. While the majority has resorted to healthy coping mechanisms, some students used methods that can have a detrimental impact on their mental health. Among them, one in every 10 (10%) resumed studying when stressed. While this may help deal with immediate anxiety, it can have debilitating effects in the longer run. Similarly, 6% indicated that they resort to smoking or alcohol. A matter of concern is that, while most students have used different ways to cope, 2% of aspirants said that they do not know how to handle stress at all (Table 5).

When students are unable to cope with stressful situations, they approach a mental health professional. Alarmingly, the burden has mounted so much for students that one in every five (19%) felt the need to speak to a therapist since starting UPSC preparations. But only 6% actually ended up visiting one (Table 6). For others, concerns such as affordability, fear of being judged, lack of access became a hurdle in reaching out, while others had a preference to manage issues independently.

Similarly, needing medical prescription like sleeping pills or anti-depressants also allude to a deteriorating mental health. One in every 10 respondent agreed to have taken each of them, since they started preparations.

The journey of cracking the UPSC exams is undeniably challenging, demanding dedication and resilience. However, the psychological toll it takes on the students cannot be ignored. Addressing mental health challenges through self-care, support systems, and professional help is very important. Recognising the importance of mental health is the first step towards ensuring that aspirants are not only academically prepared but also mentally resilient.

*Subhas Palshikar is chief editor of Studies in Indian Politics. Vibha Attri and Devesh Kumar are researchers at Lokniti-CSDS.*

## THE DAILY QUIZ

The Paris Olympics began on July 26 and will continue till August 11. Here is a quiz to test your knowledge on some of the legendary Indian athletes at the Olympic Games

**Soorya Prakash. N**

**QUESTION 1**  
Who won the first ever medal for India in the Olympics?

**QUESTION 2**  
Who won the first individual medal for India after independence?

**QUESTION 3**  
Who scored a hat-trick for India in the Olympic Football match, becoming the first Asian to do so?

**QUESTION 4**  
Which father and son duo won medals in the Olympic Games for India in the

same sport?

**QUESTION 5**  
Which father and son duo won medals in the Olympic Games for India in different sports?

**QUESTION 6**  
Who was the captain when India last won a Gold medal in Hockey in the 1980 Moscow games?

**QUESTION 7**  
Who is the first Indian woman to win an individual medal at the Olympics?

**QUESTION 8**  
Who are the Indian women to have won multiple medals in Olympic Games?



**Visual question:** Identify this athlete who became the first Indian woman athlete to qualify for a semi-final at the Olympics. THE HINDU ARCHIVES

**Questions and Answers to the previous day's daily quiz:** 1. The term used for 26 member states of the Swiss Confederation. **Ans: Canton**  
2. This famous line also attributed to the protagonists in Alexander Dumas' *The Three Musketeers* is also considered Switzerland's un-official motto. **Ans: Unus pro omnibus, omnes pro uno (One for all, all for one)**  
3. The other flag other than the Swiss flag which is square in shape. **Ans: Vatican City**  
4. There are four official languages of Switzerland. They are German, French, Italian and this. **Ans: Romansch**  
5. The traditional name of Switzerland which is mentioned on its postage stamps. **Ans: Helvetia**  
6. The cities which host the headquarters of the International Olympic Committee and World Health Organization. **Ans: Lausanne and Geneva respectively**  
7. Name the festival held in Interlaken, once every 12 years, which features competitions of stone throwing, wrestling, and yodelling. **Ans: Unspunnenfest**  
Visual: Name this Swiss humanitarian whose work earned him the first Nobel Peace Prize in 1901. **Ans: Henri Dunant, the co-founder of Red Cross**  
**Early Birds:** K.N. Viswanathan | Debopriyo Mukherjee | Debarati Kar | Shiv Narayan | Sadhan Kumar Panda

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

## From Page One

## States can sub-classify SCs for quotas: top court

The latter gave preferential quotas to Balmikis and Mazhabi Sikhs.

Chief Justice Chandrachud traced the power of these States to sub-classify the Scheduled Castes for the purpose of affirmative action, including reservations, to Articles 15(4) [prohibition of discrimination on grounds of religion, caste, etc] and 16(5) [equal opportunity in public employment] of the Constitution.

## 'Not an indivisible monolith'

The Chief Justice agreed that the Scheduled Castes was not an "indivisible monolith". The "Scheduled Castes" notified by the President under Article 341(1) of the Constitution was composed of heterogeneous groups of castes, races or tribes with varying degrees of backwardness. Their inclusion in the President's List by Parliament under Article 341(2) did not mean they were a "uniform and internally homogenous unit" incapable of further sub-classification. "Article 341(2) does not create an integrated homogenous class. Historical and empirical evidence demonstrates that the Scheduled Castes are a socially heterogeneous class. Thus, the State in exercise of the power under Articles 15(4) and 16(4) can further classify the Scheduled Castes if there is a rational principle for differentiation and if the rational principle has a nexus with the purpose of sub-classification," Chief Justice Chandrachud observed.

The court agreed that apprehensions of "potential political tinkering" by parties in power in States to expand vote banks cannot obviate the constitutional need for acknowledging and remedying *inter se* inequality among Scheduled Castes.

The court observed that the States, by addressing *inter se* disparity among Scheduled Castes on the basis of quantifiable data and providing more preferential treatment to a comparatively more downtrodden group within the class, did not interfere with Parliament's power under Article 341(2) to make inclusions or exclusions in the Scheduled Castes List. They only work to promote "substantive equality".

Besides, States have to produce empirical data to support their claim that a sub-class requires more beneficial treatment.

The majority judgment overruled a 2005 verdict in the *E.V. Chinnaiah* case, which had held that sub-classification amounted to tinkering with the Presidential list by the State legislature, and was, therefore, violative of Article 341(2), which exclusively vests power in Parliament.

## Fisherman dies in bid to evade arrest by S. Lanka

The four fishermen have been identified as K. Malaisamy, 59, who has been declared dead and whose body has been handed over to Indian authorities in Jaffna; V. Ramachandran, 64, who is still missing; and M. Mookiah, 54, and R. Muthu Muniandi, 57, who have both been arrested and taken to Kankesanthurai for further investigation, according to the fishing community at Rameswaram from where the mechanised boat set out on Wednesday. Indian Consulate Officials in Jaffna have been instructed to immediately rush to Kankesanthurai and extend all possible assistance to the fishermen and their families.

The Ministry of External Affairs said it had summoned a senior Sri Lankan diplomat. "We expressed our shock and anguish at the unfortunate loss of life. Our High Commissioner in Colombo will also be raising the matter with the Sri Lankan government later today," the MEA statement said.

## ₹10 lakh to kin

After the news of the fisherman's death spread through the Rameswaram fishing community, an uneasy calm prevailed in the town and other pockets of the coastal district of Ramanathapuram. Ramanathapuram District Collector Simranjeet Singh Kahlon handed over a cheque for ₹10 lakh from the Tamil Nadu Chief Minister's Relief Fund to the family members of the deceased Mr. Malaisamy.

According to Fisheries Department officials, 359 boats had taken the tokens from the Rameswaram jetty on Wednesday morning, and around 2,000 fishermen had ventured into the Palk Straits for fishing. By their account, the Sri Lankan Navy attacked the boat, belonging to Karthikeyan, on Wednesday night, and attempted to chase it mid-sea during which the fishermen had fallen out of the boat.

Leaders of the fishing community demanded that a murder case be registered. Under the pretext of poaching, the neighbouring country's Navy personnel have gone beyond their limits, they said.

Tamil Nadu MPs will press for justice on the issue in Parliament, according to DMK MLA Kadambatcha Muthuramalingam, who was citing the State's Chief Minister M.K. Stalin. A delegation of fishermen from the State will go to New Delhi to raise the issue with the External Affairs Minister and other senior officials, he added.

The death of the fisherman reflects the latest escalation in the persistent problem of Indian fishermen, mostly from Tamil Nadu, who are periodically caught fishing in Sri Lanka's territorial waters. The practice often results in mass arrests of Indian fishermen and the seizure of their boats by the Sri Lankan Navy.

It has also severely impacted the livelihoods of war-affected Tamil fishermen living in northern Sri Lanka given that the Indian fishermen pursue the destructive bottom-trawler fishing method to maximise their catch.

## 4 dead as cloudbursts, flash floods wreak havoc in Himachal

49 missing in the State; Chief Minister urges people to stay away from rivers; PM directs officials to ensure all possible assistance to affected

Vikas Vasudeva  
CHANDIGARH

Four people were killed and 49 missing following multiple incidents of cloudburst in Shimla, Mandi, and Kullu districts of Himachal Pradesh, where torrential rain has left several rivers in a spate.

According to the State's Emergency Operation Centre, one person was injured and nine people were stranded at different places following incessant rain in different parts of the State.

Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu, who convened a meeting with government officers to take stock of the situation in Shimla, said, "Search and rescue operations are under way, and all resources have been pressed into action. We have sought help from the Army and Air Force. The State has suffered a huge loss."

"There's a possibility of heavy rain based on weather department forecast during the next 36 hours [Friday morning]. I appeal to people to stay away from rivers and rivulets," he said.

Thirty-three people went missing after a cloudburst led to a flash flood in the Samej area, near Jhakri hydro project (Rampur), in Shimla district in the early



Heavy spell: A view of a flood-like situation arising after the water level of the Beas rose in heavy rain, in Mandi on Thursday. ANI

## 14 killed as heavy rain lashes Uttarakhand

DEHRADUN

Fourteen people died and 10 were injured in heavy rain that triggered flooding and a house collapse as rivers swelled in Uttarakhand, officials said here on Thursday. They said that the Kedarnath Yatra was suspended amid the inclement weather conditions as the heavy downpour triggered landslides at many places. PTI

hours of Thursday. Seven persons went missing and three died near Tikkan Thalukot village in Mandi district. At Jaon village in Kullu district, one person was killed and nine people went missing, while 11 houses were washed away by the gushing waters,

which also damaged two bridges.

A flash flood was reported at Malana village in Kullu. Nine persons were stranded near Charuru village in Kullu as water in the Beas swelled.

The National Disaster Response Force, State Disaster Response Force, State Police, Home Guard, and fire service teams and administration officials have been deployed for search and rescue operations.

## Shah assures help

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has been monitoring the situation in Mandi. He has asked top officials to ensure all possible assistance to the affected, sources said.

Home Minister Amit Shah also spoke to Mr. Sukhu and assured him of all help from the Centre.

## India believes in development, not expansionism: Modi

Kallol Bhattacharjee  
NEW DELHI

India does not believe in "expansionism", Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Thursday, indirectly referring to China and high-activities in the South China Sea.

Welcoming Vietnamese Prime Minister Pham Minh Chinh, Mr. Modi indirectly referred to China and highlighted the importance of freedom of navigation.

Speaking at the Indian Council of World Affairs, Mr. Minh Chinh echoed the Indian position on maritime security and called for a collective approach to solving all conflicts including in West Asia and Myanmar.

The Vietnamese leader recollected India's contribution to peace building in Vietnam in the 1950s and sought greater cooperation between the two sides in energy, defence, and culture.

"We support development, not expansionism in the region. We believe in a free, open, rule-based and prosperous Indo-Pacific," said Mr. Modi.

His remarks came days after External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar attended the Quad Foreign Ministers' meeting in Tokyo, where India was joined by Australia, Japan, and the United States in "upholding freedom of navigation and overflight", an oblique reference to China's activities in the South China Sea.

Reflecting the Indian position, Mr. Minh Chinh said, "The two sides redou-



PM Narendra Modi with his Vietnamese counterpart Pham Minh Chinh. R.V. MOORTHY

bled the importance of ensuring peace, stability, security, safety and freedom of navigation over the East China Sea and the South China Sea and a peaceful settlement of disputes based on respecting international law, especially UNCLOS 1982." He described India as a force of "stability and prosperity" in the Indo-Pacific region.

## Years of bilateral ties

Mr. Minh Chinh paid tribute to the early years of the bilateral relation when India was the Chairman of the International Commission for Supervision and Control formed as part of the Geneva Accord of 1954 to help the peace process in Vietnam.

Vietnam, he said, is "deeply grateful" for the policy of non-alignment which was championed by India.

He urged for a collective approach for solving the intractable conflicts in the world and described the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) as a major platform in dealing with issues of development and dialogue.

## Disaster Management Bill tabled in Lok Sabha

Vijaita Singh  
NEW DELHI

Union Minister of State for Home Nityanand Rai on Thursday introduced the Disaster Management (Amendment) Bill, 2024 in the Lok Sabha. The Bill seeks to create a "disaster database at national and State level" and makes provision for constitution of "Urban Disaster Management Authority" for State capitals and large cities having municipal corporations, except the Union Territories of Delhi and Chandigarh.

The database will include disaster assessment, fund allocation detail, expenditure, preparedness and mitigation plan, risk register according to type and severity of risk, and such other relevant matters, in accordance with such policy, as may be determined by the Union government.

The Bill empowers the National Disaster Management Authority and the State Disaster Management Authorities to prepare the disaster plan at national level and State level, respectively instead of the plans made by National Executive Committee and the State Executive Committees earlier.

The NDMA may also appoint experts and consultants as necessary to perform its functions.

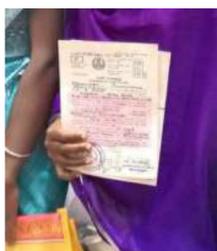
Opposition members opposed the Bill as it creates several authorities and also encroaches upon the functions of the State governments.

## Evolve policy to remove quota for SCs, STs in creamy layer, say judges

Krishnadass Rajagopal  
NEW DELHI

A majority of four judges on a Constitution Bench of the Supreme Court on Thursday called for the need to evolve a "different" set of criteria to exclude the "creamy layer" among the Scheduled Castes (SC) and the Scheduled Tribes (ST) from reservation benefits.

Justice B.R. Gavai explained that an SC/ST person would continue to be socially, economically, and educationally backward if he or she could only achieve the position of a peon or a sweeper through reservation. However, on



State must evolve a policy for identifying creamy layer even from the SCs, STs, said a judge.

the other hand, individuals who got quota benefits to reach the "high echelons of life" should be considered as belonging to the creamy layer as they had already "reached a stage

where on their own accord they should walk out of the special provisions and give way to the deserving and needy".

"State must evolve a policy for identifying the creamy layer even from the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes so as to exclude them from the benefit of affirmative action... the criteria for exclusion of the creamy layer from SC/ST for the purpose of affirmative action could be different from the criteria as applicable to the Other Backward Classes (OBCs)," Justice Gavai, a member of the seven-judge Bench, held.

Justice Gavai, whose

opinion formed the basis for a push to introduce the creamy layer principle for SC/ST categories, observed that the exclusion of the affluent from quota benefits would alone achieve real equality.

Justice Vikram Nath seconded the opinion of Justice Gavai.

Justice Satish Chandra Sharma agreed that "for the full realisation of substantive equality *inter se* the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, the identification of the 'creamy layer' *qua* Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes ought to become a constitutional imperative for the state".

## Court denies bail to former trainee IAS officer Puja Khedkar

The Hindu Bureau  
NEW DELHI

A Delhi court on Thursday denied anticipatory bail to former trainee Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer Puja Khedkar, accused of using fraudulent means to pass the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) examination.

The Delhi police have booked Ms. Khedkar for fraudulently availing the reservation for Other Backward Classes (OBC) and Persons with Benchmark Disabilities to clear the Civil Services Examination.

As per a communicate from the UPSC, she had also deceitfully availed attempts beyond the permissible limit under the

examination rules by faking her identity.

Additional sessions judge Devender Kumar Jangala of the Patiala House Court denied anticipatory bail to Ms. Khedkar considering the fact that the allegations against her are grave and serious in nature which require thorough investigation.

"The conspiracy has been hatched in a pre-planned manner. The conspiracy was executed by the applicant/accused in many years," the court said, noting that the present case could be only tip of the iceberg because if Ms. Khedkar can breach the scrutiny system of the complainant, why not others.

## Rajnath urged to stop export of arms and ammunition to Israel

The Hindu Bureau  
NEW DELHI

A group of 25 "concerned" citizens, which includes former judges, diplomats, activists, writers, and economists, has written to Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, urging him to cancel licences for the export of arms and ammunition to Israel as it is in violation of India's commitment under international law and the constitutional mandate.

"We are writing to you as concerned citizens, alarmed at the continued grant of export licences and permissions to various Indian companies, for the supply of military arms and munitions to Israel, since the war on Gaza be-

gan. The International Court of Justice (ICJ) has clearly ruled that Israel is in violation of obligations under the Genocide Convention and further that Israel is in illegal occupation of the occupied Palestinian territory," the group said in the letter dated July 30. The letter addressed to Mr. Singh was also marked to the Secretary, Defence Production and the Director-General, Foreign Trade.

In light of these rulings, any supply of military material to Israel would amount to a violation of India's obligations under international humanitarian law and the mandate of Article 21 read with Article 51(c) of the Constitution of India, the citizens noted.

## Observations on creamy layer among SCs cause confusion

Abhinav Lakshman  
NEW DELHI

The observations by the Supreme Court judges on Thursday calling for the exclusion of the "creamy layer" among the Scheduled Castes from reservation in jobs and education have caused widespread confusion among large sections of vocal Dalit communities across the country.

A prominent Dalit scholar and researcher at the University of London, Arvind Kumar, argued that the Supreme Court did not have to consider the question of a "creamy layer" for the Scheduled Castes at all. "Even as per its own framing of the question in this case, the court was not supposed to look into the issue of creamy layer among SCs," Mr. Kumar said in a chatroom discussion on social media organised by columnist Dilip Mandal hours after the judgment.

Subhagit Naskar, assistant professor at Jadavpur University, agreed, adding, "There is not much the Dalit community can hope for when some judges on the Bench have quoted from

religious scriptures to justify their stance," referring to Justice Mithal's citations of verses from the the Bhagavad Gita.

## 'A disaster'

Ravikant Kisana, associate professor of Cultural Studies at Woxsen University, Hyderabad, added, "Creamy layer has been a disaster for OBCs. It needs renewal and bureaucracy of getting it done is so frustrating that many OBCs simply can't use it. This will be fate of SC/ST creamy layer too!"

Though the majority judgment penned by Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud has ruled that there is "social heterogeneity" among the SCs based on "historical and empirical evidence", many activists have criticised the judgment permitting sub-classification, arguing that it was not based on any "current and empirical" data. Shalin Maria Lawrence, a prominent Dalit activist from Chennai, said, "There is nothing called 'developed' or 'progressed' in terms of caste. Caste capital is not economic capital. I hope people understand the difference."



## APPEAL

Master Sadappa son of Lavappa 13 years admitted in Mazumdar Shah Medical Center is diagnosed with **Aplastic Anemia**. Aplastic Anemia is a condition that occurs when body stops producing enough new blood cells. The only curative treatment is Bone Marrow Transplant. Hence we are planning to use one of the parents as donor (Haplo Identical). The approximate cost estimation of the procedure is **Rs. 28,00,000/-**.

Please send donation however small and save the boy. Cheque/ D.D./M.O. favouring **Save Poor Lives A/c Sadappa**. Our Account details: S/B Account No. 20000913487, State Bank of India, R.A.Puram, and IFSC Code: SBIN001855. You can donate through Google Pay No. 9884607377, UPI ID: savepoorlives@oksbil. All donations are exempted under 80G of I.T. Act. Save Poor Lives Registered Public Charitable Trust, Flat No. A1, Ceebros Garden, Ground Floor, Old No.76, Kamarajar Salai, Raja Annamalaiapuram, Chennai-600028. Contact No. 044 4204165 & 044 35691848. Mobile: 984607377. Email: savepoorlives@gmail.com Our website: www.savepoorlives.com

## MP seeks Rajya Sabha debate on Home affairs

The Hindu Bureau  
NEW DELHI

Almost the entire Opposition raised the demand that the Rajya Sabha hold a discussion on the functioning of the Union Home Ministry, which has a direct bearing on the State governments, with many issues that have overlapping areas of jurisdiction.

The YSR Congress Party and the Bharat Rashtra Samithi are the only Opposition parties which have not endorsed the demand.

The Biju Janata Dal joined the Opposition INDIA bloc in demanding the debate.

Trinamool Congress leader in the Rajya Sabha, Derek O'Brien, said, "I appeal to the Chair, please do not shy away from it. This is the Council of States and so many States have to deal with the Home Ministry. We want to speak to the Home Minister and want to hear from him."

The Trinamool had earlier raised the issue during Wednesday's Business Advisory Committee meeting, and wrote to Rajya Sabha Chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar on Thursday.

# Railways will soon add 2,500 general coaches, says Minister

Vaishnav says long-term plan is to manufacture 10,000 additional general coaches to ease travel; adds that the Ministry now has necessary resources to roll out KAVACH train protection system

The Hindu Bureau  
NEW DELHI

Union Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnav said on Thursday that the national transporter would add nearly 2,500 general coaches in the coming months.

Taking part in a discussion in the Lok Sabha on the demands for grants under the railway Budget, he said the ratio of general coaches, including sleeper and non-AC coaches, to AC coaches was almost 2:1. Approximately 2,500 additional general coaches would be manufactured in the coming months. Apart from this, nearly 10,000 additional general coaches would be produced in the foreseeable future, ensuring their smooth availability, he added.

During the discussion, he said the Railways was the lifeline of the country and a crucial organisation upon which the nation's economy depended. He urged Parliament to depoliticise Railways and focus



Key sector: Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnav says additional general coaches will be built in the coming months. FILE PHOTO

on its improvement for the benefit of the country.

### Flaw detection tests

Mr. Vaishnav stated that track failure, a prime reason for rail accidents, had been addressed. Over the past 10 years, 26,52,000 ultrasonic flaw detection tests had been conducted, and new technologies incorporated.

In 2013-14, there were around 2,500 rail fractures, but by 2024, these had decreased to 324, an

85% reduction, he said.

On the automatic train protection (ATP) mechanism, he said Prime Minister Narendra Modi decided to develop it in 2014, with KAVACH undergoing its first trials in 2016 and receiving the SIL-4 certification in 2019.

He added that in 2022, a 3,000-km project was initiated for the implementation of this system, and in 2024, version 4.0 of KAVACH was approved. He noted that there were cur-

rently three manufacturers of KAVACH, with two more being added. Additionally, 8,000 engineers had been trained. "We now have the necessary human resources and capabilities to roll out KAVACH on a large scale," he said.

Mr. Vaishnav also said 50 Amrit Bharat trains would be added to the production line. A Vande Metro train, designed for a range of 150-200 km, is being tested.

He addressed the issue of unmanned railway crossings, noting that in 2019, there were 9,000 such crossings. This problem had now been resolved through the construction of rail overbridges, gates, and underpasses.

The Railway Minister said the stations now had control through electronic interlocking.

While only 837 stations had this technology between 2004 and 2014, a significant increase was seen in the next decade, with 2,964 stations covered from 2014 to 2024.

## Cong. urges Dhankhar to amend ruling on RSS

The Hindu Bureau  
NEW DELHI

A day after Rajya Sabha Chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar ruled that Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) has constitutional rights to participate in the development journey of the country, senior Congress leader and member of the Upper House Digvijaya Singh on Thursday wrote to him, requesting him to amend his ruling.

Mr. Singh argued that the RSS is an "unregistered" organisation, and urged Mr. Dhankhar to allow him to raise the issue on the floor of the House under a relevant rule of the Rajya Sabha.

"I would like to draw your attention to your observations where you have given an unregistered body the constitutional rights to intervene unabashedly in functioning of government at all levels," he added.

Separately, Congress general secretary (communication) Jairam Ramesh, in a post on X, alleged that the organisation had a "long history of corroding the sovereignty and integrity of India".

# Amid uproar over his remarks, Anurag hits back at Cong.

The Hindu Bureau  
NEW DELHI



Anurag Thakur

BJP leader and Lok Sabha member Anurag Thakur on Thursday accused the Congress and its "ancestors" of conspiring against reservation for backward classes and Dalits.

Referring to the uproar by the Opposition on his caste-related remarks during the Budget debate on Tuesday, Mr. Thakur said: "My speech deeply hurt the sense of entitlement of some people as a result of which the entire ecosystem of the Congress is creating a hue and cry. They feel that only they have the right to ask questions because they are privileged. These are the same people whose ancestors used to call the backward, Dalits and deprived as fools."

Mr. Thakur alleged that former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi had "publicly called" people from the backward communities "fools".

"Rahul Gandhi and the Congress party should read the Lucknow edition of Navbharat Times dated

March 3, 1985, that had a byline of Alok Mehta, whose interview was titled 'No promotion of intellectuals in the name of reservation'. Late Shri Rajiv Gandhi had said that he will not promote fools in the name of reservation," he said.

Mr. Thakur asked if the Congress would condemn the statement made by Rajiv Gandhi in the interview. "Will any resolution be passed against that statement," he asked.

"If the feudals in the Congress party had not obstructed the Mandal report and Kaka Kalelkar report, then the situation would have been different today," he said.

## Kharge demands details of Centre's job incentive schemes

The Hindu Bureau  
NEW DELHI

Calling the employment-linked incentive scheme announced in this year's Budget "tokenism", Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge on Thursday asked the government to spell out the details of the scheme.

"A week into the 'Kursi Bachao Budget', the academia and the industry awaits clarity from the Modi Govt on its Tokenism regarding the so-called 'employment-linked incentive' schemes," Mr. Kharge said in a post on X.

Crores of youth want a permanent solution to their plight of jobs, but the Narendra Modi government has not even offered a temporary solution, the Congress chief said. "The 'B' in BJP's Budget stands for 'Betrayal'!" Mr. Kharge alleged.

The Congress chief wondered how will the government nudge 500 top companies to hire 4,000 interns every year if "it couldn't create a con-

ducive environment for private investment".

"Was there any stakeholder consultation before imposing this half-copied idea from the Congress Manifesto? The Congress Manifesto had a 'Right to Apprenticeship' - which is a structured system of training where individuals, known as apprentices, learn a trade or profession through a combination of on-the-job training and classroom instruction," Mr. Kharge said.

### Raising questions

He added that the Modi government's Budget had merely internships forced upon the industry with no long-term solution in sight. Why were none of these employment-linked incentive schemes missing the public sector component, he asked. Was it because the BJP wanted no recruitment of SC, ST, OBC and EWS youth in the public sector through reservation? Why were all these schemes providing temporary employment and internships?

## CISF keeps a dossier on all its personnel, says Minister

The Hindu Bureau  
NEW DELHI

The Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) maintains a dossier on all its personnel deployed at public interfaces, and monitors their social media activity, the government informed Parliament in reply to a question from BJP MP Kangana Ranaut, who was allegedly assaulted by a constable at Chandigarh airport in June.

The information was shared by Minister of State for Civil Aviation Murlidhar Mohol in the Lok Sabha. Ms. Ranaut had asked a question on whether the government had "any monitoring system for the scrutiny of CISF personnel at airports to know about their involvement/influence by some negative elements or activities, which results in bad behaviour with passengers".

The Minister said the CISF maintained the dossier at the unit level and these were scrutinised when deciding to deploy them at a public interface.

# Opposition targets Centre over roof leak in Parliament, seeks discussion

The Hindu Bureau  
NEW DELHI

The stark image of a blue plastic bucket placed in the lobby of the new Parliament building to catch the drips from a leak in the roof triggered an Opposition attack against the government on Thursday, with the Congress moving an adjournment motion to discuss the matter.

The Lok Sabha Secretariat, however, said that there had only been "minor leakage" as "the adhesive material used to fix the glass domes over the lobby of the building was slightly displaced" in the rain that lashed the national capital on Wednesday. Massive waterlogging was also seen in and around the Parliament complex.

The new Parliament building, built at an estimated cost of ₹71 crore, was inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi a little over a year ago.

Posting a video on X, showing the leaky dome and the bucket placed on the wet floors of the lobby, Congress MP Manickam



Rain water leaking from the ceiling of the new Parliament building on Thursday. PTI

Tagore said, "Paper leakage outside, water leakage inside. The recent water leakage in the Parliament lobby used by the President highlights urgent weather resilience issues in the new building, just a year after completion." He later submitted a notice for moving an adjournment motion to discuss the matter in the Lok Sabha.

Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav also took a swipe at the new building

on his X account. "The old Parliament was better than this new Parliament as there even former MPs could come and meet. Why not go back to the old Parliament building, at least till the time the water leakage programme is going on in the [new] Parliament building built with billions of rupees," he posted, also sharing a video of the leak. "People are asking whether water dripping from every new roof constructed under the BJP government is a part of their well-thought out design or..." he said.

### 'Monstrous edifice'

Trinamool Congress MPs also slammed the design of the new building. "The new Parliament building has no porch and steep precipitous steps. Last night when there was a cloudburst in Delhi, it was the sturdy old Parliament building which came to our rescue - sheltering us under its thoughtfully designed porch and providing some dry ground. The new building built hurriedly and without shelter,

failed, while the old one stood firm," Lok Sabha member Sagarika Ghose said on X. Her party colleague, Mahua Moitra, termed the building "a monstrous edifice to @narendramodi's ego", and said "it is only fitting that it has got shaky post 2024 Lok Sabha results".

In its statement, the Lok Sabha Secretariat dismissed doubts over the resilience of the structure.

"[I]t is worth mentioning that keeping in view the concept of Green Parliament, glass domes have been provided in several parts of the building, including in the Lobby, so that abundant natural light could be utilized in day to day work of the Parliament. During the heavy rain on Wednesday, the adhesive material used to fix the glass domes over the Lobby of the Building was slightly displaced, causing minor leakage of water in the Lobby," it said.

"The problem was, however, detected timely and corrective measures were taken immediately," the statement said.

## Cong. forms panels for Assembly elections

The Hindu Bureau  
NEW DELHI

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge on Thursday set up screening committees to shortlist the party's potential candidates for the coming Assembly elections in four States.

While Ajay Maken will head the panel for Haryana, Madhusudan Mistry will be the chairman of the committee on Maharashtra.

In Jharkhand, Girish Chodankar will head the panel, while the committee on Jammu and Kashmir will be headed by Sukhinder Singh Randhawa.

Meanwhile, Congress general secretary and Lok Sabha member K.C. Venugopal is likely to head the Public Accounts Committee of Parliament. Fifteen members were elected to the committee, in which the Congress has two members: Mr. Venugopal and Fatehgarh Sahib MP Amar Singh. Usually, the lead Opposition party chairs the committee.

**TIRUMALA TIRUPATI DEVASTHANAMS-TIRUPATI NOTIFICATION**  
Roc.No.TTD-32021(31)/2/2020-HOT-FID. Dated:01-08-2024  
Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams desired to arrange the best quality drinking water to the visiting pilgrims to Tirumala. Interested parties who can supply pure drinking water in glass bottles at reasonable price are requested to contact Health Officer, TTD, Tirumala.  
For further details contact: 9866235432.  
TTD-40021(31)/1/2024-PRO SEC (Adv.No.94) Date:01-08-2024 EXECUTIVE OFFICER

**KERALA WATER AUTHORITY e-Tender Notice**  
Tender No : (1) Re-E-Tender No 22/2024-25/SE/PHC/CHN (2) Re-E-Tender No. 23/2024-25/SE/PHC/CHN (3) Re-E-Tender No 25/2024-25/SE/PHC/CHN JUM - WSS to Aikkarannadu, Mazhuvannoor & Kunathunadu Pt-1 (1) Laying RWPM and CWP/MP - Pipeline Work (2) Construction of 17 MLD Water Treatment Plant and allied works at Peringole - General Civil Work (3) Construction of 9m dia well cum pump house - General Civil Work. EMD : Rs. (1) 500000, (2) 500000, (3) 200000. Tender Fee : Rs. (1) 19518 (3) 13010. Last Date for Submitting Tender : 16-08-2024, 03:00 pm. Phone : 0484 2360645. Website : www.kwa.kerala.gov.in, www.etenders.kerala.gov.in  
KWA-JB-GL-6-323-2024-25 Superintending Engineer, PH Circle, Kochi

**PUNJAB STATE POWER CORPORATION LTD.**  
Regd. Office : PSEB Head Office, The Mall, Patiala-147001.  
Corporate Identity Number: U40109PB2010SGC033813  
Website: www.pspcl.in, (Contact No. 96461-18774)  
Tender Enquiry No. MQP-239/2024-25/PR Dated: 01.08.2024  
CE/Metering, PSPCL, C-3, Shakti Vihar, PSPCL, Patiala invites E-tender for procurement of 1,44,000 no. 1-in-1 Polycarbonate Meter Boxes (Cabinets) for incorporating Single Phase Energy Meters. For detailed NIT & Tender Specification please refer to https://eproc.punjab.gov.in from 01.08.2024 (03:00 PM onwards).  
Note: Corrigendum and amendments, if any, will be published online at https://eproc.punjab.gov.in  
C-521/24 76155/12/3212/2023/36277

**TRANSMISSION CORPORATION OF TELANGANA LIMITED**  
TENDER NOTIFICATION  
TENDER SPECIFICATION No.CTO-01/2024  
TGTRANSCO invites sealed bids (Two part) against Tender Specification No.CTO-01/2024 for Fixing up of Rate contract Prices for Erection and oil filtration works of 220KV & 132KV class Power Transformers. The details of Bid Specification, Bid Sale opening date and Bid submission closing date etc., are available at TGTRANSCO website.  
Ph.No:040-23393453, 23396000, Extn.No.3365,3620,3322,3661. Sd/-  
DIPR R.O. No. : 288-PP/CL-AGENCY/ADVT/1/2024-25, Date: 01-08-2024. Chief Engineer/Transmission

भारत सरकार - अंतरिक्ष विभाग / GOVERNMENT OF INDIA - DEPARTMENT OF SPACE  
निर्माण एवं अनुसंधान समूह, एसडीएससी-शार / CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE GROUP, SDSC-SHAR  
श्रीहरिकोटा / नेल्लूर (ज़िला), आ.प्र. / SRIHARIKOTA - 524124  
संक्षिप्त ई-निविदा सूचना / Brief E-TENDER NOTICE  
सं.शारसीएमजी सिविल: अनुसंधान: ई-जन निविदा / No: SHAR:CMGCIVIL:MAINT:EP-04/24-25 तिथि/Date: 31.07.2024  
भारत के राष्ट्रपति की ओर से "पुलीकट नगर एवं स्वर्णमुखी आवासीय कालोनियों में 20 एचपी मल निकास पाइप सेटों की आपूर्ति एवं उन्हें स्थापित करना" (टीसी-24-018, अनुमानित लागत ₹ 11.00 लाख), "एसडीएससी शार के फेज-1 में बाइसे से संबंधित कार्य" (टीसी-24-019, अनुमानित लागत ₹ 12.14 लाख), "एसडीएससी शार के जोरो पॉइंट में पीयू जल रोचन कार्य, नियंत्रण केंद्र भवन एवं एफएलपी में जल रिसाव रोकना, जी01 भवन" (टीसी-24-020, अनुमानित लागत ₹ 37.70 लाख), "एसडीएससी शार के वाल्ट प्रशासन भवन में जल रिसाव रोकना एवं एसएमपी व ईटीएफ क्षेत्र में कक्षा का निर्माण, एसएचएसबी तथा सिविल नवीनीकरण कार्य, 6सी भवन" (टीसी-24-021, अनुमानित लागत ₹ 19.20 लाख), "एसडीएससी शार की एसएमपीसी यूनिट-1, में विविध सिविल कार्य" (टीसी-24-022, अनुमानित लागत ₹ 32.92 लाख), "एसडीएससी शार में विविध सिविल कार्य" (टीसी-24-023, अनुमानित लागत ₹ 15.82 लाख) हेतु मूद्र ई-निविदाएं आमंत्रित की जाती हैं। निविदा दस्तावेजों को 16.08.2024 को 14:30 बजे तक डाउनलोड किया जा सकता है। इच्छुक निविदाकार विस्तृत सूचना के लिए 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 "Supplying & fixing of 20 HP sewage pump sets at PCN & SMN Housing colonies" (T/C-24-018, Est. cost ₹ 11.00 Lakhs); "Fencing works @ PHC-II, SDSC SHAR" (T/C-24-019, Est. cost ₹ 12.14 Lakhs); "PU waterproof treatment works, Control center bldg at Zero Point & Arresting water leakages, G10 bldg at FLP, SDSC SHAR" (T/C-24-020, Est. cost ₹ 37.70 Lakhs); "Arresting water leakages, VALF Admin bldg & Construction of room, SHSB & civil renovation works, 6C bldg at SMP & ETF area, SDSC SHAR" (T/C-24-021, Est. cost ₹ 19.20 Lakhs); "Misc civil works at SMP Unit-1, SDSC SHAR" (T/C-24-022, Est. cost ₹ 32.92 Lakhs); "Misc civil works at FLP, SDSC SHAR" (T/C-24-023, Est. cost ₹ 15.82 Lakhs). Tender documents can be downloaded up to 16.08.2024, 14:30 hrs. Interested tenderers may visit www.isro.gov.in or www.tenderwizard.com/ISRO for details.  
हस्ताक्षरित-समूह प्रबंधन, सीएमजी / एसडीएससी शार / Sd/- GROUP HEAD, CMG / SDSC SHAR

**GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA**  
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF CONSTRUCTION ENGINEER, RURAL WORKS CIRCLE : SUNDARGARH  
AT/PO-SANKARA, SUNDARGARH-770020, E-mail: address-serw\_sundargarh@yahoo.com  
No.Tender Online - RWCCESNG-06 of 2024-25, Letter No.1739 /Dt.31.07.2024  
e-Procurement NOTICE  
1. Type of the Work : Buildings (OMBADC & DMF)  
2. Class of Contractor : As specified in the column-6 of the Annexure  
3. Time of Completion : As specified in the column-5 of the Annexure  
4. Detail Projects : As per Annexure attached  
5. Estimated Cost : As specified in the column-4 of the Annexure  
6. Other details:  
Procurement Officer Bid Identification No. Availability of Tender on-line for bidding From To Last Date & Time of Seeking Tender Tender Clarification Date & Time of Opening of tender Technical Bid Financial Bid  
1 Chief Construction Engineer, Rural Works Circle, Sundargarh RWCCESNG-06 of 2024-25 08.08.2024 11:00 AM 28.08.2024 5:00 PM 27.08.2024 5:00 PM 29.08.2024 11:00 AM Will be intimated separately  
Further details can be seen from the website www.tendersodisha.gov.in  
Chief Engineer (Design & Quality Control)  
Chief Construction Engineer (I/C), Rural Works Circle, Sundargarh, OIPR-251331/1/0011/2425

**OFFICE OF DISTRICT SUPPLY OFFICER, Dausa**  
COLLECTORATE CAMPUS, DAUSA 303303  
Mail-ID dsofood-dau-rj@nic.in  
File No. DSO/DAUSA/PDS/TENDER/2024/488 Dt. 26-07-2024  
NOTICE INVITING BID  
e-Bids for selection of Handling and Transportation of Food grains Under PDS from FCI Depot in District Dausa are invited from interested bidders up to 16.08.2024. Other particulars of the bid may be visited on the procurement portal (https://proc.rajashtan.gov.in or http://spp.rajashtan.gov.in) of the state. The approximate value of the procurement is Rs. 37152400/- for one year.  
UBN FCC2425SLOB00050  
NIB - FCC2425A0030  
District supply officer  
Dausa  
DIPRC/6771/2024

**TNPJ TAMILNADU NEWSPRINT AND PAPERS LIMITED**  
Kagithapuram - 639 136, Karur Dist. Tamil Nadu.  
Ph.: 04324-277001 (10 Lines), E-Mail: purchase.engg@tnpl.co.in  
NOTICE INVITING TENDER  
Tender No. Material Description Due date  
242513 Procurement of Shaft & Sleeve Annual 16.08.2024  
002463 Rate Contract  
TNPL will follow Two Bid system and E-Tender cum Auction. Corrigendum if any will be issued in TNPL website & NIC Portal only. Detailed Terms & conditions are available in the tender document which can be downloaded from website : https://tntenders.gov.in/nicep/app  
DIPR/2705/Tender/2024 TNPL - Maker of bagasse based eco-friendly Paper

**IN BRIEF**



**Lt-Gen. Sadhna Saxena Nair is DG, Medical Services of Army**

Lieutenant-General Sadhna Saxena Nair assumed the office of Director General, Medical Services (Army) on Thursday, becoming the first woman to be appointed to this position. Prior to this, she was the first woman to hold the post of DG Hospital Services (Armed Forces) on promotion to the rank of Air Marshal. Lieutenant-General Nair graduated from the Armed Forces Medical College, Pune and was commissioned into the Army Medical Corps in December 1985. She is also the first woman Principal Medical Officer of Western Air Command, and Training Command, Indian Air Force. She was nominated as an expert member of Dr. Kasturirangan Committee for drafting part of the medical education component of the National Education Policy.

**Air India cancels flights to Tel Aviv amid Israel-Iran tensions**

Air India cancelled its flights to and from Tel Aviv on Thursday amid rising tensions between Israel and Iran which have led to several global airlines suspending operations to the Ben Gurion Airport. Air India said that passengers with confirmed bookings on the two flights will be provided a one-time waiver on rescheduling and cancellations charges. Germany's Lufthansa and another airline from the same group, Swiss International Air Lines, have cancelled all passenger and cargo flights to and from Tel Aviv with immediate effect till August 8. They have also extended a suspension of flights to the Lebanese capital of Beirut till August 12.

**States can directly buy rice from FCI, says Food Minister**

They need not take part in e-auction for buying additional stock; Centre brings 16 more items under price monitoring system, launches app

**The Hindu Bureau**  
NEW DELHI

Union Food and Consumer Affairs Minister Pralhad Joshi announced here on Thursday that State governments can directly purchase rice from the Food Corporation of India (FCI) under the Open Market Sale Scheme (Domestic) from Thursday without participating in e-auction.

According to the Centre, the decision was taken to reduce the huge surplus stocks ahead of the procurement after this kharif season.

Mr. Joshi said if the States wanted to procure more rice over the stipulated 5 kg of free grain per individual under the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY), they could procure it for ₹2,800 per quintal (excluding transportation cost), instead of the earlier rate of ₹2,900 per quintal. The Centre will directly offload rice to the States under the scheme.

Speaking on the PMGKAY, Mr. Joshi main-



The decision was taken by the Centre to reduce the surplus stocks ahead of the procurement after the kharif season. SRINATH M

tained that the Centre would continue to provide free foodgrains to about 81.35 crore beneficiaries for a period of five years with effect from January 1, 2024, with an estimated financial outlay of ₹11.8 lakh crore borne by the Centre. He said the Centre had successfully completed all three phases of replacing custom-milled rice with fortified rice in every scheme of the government.

**Vegetable prices**  
On the increasing prices of vegetables, he said the issue was seasonal.

Tomato price was stabilising, and the Centre had

made subsidised tomato available at ₹60 a kg without the use of price stabilisation fund.

He launched the 4.0 version of the Price Monitoring System (PMS) mobile app on which prices of 22 commodities were monitored daily. "Now, prices of 38 commodities will be monitored. We are now adding 16 more commodities," he added. The 16 food items are bajra (whole), jowar (whole), ragi (whole), suji (wheat), maida (wheat), besan, ghee, butter (pasteurised), brinjal, egg, black pepper, coriander, cumin seed, red chillies, turmeric powder and banana.

**Allahabad HC rejects plea by Shahi Idgah mosque committee**

**Ishita Mishra**  
NEW DELHI

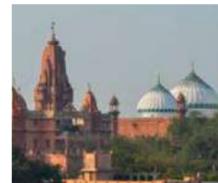
The Allahabad High Court on Thursday dismissed the plea filed by Mathura-based Shahi Idgah mosque committee, challenging maintainability of 18 lawsuits seeking removal of the mosque from the 13.37-acre complex, which it shares with the Katra Keshav Dev temple.

The court observed that the Places of Worship Act does not define "religious character" and to attract provisions of this Act, the religious character of a place of worship must be determined.

A main suit pertaining to the Krishna Janmabhoomi-Shahi Idgah mosque dispute remains pending in the court. It was filed by the Hindu worshippers who believe that Lord Krishna was born at the complex in Mathura. These petitioners maintain that the mosque was built on the orders of Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb, after demolishing a Hindu temple.

Hearing the batch of cases, the High Court had last year ordered a survey of the mosque by a three-member team, which was stayed by the Supreme Court earlier this month.

Rejecting the Muslim side's plea in which the



A view of Shahi Idgah mosque and Shri Krishna Janmabhoomi Temple in Mathura. PTI

Hindu side's lawsuits were challenged citing the Places of Worship Act, 1991, the Limitation Act, 1963, and the Specific Relief Act, 1963, the Bench of Justice Mayank Kumar Jain said all 18 suits filed in the matter in the past two decades were maintainable, paving the way for trial.

The court noted that in the present proceedings, the question of religious character is a mixed question of facts and law. "This court is of the opinion that the religious character of the suit property cannot be determined at this stage. It can only be decided by framing issues on the basis of the pleadings of the parties and after taking oral and documentary evidence to be led during the trial," the court said.

The mosque committee had argued that the Hindu plaintiffs had already admitted that a compromise was made between the two parties in 1968.

**Delhi riots case: Khalid Saifi moves High Court**

**The Hindu Bureau**  
NEW DELHI

'United Against Hate' founder Khalid Saifi on Thursday approached the Delhi High Court against the invocation of the charge of attempt to murder against him in a case related to the 2020 north-east Delhi riots.

Mr. Saifi's counsel argued that the charge under Section 307 (attempt to murder) of the Indian Penal Code can't be framed against him once the offences under the Arms Act were dropped. Moreover, neither any weapon was recovered nor the alleged gunshot was attributed to him, the counsel said.

Justice Manoj Kumar Ohri, however, orally remarked that in view of the statements of witnesses about Mr. Saifi's presence at the place of the incident and "provocation", he was not inclined to entertain the plea. The judge said, "I will pass the order."

In January, a Delhi court had framed charges of attempt to murder, rioting and unlawful assembly against former Congress councillor Ishrat Jahan, Mr. Saifi, and 11 others.

While Ms. Jahan is out on bail, Mr. Saifi is still in jail as his bail plea is pending with the Delhi High Court.

**People protest over conflict, displacement in Manipur**

**The Hindu Bureau**  
GUWAHATI

The police in Manipur's capital Imphal fired tear gas shells to restore order after a rally on Thursday by people displaced by the 16-month-long ethnic conflict in the State turned violent.

About 100 inmates of the Akampat relief camp in Imphal had taken out a rally demanding the rehabilitation of those displaced by the clashes between the Meitei and Kuki-Zo people, and a resolution of the ethnic conflict.

Locals said panic set in among students of a school in the area when the protest turned violent. The protesters were mostly from the India-Myanmar border town of Moreh who were displaced in the early days of the conflict in 2023.

**Vishalgad violence: Awhad's SUV attacked over remarks on Chhatrapati Sambhajiraje**

**Snehal Mutha**  
MUMBAI

NCP (SP) leader Jitendra Awhad's car was vandalised in Mumbai on Thursday allegedly over his remarks against Swaraj Party leader and former Rajya Sabha MP Chhatrapati Sambhajiraje following violence over encroachments at Vishalgad fort in Kolhapur last month.

Before fleeing, the attackers had raised slogans in support of Mr. Sambhajiraje, the son of Kolhapur MP Shahu Maharaj, a descendant of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj.

Mr. Awhad had criticised Mr. Sambhajiraje's 'Chalo Vishalgad' move and asked him to "check his blood as someone from Shahu Maharaj's family

**NCP (SP) leader had criticised Swaraj Party leader for leading a march to the fort in Kolhapur**

cannot say something that will cause riots".

The NCP (SP) leader said he has no intention of filing a case over the incident and would handle it in his own way. "By blood test, I meant Shivaji Maharaj was a man of unity. Causing conflicts was never in his blood. Sambhajiraje's behaviour does not align with Maharaj's teachings. Sambhajiraje has been used to destroy the peace of Maharashtra after the Lok Sabha election," he said.

The incident comes just two days after Maharashtra

Navnirman Sena (MNS) workers allegedly damaged NCP MLC Amol Mitkari's car in Akola after he criticised MNS chief Raj Thackeray for targeting Deputy CM Ajit Pawar over recent waterlogging in Pune.

He had called Mr. Thackeray the "most unsuccessful person" in Maharashtra politics, and said he has no authority to criticise the work of Mr. Pawar.

**MNS workers detained**  
The Akola police detained four MNS workers on Thursday for their alleged role in the incident.

Mr. Mitkari also staged a protest outside the Akola Superintendent of Police's office, demanding the arrest of all the accused. He later withdrew the protest after meeting the SP.

**Punitive tax on imported laboratory chemicals removed after furore**

**Jacob Koshy**  
NEW DELHI

In a relief to scientists and researchers across the country, the Finance Ministry has clarified that all imported 'laboratory chemicals', except denatured ethanol, will be taxed at 10% instead of 150% as was first proposed in the Union Budget on July 23.

Imported laboratory chemicals are a critical component of research in nearly every domain of science. They include reagents and enzymes that are usually extremely specific and not mass-produced, making them expensive and a significant overhead on the budget that scientists get for planning their research.

The Customs Department defines laboratory

chemicals as "all chemicals, organic or inorganic, whether or not chemically defined, imported in packings not exceeding 500 gm or 500 millilitres and which can be identified with reference to the purity, makings or other features to show them to be meant for use solely as laboratory chemicals".

**Seek clarification**

As *The Hindu* reported this week, several scientists went into a tizzy after companies that supply these chemicals informed them they would now have to pay 1.5 times the usual rate for their goods. Senior scientists wrote to funding agencies such as the Ministry of Science and Technology, asking for clarification on the new rate and even, if the Budget documents, had actually made a mis-



Imported laboratory chemicals include reagents and enzymes that are not mass produced.

print by writing 150% instead of 15%.

As it emerged, this wasn't a misprint. The Customs Department had hiked its rates allegedly to rein in imports of ethanol that were being brought in as 'laboratory chemicals'

to avoid the customs duty of 150%. There are broadly two kinds of ethanol. Ethanol, of varying grades, sourced from grain and used in the manufacture of alcohol, and, denatured ethanol, which is ethanol mixed with additives and unfit for consumption. The latter also comes in grades but is used in laboratories and in commercial applications.

Scientists told *The Hindu* that denatured alcohol is made by several local manufacturers and does not need to be imported.

However, the Finance Ministry notification also states that any laboratory chemical imported needs to be accompanied by a letter that says the goods will only be used in a laboratory and for research and not further traded for commercial gains.

**THE CROSSWORD+ 14243** (set by Arden)

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

**Across**

- Perhaps teach English to a Goddess (6)
- Contract for a short dress wearing attractive girl (8)
- "Damages the garden tool", did you say? It just wears out (5,4)
- Part of the mercurial Pope's court (5)
- Forgetfulness - crazy since the morning before (7)

**Down**

- Language expert - he is on support, it's arranged (8)
- Sorting out each length covering news agency (7)
- Walk around - confident it's highly valued (9)
- Cross boundary rope, interesting - both sides come again? (1,3,4,6)
- Old empire still preserved (5)
- Indian serial made on this subject (7)
- Vehicle for those who are late (6)
- I check there and whole thing becomes yellow (7-7)
- Sergie's gone finally, full of beans (9)
- Starts with a drop of alcohol during meals (8)
- Not on the usual route - that's strange (7)
- Story about one doctor and one pair of drums (7)
- Foot rest isn't right, so cause trouble (4,2)
- Number from top to bottom levels (5)

**SUDOKU**

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

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★☆☆☆

**Solution to previous puzzle**

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

**Solution to yesterday's Sudoku**

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

**MADGALDEEP** SCENT 3in1

**FAITH**

**Acquisition of knowledge**

Mankind has been blessed with the ability to think. This is a great boon. But it is a faculty that has to be sharpened through reading, said Malayaman in a discourse. Wealth that we acquire can be lost due to natural calamities, or it can be stolen from us. But what we read always remains with us, in times of joy and in times of sorrow. Thiruvalluvar tells us that unlike the things that we call wealth, education is true wealth. It is wealth that is never destroyed.

Thiruvalluvar says a learned man notices that the world is happy because he is well read. And this serves as an impetus for him to read more. There are two types of knowledge - that which we need for managing daily life, and spiritual knowledge. Thirumoolar says there was a time when he had not understood the meaning of Self. When he did, his previous state of ignorance vanished. In another verse in his Tirumandiram, Thirumoolar says as long as a man has no self-realisation, he gets caught in worldly life. Once he understands the nature of the *atma*, he acquires divinity. Thus, while we need to acquire knowledge that helps us tackle the everyday problems of life, and to make a living, this alone is not enough. For the *atma* to attain liberation, one must also pay attention to spiritual knowledge. Learning and reading must continue throughout life and must not be time bound.

**IN BRIEF**



**NMDC's iron ore output slid 11%, sales rose over 5% in July**

Mining major NMDC reported iron ore production slid 11% to 2.17 million tonne in July, from the 2.44 MT a year earlier, while sales of the key raw material used in steel production rose more than 5% to 3.06 MT. For the four months ended July, production totalled 11.36 MT (13.15 MT) and sales 13.13 MT (13.89 MT), India's largest iron ore producer said in a filing on Thursday. Sources cited monsoon impact on mining operations as reason for the July performance.

**Sun Pharma Q1 net rises 29% on cut in raw material cost**

Sun Pharma reported Q1 net profit grew 29% to ₹2,878.94 crore from ₹2,232.05 crore in the year-earlier period on shrinking material costs and revenue expansion. The company's revenue from operations rose 6% to ₹12,652.7 crore in Q1 FY25 from ₹11,940.8 crore in the same quarter of the previous year. Cost of materials consumed dropped 16% in the reporting quarter to ₹1,557.01 crore from ₹1,852.49 crore due to "better product mix", according to CFO C.S Muralidhar.

**Repco Home Finance Q1 net profit rises 18% to ₹105 crore**

Repco Home Finance Ltd.'s standalone net profit for the June quarter rose 18% from the year-earlier period to ₹105 crore. Net interest income rose by 8% to ₹175 crore, while total revenue from operations increased to ₹408 crore (₹364 crore). Net interest margin remained flat at 5.1%, the lender said in a statement. Gross non-performing assets declined to 4.25% from 5.5%, while net NPAs slid to 1.7% from 2.8%. Provisional coverage ratio was 61.8% (51.4%).

**GST receipts growth rallies to 10.3%, July kitty 3rd-highest ever**

Net receipts rise 14.4% with revenue from imports outpacing domestic transactions; refunds record a sharp decline; 14 States underperform

**Vikas Dhoot**  
NEW DELHI

India's gross Goods and Services Tax (GST) collections crossed ₹1.82 lakh crore to hit the third-highest monthly level in July, with revenue growth rebounding to 10.3% from June's three-year low of 7.6%.

Gross revenue from domestic transactions grew 8.9%, easing from 9.4% in June, but growth in taxes collected on imports bounced to 14.2%, from 2.4% a month earlier.

Sequentially, gross GST collections were 4.75% more than June's kitty of ₹1,73,813 crore. After effecting refunds, net GST collections rose 14.4% in July to ₹1,65,793 crore, with net import revenue up 17.3% and domestic transactions clocking a 13.5% rise. July's net GST revenues were 7.75% over June's figure of just under ₹1.54 lakh crore.

Net domestic revenues had risen 8.5% in June, while net receipts from imports had contracted 1.5% from June 2023 levels.

Tax experts noted a slowdown in refunds might be responsible for the sharper uptick in net tax collections vis-a-vis gross revenue. In June, refunds had grown 19.3% year-on-year, with both domestic and export-related refunds rising

**Strong showing**

Gross GST (GST) collections hit their third-highest monthly level in July to cross the ₹1.82 lakh crore-mark



- Gross monthly receipts hit a record high of more than ₹2.1 lakh crore in April
- Domestic GST refunds slid 34.1% in July while export-related refunds rose 1.4%
- Tax experts cited a slowdown in refunds as likely reason for sharper uptick in net tax collections

by more than 19%.

**Domestic refunds slip**

In contrast, domestic refunds slipped 34.1% in July, while export-related GST refunds rose 1.4%. Total refunds in July were 19.4% lower than a year earlier at ₹16,283 crore, which also marked an 18.4% drop from June's refunds of almost ₹20,000 crore.

July's revenue numbers were provisional, as per an official statement. Gross monthly GST receipts hit a record high of more than ₹2.1 lakh crore in April.

The Finance Ministry, which generally shared monthly GST revenue numbers through a press release on the first of every subsequent month since the introduction of the tax in 2017, had not issued such a statement for June.

June's figures were subsequently released on the indirect tax portal.

While total revenues

from domestic transactions were 8.9% higher, as many as five States clocked a contraction, including AP and HP. Revenue growth was milder than the national average in nine States, including Tamil Nadu and Bihar.

Gross GST revenues in the first four months of 2024-25 had risen 10.2% to ₹7.39 lakh crore. Net collections' growth was slightly higher at 11%, with a kitty of ₹6.56 lakh crore.

"There appears to be a wide divergence in the growth of collections compared with the same month last year across States even among the large manufacturing and consuming States," said M.S. Mani, partner, Deloitte India, noting the need to assess the variations based on sectoral data for these States.

Mr. Mani also said there "appears to be a slowdown on refunds".

**PMI signals factory activity eased in July**

**The Hindu Bureau**  
NEW DELHI

Growth in new orders and output eased slightly at Indian factories in July, even as firms raised selling prices at the fastest pace in almost 11 years amid a significant spike in input costs that accelerated at a two-year high rate, the HSBC India Manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) survey shows.

The seasonally adjusted PMI inched down to 58.1 in July, from June's 58.3.

"The continuous increase in the output price index, driven by input and labour cost pressure, may signal further inflationary



pressure," averred HSBC chief India economist Pranjul Bhandari.

About 7% of firms reported an uptick in hiring, with both permanent and short-term hires, but 92% reported no change in staff headcount. The pace of job creation dropped below June's levels, said S&P Global Market Intelligence.

**Nasscom slams GST notice to Infosys**

**The Hindu Bureau**  
BENGALURU

Nasscom on Thursday questioned the logic of a ₹32,000-crore GST notice to Infosys, without naming the firm, noting the move reflected a lack of understanding of the industry's operating model.

"Recent media reports of a GST demand of over ₹320 billion reflected a lack of understanding of the industry's operating model," the apex body observed.

"This is an industry-wide issue and multiple companies are facing avoidable litigation, uncertainty, concerns from investors and customers," Nasscom said in a state-

**'The issue at hand involves the applicability of GST through the reverse charge mechanism'**

ment. According to Nasscom, the issue at hand involves the applicability of GST through the reverse charge mechanism (RCM).

The GST enforcement authorities had been issuing notices for remittance by the Indian head office to its foreign branches for cases where there is no service between the head office and the foreign branch for this RCM, ignoring that this is not a case of 'import of service' by the head office from the branch.

**MARKETS**

**MARKET WATCH**

|           | THURSDAY | % CHANGE |
|-----------|----------|----------|
| Sensex    | 81,868   | -0.15    |
| US Dollar | 83.73    | -0.01    |
| Gold      | 72,500   | -0.76    |
| Brent oil | 80.18    | -0.64    |

**NIFTY 50**

|                  | PRICE    | CHANGE  |
|------------------|----------|---------|
| Adani Enter      | 3217.25  | -47.85  |
| Adani Ports      | 1590.15  | 20.25   |
| Apollo Hosp      | 6706.40  | 91.10   |
| Asian Paints     | 3099.35  | 14.90   |
| Axis Bank        | 1172.30  | -6.20   |
| Bajaj Auto       | 9730.50  | 66.30   |
| Bajaj Finserv    | 1634.80  | -16.85  |
| Bajaj Finance    | 6771.65  | -35.30  |
| Bharti Airtel    | 1505.50  | 13.35   |
| BPL              | 349.10   | -0.35   |
| Britannia Ind    | 5730.15  | -54.30  |
| Cipla            | 1546.20  | 1.90    |
| Coal India       | 540.40   | 18.20   |
| Divs Lab         | 4917.90  | -53.40  |
| Dr Reddys Lab    | 6887.95  | 137.45  |
| Eicher Motors    | 4968.80  | 6.10    |
| Grasim Ind       | 2767.00  | -9.75   |
| HCL Tech         | 1640.55  | -2.05   |
| HDFC Bank        | 1638.80  | 23.05   |
| HDFC Life        | 713.60   | -1.90   |
| Hero MotoCorp    | 5371.85  | -116.60 |
| Hindalco         | 673.50   | 3.90    |
| Hind Unilever    | 2715.55  | 3.90    |
| ICICI Bank       | 1210.10  | -4.80   |
| Indusind Bank    | 1419.85  | -7.35   |
| Infosys          | 1852.60  | -15.65  |
| ITC              | 493.70   | -1.65   |
| JSW Steel        | 934.55   | 6.30    |
| Kotak Bank       | 1792.65  | -15.25  |
| L&T              | 3779.30  | -35.70  |
| LTIMindtree Ltd. | 5678.90  | 20.75   |
| M&M              | 2828.40  | -79.40  |
| Maruti Suzuki    | 13359.05 | 243.25  |
| NestleIndia      | 2484.00  | 27.65   |
| NTPC             | 423.45   | 7.45    |
| ONGC             | 341.75   | 7.55    |
| PowerGrid Corp   | 361.10   | 12.90   |
| Reliance Ind     | 3030.60  | 19.75   |
| SBI Life         | 1767.25  | 13.60   |
| State Bank       | 862.65   | -9.75   |
| Shriram Finance  |          |         |
| Ltd.             | 2989.25  | 57.30   |
| Sun Pharma       | 1715.20  | -4.15   |
| DataConsumerPro- |          |         |
| duct             | 1208.35  | 19.40   |
| Tata Motors      | 1144.40  | -12.25  |
| Tata Steel       | 163.06   | -2.27   |
| TCS              | 4397.10  | 11.75   |
| Tech Mahindra    | 1544.45  | -9.95   |
| Titan            | 3468.35  | 9.40    |
| UltraTech Cement | 11984.50 | 97.30   |
| Wipro            | 521.55   | -0.45   |

**EXCHANGE RATES**

Indicative direct rates in rupees a unit except yen at 4 p.m. on August 01

| CURRENCY           | TT BUY | TT SELL |
|--------------------|--------|---------|
| US Dollar          | 83.52  | 83.84   |
| Euro               | 90.15  | 90.51   |
| British Pound      | 106.60 | 107.02  |
| Japanese Yen (100) | 55.54  | 55.75   |
| Chinese Yuan       | 11.52  | 11.57   |
| Swiss Franc        | 95.21  | 95.58   |
| Singapore Dollar   | 62.41  | 62.66   |
| Canadian Dollar    | 60.44  | 60.67   |
| Malaysian Ringgit  | 18.27  | 18.36   |
| Australian Dollar  | 54.56  | 54.77   |

Source: Indian Bank

**'India's per capita income to hit a quarter of U.S. levels in 75 years'**

**Vikas Dhoot**  
NEW DELHI

India may be the fastest growing major economy, but it will take 75 years for its per capita income to reach a quarter of U.S. income levels if current trends continue, the World Bank warned on Thursday, identifying it as one of 100-odd countries including China that face the risk of falling into the "middle income trap".

The World Bank made a reference to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision to turn India into a developed economy by 2047, "the centennial of independence" in its 'World Development Report 2024'. While governments

in India and other nations hope to accomplish the transition from a middle-income economy, like Korea, the multilateral lender said "it would be fair to conclude that it would be a miracle if today's middle-income economies manage to do in 50 years what Korea did in just 25."

**'Driving in first gear'**

Noting that many middle-income countries still use a playbook from the last century, relying mainly on policies designed to expand investment, World Bank group chief economist Indermit Gill posited that it was like "driving a car just in first gear and trying to make it go faster".

"If they stick with the

old playbook, most developing countries will lose the race to create reasonably prosperous societies by the middle of this century. At current trends, it will take China more than 10 years just to reach one-quarter of U.S. income per capita, Indonesia nearly 70 years, and India 75 years," Mr. Gill cautioned.

Nations such as China, India, Brazil, and South Africa face serious obstacles in efforts to become high-income countries, reckoned the World Bank, concluding that countries growing wealthier usually hit a "trap" at about 10% of annual U.S. GDP per person. This is currently the equivalent of \$8,000 today, or the middle of the

range of what the Bank classifies as "middle-income" countries.

By 2023, 108 countries were classified as middle-income, each with annual GDP per capita in the range of \$1,136 to \$13,845. Home to six billion people or 75% of the global population, with two out of every three persons living in extreme poverty, these countries generate more than 40% of global GDP.

Emphasising that the road ahead poses even stiffer challenges such as rapidly ageing populations and the difficulty of expediting economic progress without fouling the environment, Mr. Gill mooted a fresh approach to escape the 'middle-income trap'.

**Tube Investments Q1 net rises 5% to ₹154 cr.**

**The Hindu Bureau**  
CHENNAI

Tube Investments of India Ltd. (TII) reported first-quarter net profit rose 5% from the year-earlier period to ₹154 crore.

Total revenue from operations rose 10% to ₹1,960 crore, with revenue from engineering and metal forming divisions climbing ₹123 crore to ₹1,265 crore and by ₹16 crore to ₹358 crore, respectively, while in the mobility division it contracted by ₹6 crore to ₹181 crore, said TII.

Consolidated revenue from operations was ₹4,578 crore against ₹3,898 crore. Net profit rose to ₹314 crore from ₹284 crore.

**Tata Motors Q1 net soars 74% to ₹5,566 cr., revenue up 6%**

**The Hindu Bureau**  
MUMBAI

Tata Motors Ltd. reported first-quarter consolidated net profit grew 74% from the year-earlier period to ₹5,566 crore.

Consolidated revenue grew 5.7% to ₹1,08,048 crore year-on-year (YoY).

Jaguar Land Rover (JLR) revenue climbed 5.4% to ₹7,273 million with EBIT margins of 8.9% (+30 bps) driven by favourable volume, mix and material cost improvements, the company said in a filing.

Commercial Vehicles (CV) business reported a revenue of ₹17,849 crore, up 5.1% while EBIT margins improved to 8.9% (up 240 bps) benefiting from better realisations and ma-



terial cost savings.

Revenue of the Passenger Vehicles (PV) business slid 7.7% to ₹11,847 crore, reflecting challenging market conditions but EBITDA at 5.8% rose 50 bps on material-cost reduction.

"The first quarter has carried forward the momentum of last year with all businesses continuing to deliver on their distinc-

tive strategies," said P.B. Balaji, Group CFO. "We are confident of sustaining the performance in the coming quarters and delivering a strong year."

Stating the PV market was subdued in July, he said the segment would grow in the coming quarters with new products and festive demand.

The Board approved the scheme of demerger of Tata Motors into two separate listed firms viz. Tata Motors Ltd. and Tata Motors Passenger Vehicles Ltd..

In FY25 the company will be making a capital investment of ₹35,000 crore in JLR and ₹8,000 crore in the India business.

Mr. Balaji said the company would become debt free this year as planned.

**Products, strategies driving MRF's growth journey: CMD**

**N. Anand**  
CHENNAI

Following the disturbance to commercial shipping in the Red Sea, tyre major MRF is taking necessary steps to continue its growth journey driven by products and strategies, said Chairman and Managing Director K.M. Mammen.



K.M. Mammen

"The disturbance to commercial shipping in the Red Sea is a challenge both for imports of essential raw materials and exports. Given this situation, MRF will take necessary steps to continue its growth journey," he said, addressing shareholders at the 63rd Annual General Meeting.

Asserting that the Indian economy was expected to carry on the growth momentum of the previous year, he said the raw material prices had started increasing steeply in recent months, which needed to be addressed suitably. Also, the industry had to cover the impact of extended producers' respon-

sibility imposed by the government.

He also said that during 2023-24 raw material prices remained favourable. As a result, MRF was able to avoid any price increases. In fact, MRF also gave a price reduction in its star product in the truck tyre range S3C8, which was welcomed by customers.

Talking about export markets, he said sales in FY24 were impacted due to unfavourable regulatory restrictions in certain countries, the Red Sea crisis, and a severe shortage of forex in few markets. As a result, MRF saw a marginal increase in export turnover to ₹1,874 crore from ₹1,866 crore in the year earlier period.

**RITES posts muted performance in Q1, eyes faster execution of orders, says MD**

**Maitri Porecha**  
NEW DELHI

Railway PSU RITES posted muted performance in the first quarter of FY24-25 compared with the year-earlier period, and is now shifting focus to faster execution of orders including export orders received from Mozambique and Bangladesh to quicken revenue collection, said MD Rahul Mithal.

Operating revenue (consolidated), excluding other income, stood at ₹486 crore in Q1 FY25 as against ₹544 crore in Q1 FY24, which is a decline of 10.8%.

In the Q1 of FY24, supply of coaches to Mozambique had raked in ₹35 crore, while another ₹25



crore was brought in from Railway Inspection services provided to Indian Railways, for which RITES was the sole nominee, Mr. Mithal told *The Hindu* in an exclusive interview.

Due to a change in the policy of Indian Railways, which now empanels four companies - Intertek, Bureau Veritas, TUV (India) and RITES for inspecting wheels, rails, rolling stock

and so on, Mr. Mithal said revenue from inspection is being shared in four ways leading to a dip in earnings for RITES.

"Also, at ₹5 crore, the export segment has shown a dip of 87%, but fresh orders worth ₹1,200 crore for export of 200 coaches worth ₹900 crore to Bangladesh and 10 locomotives worth ₹300 crore to Mozambique will bring in enhanced revenue by the first quarter of the next financial year," Mr. Mithal said.

RITES had also created an India Middle East EU Corridor (IMEC) cell with its office, where it is pooling in internal resources as well as hiring additional resources to deliberate with multiple stakeholders in-

cluding ports, Ministry of Railways, and foreign governments to identify key challenges in building the corridor.

Commenting on the volatile situation due to the Israel-Palestine conflict, Mr. Mithal said the current focus in India is to develop the first India-UAE leg of IMEC.

"We are analysing the trade potential, cost of augmenting infrastructure, especially joining missing links, seamless integration of different IT system interfaces for different countries' ports and railways, integration of regulatory aspects like Customs as each port has their own port and cargo monitoring systems," he said.

**Maruti leads drop in July dealer sales of carmakers**

**Reuters**  
BENGALURU

India's top three carmakers by sales, on Thursday, reported a drop in car sales to domestic dealers in July as pent-up demand from last year began to taper off.

Hyundai Motor India's sales to dealers dropped 3.3% while Tata Motors' sales slid by 6%. Market leader Maruti Suzuki's sales fell 9.6%.

"For about two years, the industry has grown substantially. One year of consolidation is expected, so this year would be flat-ish," said Amit Hiranandani, auto sector lead analyst at brokerage SMIFS.

## SEOUL

## South Korea offers humanitarian aid to flood-hit North Korea



South Korea on Thursday offered to send aid supplies to North Korea to help the country recover from heavy rain and floods that submerged thousands of homes and huge swathes of farmland. It is unclear whether North Korea would accept South Korea's proposal for help since animosity between the rivals is at its highest. AP

## GAZA STRIP

## At least 15 Palestinians killed in Israeli strike on school in Gaza



Israeli forces hit a school in Shejaia in Gaza City on Thursday, killing at least 15 people and wounding 29, Palestinian civil emergency services said. The military said it had targeted fighters operating in a compound within the school that it said was used as a hideout for Hamas commanders and fighters. REUTERS

## KANO

## Bomb attack kills 19, injures 27 in northeastern Nigeria teahouse



A bomb exploded in a teahouse in Kawuri village in Borno State in northeast Nigeria, killing 19 people and wounding 27, security sources said on Thursday. No group has claimed responsibility for Wednesday's blast, but the Boko Haram jihadist group and Islamic State West Africa Province are both active in Borno. AFP

## WASHINGTON

## Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, 9/11 attacks accused, to plead guilty



Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, accused as the mastermind of al-Qaeda's September 11, 2001, attacks on the United States, has agreed to plead guilty, the Defence Department said on Wednesday. The development points to a long-delayed resolution in an attack that killed thousands and altered the course of the U.S. AP

## Calls for revenge echo at Haniyeh's funeral; Tehran vows 'punishment'

President Pezeshkian assures Hamas that Iran 'will continue to support the Axis of Resistance with firmer determination'; UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres says the strikes in Tehran and Beirut represented a 'dangerous escalation'

Agence France-Presse  
TEHRAN

Iran held a funeral ceremony on Thursday with calls for revenge after the killing in Tehran of Hamas political chief Ismail Haniyeh in a strike blamed on Israel.

Thousands of mourners paid respects to Haniyeh as the Israeli military confirmed that an air strike in Gaza last month killed the Hamas military chief, Mohammed Deif.

Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei led prayers for Haniyeh ahead of his burial in Qatar, having earlier threatened a "harsh punishment" for his killing.

In Tehran's city centre,



Throng of mourners: Iranians take part in a funeral ceremony for late Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh, in Tehran on Thursday. AFP

crowds, including women shrouded in black, carried posters of Haniyeh and Palestinian flags in a procession and ceremony that began at Tehran University.

Iran's Revolutionary Guards announced the day

before that Haniyeh and a bodyguard were killed in a pre-dawn strike on Wednesday on their accommodation in Tehran.

It came just hours after Israel killed a top Hezbollah commander, Fuad

Shukur, in a retaliatory strike in the south of Lebanon's capital Beirut, raising fears of a wider regional conflict as the Israel-Hamas war in Gaza continues. Shukur is to be buried on Thursday.

## 'Duty to respond'

Senior Iranian officials including President Masoud Pezeshkian and the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps chief, General Hossein Salami, attended the ceremony for Haniyeh, state TV showed. Qatar-based Haniyeh had been visiting Tehran for Mr. Pezeshkian's inauguration ceremony on Tuesday.

Khalil al-Hayya, Hamas's foreign relations chief, vowed during the funeral

ceremony that Haniyeh's message will live on and "we will pursue Israel until it is uprooted from the land of Palestine".

Mr. Pezeshkian later told Mr. Hayya that Iran "will continue to support with firmer determination on the Axis of Resistance", Iran-aligned regional groups that include Hamas, the official IRNA news agency said.

Iran's parliamentary speaker Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf said, "It is our duty to respond at the right time and in the right place."

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said the strikes in Tehran and Beirut represented a "dangerous escalation".

## Israel says Hamas military chief Deif killed in July hit

Agence France-Presse  
JERUSALEM

Israel's Army confirmed on Thursday that Hamas military chief Mohammed Deif was killed in an air strike last month in the southern Gaza Strip.

The announcement came a day after Hamas and Iran said the Palestinian movement's chief Ismail Haniyeh was killed in Tehran. Israel has not commented on that report.

"Mohammed Deif, the Osama bin Laden of Gaza, was eliminated" on July 13, Defence Minister Yoav Gallant said.

This is a "significant milestone in the process of dismantling Hamas" in Gaza, Mr. Gallant added.

The Army said fighter jets had struck Khan Yunis on July 13 and "following an intelligence assessment, it can be confirmed that



Mohammed Deif

Mohammed Deif was eliminated in the strike".

He was killed along with one of his top commanders, Rafa Salama, the military said.

Health authorities in Hamas-run Gaza said more than 90 people had been killed in that strike but Hamas has denied Deif was among them.

"Deif initiated, planned, and executed the October 7th massacre," the military said. On that day the militant Islamist group at-

tacked southern Israel, resulting in the death of 1,197 people, according to a tally.

Deif became head of Hamas's armed wing, Ezzedine al-Qassam Brigades, in 2002.

He was among Israel's most wanted men for nearly three decades and on a U.S. list of "international terrorists" since 2015.

Deif, whose real name is Mohammed Diab al-Masri, was born in the Khan Yunis refugee camp in 1965.

In January, Israel released a picture of Deif showing him with one eye missing, without specifying when it was taken.

Deif became involved in Hamas in the 1980s when he was a student at the Gaza Islamic University.

He is said to have played a key role in the huge network of tunnels built beneath Gaza.

## Bangladesh police release student leaders after unrest

Agence France-Presse  
Press Trust of India  
DHAKA

The Bangladesh police freed six student leaders on Thursday whose campaign against civil service job quotas sparked deadly nationwide unrest, as the government looked to calm tensions and forestall fresh demonstrations.

Students Against Discrimination staged nationwide rallies last month that ended in a police crackdown and the deaths of at least 206 people, according to a count of police and hospital data.

The group's leadership were among thousands

picked up in the police dragnet that followed some of the worst unrest of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's 15-year tenure.

"All six quota movement coordinators have been returned to their families this afternoon," Deputy Commissioner Junaed Alam Sarkar said.

Meanwhile, Bangladesh banned the Jamaat-e-Islami and its student wing Islami Chhatra Shibir under anti-terrorism law, accusing the fundamentalist party of instigating protests. The development comes after a meeting of the ruling Awami League-led 14-party alliance passed a resolution earlier this week.

## Harrowing deluge



A man rides a horse cart through a flooded street following heavy rain in Lahore on Thursday. Pakistan's second-largest city experienced record-breaking rainfall, with hospitals flooded, power supply interrupted and streets submerged. AFP

## Opposition urges Venezuelans to 'mobilise' after polls

Agence France-Presse  
CARACAS

Venezuelan Opposition leader Maria Corina Machado called on Wednesday for supporters to "mobilise" after President Nicolas Maduro vowed to hold on to power following a widely disputed election.

Ms. Machado's message comes amid deep uncertainty in the South American country, after Mr. Maduro was declared the winner in Sunday's election but with electoral authorities failing to disclose detailed results to back up the claim.

Sixteen people have been killed in protests that



Nicolas Maduro

erupted after the election, according to the Opposition, which claims its candidate Edmundo Gonzalez Urrutia is the rightful victor. The Opposition has released a large set of voting data it says shows him defeating Mr. Maduro by a wide margin.

## Russia has freed U.S. reporter in prisoner swap, says Turkiye

Agence France-Presse  
ANKARA

U.S. journalist Evan Gershkovich and former U.S. marine Paul Whelan were released from Russia on Thursday, the Turkish government announced, in one of the biggest East-West prisoner swaps since the Cold War.

A total of 26 people, including two minors, from the United States, Germany, Poland, Slovenia, Norway, Belarus and Russia were involved in the swap "carried out" by Turkiye's MIT intelligence service, Turkiye's presidency said.

There was no immediate confirmation from U.S. officials, although the



Evan Gershkovich

swap was widely reported by U.S. television networks. The Kremlin declined to comment on any exchange.

Wall Street Journal reporter Gershkovich, 32, was detained in Russia in March 2023 and convicted in July on spying charges in a fast-track trial de-

nounced as a sham by the United States.

Signs of an imminent prisoner swap had picked up momentum earlier on Thursday, amid reports a plane used in a previous exchange deal had landed in the Russian exclave of Kaliningrad.

Among those expected to be returned to Russia in exchange is Vadim Krasikov, a Russian citizen imprisoned in Germany for killing a former Chechen rebel commander in a brazen assassination.

The exchange would be a victory for President Joe Biden, whose Vice President, Kamala Harris, faces Republican Donald Trump in the November election.

## F-16s delivered to Ukraine 'will be shot down': Russia

Agence France-Presse  
MOSCOW

The Kremlin said on Thursday that any F-16s delivered to Ukraine would be shot down and have little impact on the battlefield, in response to reports that the first fighter jets have arrived.

"Their number will gradually decrease, they will be shot down... But of course, these deliveries will not have any significant impact on the development of events on the front," Kremlin spokesperson Dmitry Peskov said.

The F-16 is touted for its precision and speed.

## Trump attacks Kamala Harris's racial identity, says she opted to 'turn Black'

Agence France-Presse  
HARRISBURG

Donald Trump suggested on Wednesday that Vice-President Kamala Harris had decided to "turn Black" for political gain, as he attacked his Democratic White House rival during a combative interaction with African American journalists in Chicago.

The Republican former President's inflammatory comments marked an escalation of the 78-year-old's vitriol against Ms. Harris, whom he falsely accused of having identified as Indian but then, "all of a sudden, she made a turn, and she became a Black person".



Kamala Harris, Donald Trump



Ms. Harris, 59, has long identified as Black and graduated from a historically Black university.

"So I don't know, is she Indian or is she Black?" asked Mr. Trump during a heated interview at the National Association of Black Journalists conference.

Ms. Harris later de-

nounced the attacks as "the same old show" of "the divisiveness and the disrespect" from Mr. Trump.

The combative remarks by Mr. Trump, who has been eager to improve his performance with Black voters, are likely to send shock waves through the

2024 White House contest.

They come as the former President, convicted two months ago of felony fraud related to hush money payments to an adult star, struggles to formulate a new strategy less than 100 days before the election.

## People deserve better'

In her address to a sorority gathering on Wednesday in Houston, Texas, Ms. Harris slammed Mr. Trump's attacks.

"The American people deserve better," she said. "We deserve a leader who understands that our differences do not divide us, they are an essential source of our strength."

**GALLIC DELIGHT**

**Marchand wins 200m breaststroke for a third gold in Paris Games**



Leon Marchand won his third Olympic gold with a sensational win in men's 200m breaststroke on Wednesday. The Frenchman's time of 2:05.85 was a new Olympic record and the second fastest of all-time. Defending champion Zac Stubblety-Cook of Australia took silver and Caspar Corbeau of the Netherlands the bronze.

**WAY AHEAD**

**Ledecky retains 1,500m freestyle Olympic gold, rewrites records**



Katie Ledecky blitzed the field to retain her 1,500m freestyle title, securing a record-equalling eighth gold medal in the sport. She won in an Olympic record 15.30.02, more than 10 seconds ahead of France's silver medalist Anastasiia Kirpichnikova. Germany's Isabel Gose took bronze.

**DOING ONE BETTER**

**Pan breaks own world record on way to 100m freestyle gold**



Pan Zhanle of China broke his own world record on the way to winning the men's 100m freestyle on Wednesday night, finishing in 46.40 seconds for his country's first swimming gold medal of the Paris Olympics. That mark topped his 46.80 at the World championships. He edged Kyle Chalmers (47.48) and David Popovici (47.49).

**THIRD MEDAL**

**McIntosh storms to women's 200m butterfly gold**



Canadian teenager Summer McIntosh stormed to the women's 200m butterfly title on Thursday to collect her third medal of the Paris Olympics. The 17-year-old hit the wall in an Olympic record 2min 03.03sec ahead of America's Regan Smith (2:03.84) and Chinese defending champion Zhang Yufei (2:05.09).

# Swapnil Kusale overcomes the jitters to shoot down India's third bronze medal

The 25-year-old, who didn't look like he was going to make it to the podium at the end of the first two stages, pulls himself together even as the others lose their nerve



**Jonathan Selvaraj**  
PARIS

**I**m tryambakam yamahe sugandhim pusti-varadhanam urvarukam iva bandhanan mrtyor muksiya ma mrtat

About a year ago, Swapnil Kusale had the Maha Mrityunjay mantra tattooed down his spine. It is a verse from the Rig Veda spoken in times of great stress and which bestows longevity. The original intention of the verse though was to ease the transition from the world of mortals.

Immortality is indeed what the 25-year-old has achieved. He will forever be a legend in Indian sports after winning the men's 50m 3 position shooting Olympic bronze at Chateauroux.

If Kusale has the *moksha* mantra written on his back, he also has 'Bharat' engraved in gold letters on the barrel of his gun. It's with that gun that Kusale, the son of a school teacher from village Kambalwadi, near Kolhapur, won India's third bronze at this Games and the first ever in this event.

Seen as a promising shooter he had finished fourth on two big occasions – at the 2022 World Championships and then

**A bronze, India's silver lining**

On a day of setbacks for India — boxer Nikhat and shuttler Sindhu bowed out in the round of 16 while the men's badminton duo of Satwik and Chirag was eliminated in the quarterfinals — Kusale brought cheer with a bronze in the 50m rifle men's 3 position event, the third shooting medal for the country in Paris



SWAPNIL KUSALE

■ **Born:** August 6, 1995  
■ **World rank:** No.12

■ Swapnil Kusale was one of the three Indian shooters to win the Olympic quota in the first competition in the current Olympic cycle, the World Championship in Cairo, Egypt, in October 2022

■ He was fourth in the 3-position event then, and missed the bronze by 0.3 point. The other two Indian Olympic quota winners from Cairo, trap shooter Bhowneesh Mendiratta and air rifle World Champion, Rudranksh Patil, did not make the Olympic team

■ Coach Deepali Deshpande has been training many rifle shooters for a long time, including three in the present Olympic team. It was Swapnil who was able to rise to the occasion on the Olympic stage and make the coach proud. Deepali had competed in the rifle 3-position event in the 2004 Olympics in Athens, Greece.

| International medals | G | S | B |
|----------------------|---|---|---|
| World Championship   | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| World Cup            | 2 | 2 | 0 |
| Asian Games          | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Asian championship   | 1 | 1 | 0 |

■ Swapnil won the Asian Games team gold with Aishwary Pratap Singh Tomar and Akhil Sheoran in Hangzhou, China, last year. Aishwary missed the final by one point in the Paris Games, while Olympic quota winner Akhil Sheoran could not make the national team

in the Asian Games.

Competing in his first Olympics, Kusale looked to be going down a similar path in final here as well. Starting with a 9.6 in his first kneeling shot – shooters take 15 shots kneeling, then another 15 lying prone, before transitioning to standing position – the occasion seemed to get the better of Kusale. He, ho-

wever, pulled himself together and continued to stay in the contest.

At the end of the first two stages, Kusale was fifth – 0.9 behind fourth and a whole point away from the medals.

Kusale said he wasn't trying to pay attention to the gap. "I just was focused on my breath. I wanted to make my teammates hap-



**Unwavering:** Kusale does India proud with another individual medal, this time the 50m 3 position bronze. RITU RAJ KONWAR

py. I just focused on my body to calm myself," he said afterwards.

The standing position is where matters are truly settled and that's where Kusale really shone. Although he started poorly with a 9.5, he shot another four in the 10 ring to keep his position. In his second series of five shots, another 9.1 was evened out by another four in the 10 ring.

If Kusale managed to keep his nerve, those around him lost theirs. Jiri Privratsky of Czechia, who was fourth, and Jon Herman Hegg of Norway, who was in the lead at the start of the standing series, both

shot five shots in the nine ring to vault Kusale into bronze medal place. The Indian would never leave it. He opened up a 2.2 point gap that Privratsky wasn't able to bridge.

Indeed the Indian even had a chance to finish in second place but ultimately conceded that to Ukraine's Serhiy Kulish while China's Yukun Liu triumphed. Silver might have been missed but bronze isn't too bad as the big smile Kusale's face suggested. The grin got wider as he posed for photos later. With the tricolour on his back, Kusale looked every bit the icon of Indian sports history.

# I will come back stronger, vows Nikhat after a tough defeat in pre-quarterfinal

**Y.B. Sarangi**  
PARIS

Carrying a World champion's tag, having a sleepless night, surviving on an empty stomach for two days, Nikhat Zareen checked her emotions long enough before breaking down after getting a consoling hug from a sympathiser.

She had just lost to a tough opponent – Asian Games champion Wu Yu – in the women's 50kg pre-quarterfinals and her journey in Paris 2024 had ended at the North Paris Arena here on Thursday.

Nikhat approached the Olympics knowing she was a medal contender. She prepared systematically, overcame minor injuries and showed consistency

coming into the Games. But running into the top-seeded boxer in the second round was never going to be easy.

Even before Nikhat could realise, 52kg World champion Wu, faster on her feet and quicker with her hands, gained ground. The Chinese moved in a flash, landed clean punches and moved out of Nikhat's reach to take the opening round 4-1.

The unseeded Indian upped the ante to connect a few hooks to impress the judges even though the Chinese led 2-0 in the second round.

Better bout management by Wu in the final three minutes, during which she used her fine foot work to defend herself and deny Nikhat any scope



**Bitter pill:** Nikhat is crestfallen after falling to Wu. PTI

for a comeback, left the Indian behind again.

"Sorry, guys. It was a learning experience for me. I had not boxed with her (Wu) before. She was faster. I will analyse this bout once I am home. It was an intense bout. My last fight was tough, but

she was playing her first. That also has an impact. I had worked hard, prepared myself physically and mentally for this Olympics. I will come back stronger," said Nikhat.

As the International Olympic Committee (IOC) had suspended the Inter-

national Boxing Association (IBA) and did not recognise its events, Nikhat's World champion status did not fetch her any seeding. Had Nikhat secured a place in the final (like Lovlina, the only seeded Indian) of the Asian Games (the continental event recognised by IOC), she had a chance of getting a seeding.

Besides the lack of seeding, avoiding food to cut weight also affected Nikhat.

"I had not eaten anything in the last two days to cut my weight. I had not recovered well after the first bout. I did not sleep well as I was feeling hungry. Had I won, the effort would have been appreciated. But now it will look like an excuse. Nevertheless, I gave my best."

**AROUND PARIS**

**Abhishek scores, but India loses to Belgium**

The Indian hockey team suffered its first loss, going down 1-2 to defending champion Belgium after letting slip a 1-0 advantage on Thursday.

Abhishek gave India the lead in the 18th minute before Belgium scored through Thibaut Stockbroeckx (33rd) and John-John Dohmen (44th) to seal the win and remain unbeaten.

Both India and Belgium have qualified for the quarterfinals from Pool B. India had defeated New Zealand 3-2 before drawing 1-1 against Argentina and beating Ireland 2-0. India will next play Australia in the final pool match on Friday.

**Nishant overcomes Rodriguez's challenge**  
Nishant Dev (71kg)



**Lone bright spot:** Abhishek sounded the boards with a sensational strike before Belgium fought back strongly. GETTY IMAGES

recorded a hard fought 3-2 win over Ecuador's Tenorio Rodriguez to move into the quarterfinals of the men's boxing event. The Indian delivered accurate and powerful combinations to stay ahead. Nishant will meet Marco Alvarez next.

**Sreeja goes down fighting to World No. 1**  
Birthday girl Sreeja Akula had four game points in

the first and five in the second before losing to World No. 1 Yingsha Sun in straight games in women's singles table tennis.

Sreeja had the opportunity to become the first Indian paddler to feature in the quarterfinals in the Olympics.

However, the challenge of beating the Chinese turned out to be an impossible task for the 26-year-old.

**THE INDIA SHOW**

A look at some of the Indian performances on Thursday:

**Archery:** Men's Individual (1/32 elimination): Pravin lost to Kao (Chn) 0-6.

**Athletics:** 20km race walk: Men's final: Vikash (30th), Paramjeet (37th), Akshdeep (DNF); Women's final: Priyanka (41st).

**Badminton:** Men: Singles (round-of-16): Lakshya bt Prannoy 21-12, 21-6; Doubles (quarterfinal): Satwiksairaj & Chirag lost to Chia & Soh (Mas) 21-13, 14-21, 16-21; Women (round-of-16): Sindhu lost to He (Chn) 19-21, 14-21.

**Boxing:** (round-of-16): Men's 71kg: Nishant bt Tenorio (Ecu) 3-2; Women's 50kg: Nikhat lost to Wu (Chn) 0-5.

**Golf:** Men's Individual Stroke Play (round 1): Shubhankar (T29), Gaganjeet (T56).

**Hockey:** Men (Pool B): lost to Belgium 1-2.

**Sailing:** Women's Dinghy: Nethra (sixth in race 1); Men's Dinghy: Vishnu Saravanan (25th overall after two races).

**Shooting:** 50m Rifle 3 Position: Men's final: Swapnil (Bronze); Women's qualification: 18. Anjum and 31. Sift, DNQ for final.

**Table tennis:** Women (round-of-16): Sreeja lost to Sun (Chn) 10-12, 10-12, 8-11, 3-11.

**INDIANS IN ACTION**

A look at some Indians who will compete on Friday (all times IST):

**Archery:** Mixed Team (1/8 elimination): vs Indonesia (1.15 p.m.).

**Athletics:** Women's 5000m: Round 1 (Ankita, Parul), 9.40 p.m.; Men's shot put qualification (Tajinderpal), 11.40 p.m.

**Badminton (session begins at 6.30 p.m.):** Men (quarterfinal): Lakshya vs Chou (Tpe).

**Golf:** Men's Individual Stroke Play: Round 2 (Gaganjeet, Shubhankar), 12.30 p.m.

**Judo (session begins at 1.30 p.m.):** Women: +78kg (elimination round-of-32): Tulika vs Ortiz (Cub).

**Hockey:** Men (Pool B): vs Australia (4.45 p.m.).

**Rowing:** Men's Single Sculls final D (Balraj), 1.45 p.m.

**Sailing:** Women's Dinghy (Nethra), 3.35 p.m.; Men's Dinghy (Vishnu Saravanan), 3.50 p.m.

**Shooting:** 25m Pistol women's qualification (Precision: 12.30 p.m., Rapid: 3.30 p.m.): Manu, Esha; Skeet: Men's qualification - Day 1 (Anantjeet), 1 p.m.

## INBRIEF



## Pintado and Yang claim the 20km race golds

Ecuador's Brian Pintado won the first athletics Olympic gold medal of the Paris Games on Thursday with victory in the men's 20km walk. Brazil's Caio Bonfim took the silver with Spain's world champion Alvaro Martin claiming bronze. China's Yang Jiayu produced a dominant performance to win the women's event. The 28-year-old came home clear of Spain's Maria Perez with Jemima Montag of Australia taking the bronze medal.



## Italian gymnast Giorgia Villa backed by a cheese brand

Italian gymnast Giorgia Villa was part of the side that won silver in the all-around final, finishing second best to Simone Biles-led USA. However, the bigger draw has been Villa's sponsorship deal with cheese company Parmigiano-Reggiano. The unique photos she has posted, with blocks of parmesan cheese, have gone viral.

## GOLDIES

**South Korea:** Fencing Men's Sabre  
**Katie Ledecky (USA):** Women's 1500m Freestyle  
**Leon Marchand (Fra):** Men's 200m Breaststroke  
**Pan Zhanle (Chn):** Men's 100m Freestyle  
**Yang Jiayu (Chn):** Women's 20km Walk  
**Brian Pintado (Ecu):** Men's 20km Walk  
**Liu Yukun (Chn):** Men's 50m Rifle 3 Positions  
**New Zealand:** Rowing Women's Double Sculls  
**Romania:** Rowing Men's Double Sculls  
**Netherlands:** Rowing Women's Four  
**USA:** Rowing Men's Four  
**Zelym Kotsoiev (Aze):** Judo Men's -100kg  
**Alice Bellandi (Ita):** Judo women's -78kg  
**Giovanni de Gennaro (Ita):** Men's Kayak Single  
**Simon Biles (USA):** Artistic Gymnastics Women's All-Around  
**Summer McIntosh (Can):** Women's 200m Butterfly

## GOING FOR GOLD

**Archery:** Mixed Team  
**Athletics:** Men's 10,000m  
**Badminton:** Mixed Doubles  
**Cycling:** BMX Racing Men & Women  
**Diving:** Men's Synchronised 3m Springboard  
**Equestrian:** Jumping Team  
**Fencing:** Men's epee  
**Rowing:** Men's & Women's Pair, LWT Men's & Women's Double Sculls  
**Sailing:** Women's & Men's Windsurfing  
**Shooting:** Women's 50m Rifle 3 Positions  
**Swimming:** Men's 50m Freestyle, Women's 200m Backstroke, Men's 200m Individual Medley  
**Tennis:** Mixed doubles  
**Trampoline Gymnastics:** Women & Men

## Zheng ousts Swiatek, makes it to the final

**AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE**  
PARIS

Zheng Qinwen stunned women's World No. 1 Iga Swiatek 6-2, 7-5 on Thursday to become the first Chinese player to reach an Olympic Games tennis singles final. It also broke the Pole's 25-match win streak at Roland-Garros.

**Zverev dethroned**  
In the men's section, Italy's Lorenzo Musetti knocked out defending champion Alexander Zverev with a 7-5, 7-5 win over the German in the quarterfinals. He will take on Novak Djokovic, who beat Stefanos Tsitsipas 6-3, 7-6(3), for



Zheng, AP

a place in the final. Earlier, World No. 3 Carlos Alcaraz booked his place in the semifinals by seeing off Tommy Paul of the United States 6-3, 7-6(7). Alcaraz will next face Felix Auger-Aliassime, who became the first Canadian to make the last four with a 6-4, 6-7(8), 6-3 win over sixth-seeded Casper Ruud.

## Day of massive disappointment for India

Sindhu's dream is shattered by He; Satwik-Chirag come unstuck against Chia-Soh; Lakshya remains the sole medal hope for the country



## BADMINTON

**Y.B. Sarangi**  
PARIS

It was a day of massive disappointment for India on the badminton courts of the Olympics at the Porte de La Chapelle arena here on Thursday.

Two-time medallist P.V. Sindhu's dream of a historic third medal remained unfulfilled while a strong medal hope, the Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty pair, could not rise to the expectations.

Lakshya Sen, who defeated compatriot H.S. Prannoy to enter the quarterfinals, was the only Indian shuttler left in the medal race.

World No.13 Lakshya dispatched the 22nd-placed Prannoy 21-12, 21-6 in a one-sided match.



**Not meant to be:** Sindhu cuts a dejected figure during her match against He. RITU RAJ KONWAR

Lakshya rode on some fine smashes and Prannoy's mistakes to have a five-point cushion at the break and built on it to take the first game.

## Unplayable shots

The 22-year-old Lakshya banked on his better fitness to unleash some unplayable shots while a tiring Prannoy, who was down with chikungunya a few weeks back, committed unforced errors before bowing out.

Lakshya, a World cham-

pionships bronze medalist, will take on another Worlds medallist, Chinese Taipei's Chou Tien-chen, ranked 11th, in the quarterfinals.

While Lakshya expects his next match to be tough, Prannoy left wiping his tears.

Sindhu, who gave a good account of herself after returning from an injury, was beaten 21-19, 21-14 by World No. 9 He Bingjiao of China in the women's singles pre-quarterfinals. He's impressive court

coverage and wide range of shots kept her ahead. The Chinese, leading 11-9 head-to-head, produced some brilliant down the line and cross court smashes to establish a five-point lead in the first game.

The 13th-ranked Sindhu got into her rhythm and made some successful challenges to draw level at 12-12 but He drilled two superb jump smashes to secure the first game.

The Chinese grabbed six consecutive points to go 8-2 up in the second. Sind-



**Losing the plot:** Satwik-Chirag, despite a bright start, saw their game unravel as the contest progressed. AFP

hu fought well in some rallies but could not stop He. "It's sad that I couldn't convert it to a win, especially the first game because it was 19-all at one point. We did whatever we could," said Sindhu.

The ouster of the World No. 5 duo Satwik-Chirag was a big blow as well.

The Malaysian third-ranked pair, Aaron Chia and Wooi Yik Soh, rallied to beat the Indians 13-21, 21-14, 21-16 in a 64-minute men's doubles quarterfinal clash.

Satwik and Chirag, who won their last three engagements against the Malaysians, relied on their fine placement and powerful smashes to win the first

game. Satwik-Chirag, who led 4-0 in the second, lost the momentum as Chia-Soh applied pressure. The neck-and-neck contest continued until the Indians erred, including hitting wide or into the net, and helped in their rivals' comeback.

"We should've been a little calmer," said Chirag "I think at 14-11, at a point or two, we got quite unlucky," he added.

"We have dealt with big matches. It's on the mental side not to take so much on to the court. Not to think like something extra special. We focused on that. We just wanted to give our 100 per cent," said Satwik-sairaj.



**Dazzling show:** Biles conjured up an electrifying floor routine to pip Andrade to the gold medal. REUTERS

## Biles sparkles to regain the all-around crown

## GYMNASTICS

**AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE**  
PARIS

Simone Biles recaptured the Olympic all-around crown on Thursday, seeing off Brazil's Rebeca Andrade for her sixth Olympic gold and second in Paris.

Biles, who famously withdrew from multiple events at the Tokyo Games three years ago with the disorientating "twisties", followed up her team gold with the United States earlier this week. Defending

Olympic champion Sunisa Lee took bronze.

The 27-year-old Biles became the first gymnast to reclaim the individual title, which she won in the 2016 Rio de Janeiro Games.

She capped her performance with another electrifying floor routine to Taylor Swift's hit song *Ready for It*, her high-flying tumbling bringing the crowd to its feet.

She scored 59.131 points to finish 1.199 ahead of Andrade with 21-year-old Lee sealing bronze with her floor routine having trailed in fourth going into the final rotation.

## A victory in 46 seconds for Algerian boxer in Olympics gender row

**AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE**  
PARIS

Algerian boxer Imane Khelif, who failed a gender eligibility test last year, won her opening bout at the Paris Olympics in just 46 seconds on Thursday against her distraught opponent.

Khelif advanced to the women's 66kg quarterfinal after unloading two strong punches on Angela Carini, who shrugged off attempts by the Algerian to shake her hand and collapsed to her knees in floods of tears. An Italian coach said Carini had suffered a badly hurt nose and the official decision was listed as an abandonment.

Khelif and Taiwan's Lin Yu-ting, who will fight in the 75kg category on Friday, were disqualified from the World Championships last year but deemed eligible to box in the women's competition in Paris.

The IOC website for accredited media in Paris said the 25-year-old Khelif was disqualified after "elevated levels of testosterone



**Tough luck:** Khelif and Lin were disqualified from last year's Worlds after "elevated levels of testosterone failed to meet criteria". AP

failed to meet the eligibility criteria".

Both boxed in the women's event at the Tokyo Olympics three years ago.

Khelif, who came fifth in Tokyo, was given a huge roar when she came into the North Paris Arena, where there were numerous Algeria fans with the country's flag. Before and during the very brief bout they chanted her name, but the action itself was over in a flash.

Earlier on Thursday, Algeria's Olympic Committee condemned what it called

"malicious and unethical attacks directed against our distinguished athlete, Imane Khelif, by certain foreign media".

Khelif and Lin were disqualified from the 2023 Worlds in New Delhi, which was run by the International Boxing Association (IBA).

Lin was stripped of her bronze after undergoing "biochemical" tests mandated by the IBA.

However, the International Olympic Committee is running the boxing in the French capital because

## Medals table

|    | Country       | G  | S  | B  | T  |
|----|---------------|----|----|----|----|
| 1  | China         | 11 | 7  | 5  | 23 |
| 2  | France        | 8  | 11 | 8  | 27 |
| 3  | Japan         | 8  | 3  | 5  | 16 |
| 4  | USA           | 7  | 14 | 13 | 34 |
| 5  | Australia     | 7  | 6  | 4  | 17 |
| 6  | Great Britain | 6  | 7  | 7  | 20 |
| 7  | Korea         | 6  | 3  | 3  | 12 |
| 8  | Italy         | 5  | 6  | 4  | 15 |
| 9  | Canada        | 3  | 2  | 3  | 8  |
| 10 | Germany       | 2  | 2  | 2  | 6  |
| 44 | India         | 0  | 0  | 3  | 3  |

of governance, financial and ethical issues at the IBA.

At least one woman boxer at the Games has spoken out about the controversy.

Australia's Caitlin Parker is in the 75kg class so will not face Khelif or Lin, but she made her stance on the controversy clear. "I don't agree with that being allowed, especially in combat sports as it can be dangerous."

## Sarabjot felicitated by Union Sports Minister Mandaviya

**SPORTS BUREAU**  
NEW DELHI

Union Sports Minister Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya felicitated Olympic medallist Sarabjot Singh with a cash award of ₹22.5 lakh here on Thursday.

Sarabjot, who had won the mixed air pistol bronze with Manu Bhaker, returned from Paris along with other shooters Arjun Babuta, Ramita Jindal, Rhythm Sangwan, Sandeep Singh and Arjun Singh Cheema. Coaches Suma Shirur, Samaresh Jung and Sarabjot's personal coach Abhishek Rana also returned with the squad.

The Sports Minister acknowledged the good per-



**Recognition:** Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya honours Sarabjot in New Delhi on Thursday. Minister of State for Sports Raksha Khadse and Sarabjot's coach Rana are also seen. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

formance of the shooters in Paris.

"Each one of you is a champion. It was hard for some of you to come to terms with the fact that you missed the medal by a whisker.

"But, don't let that loss

lessen your passion for the game. Instead, let it fuel your motivation to excel in future competitions," he said.

Expressing happiness about the way Khelo India scheme was grooming young champions to world

standards, the Minister said: "Sarabjot is a personification of this pyramidal structure. Khelo India to Target Olympic Podium Scheme (TOPS) to the Olympic podium finish. But, support alone cannot guarantee results.

"It is the hard work of the athletes, the motivation of their parents, coaches and those around them that ensures their final victory."

The Minister also pointed out that the new scheme KIRTI (Khelo India Rising Talent Initiative), a nation-wide drive to nurture sports talent, would be a "game-changer" in identifying future Olympians from the grassroots level.

## Track and field duels to savour in Paris

**AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE**  
PARIS

Track and field takes centre stage at the Paris Olympics on Friday with a swathe of stars on show. *AFP Sports* picks out two of the many duels to savour in the Stade de France.

**Men: 100m, Marcell Jacobs (Ita) vs Noah Lyles (USA):** A fascinating clash between the mercurial Italian and the livewire American – the former defending his surprise title from Tokyo and the latter trying to rubber-stamp the image of himself as the rightful successor to Usain Bolt. The two could not be more of a contrast physically – Jacobs is all muscles while Lyles has remained lithe, but on form since the Olympics the American is

odds-on favourite.

**Women: 400m hurdles, Femke Bol (Ned) vs Sydney McLaughlin-Levrone (USA):** Probably the most keenly-anticipated potential match-up of the Games pits world champion Bol against the 24-year-old American who has dominated the event for the past three years. The Dutchwoman has twice taken minor medals behind the world record-holder – a bronze in Tokyo and silver at the 2022 Worlds – but she certainly comes to Paris race-fit whereas the American has been sparing in her appearances. Bol can take heart that no-one has successfully defended the title. But McLaughlin-Levrone has shown she is all about making history.

# A thorough gentleman: cricket fraternity pays tribute to Gaekwad

His dedication, resilience, and love for the game were unparalleled; he was not just a cricketer but a mentor and a friend to many, and his contributions will always be remembered, says BCCI chief Binny

**CRICKET**

**Press Trust of India**  
NEW DELHI

**A**unshuman Gaekwad's "dedication, resilience, and unparalleled love" for the game were fondly recalled as tributes poured in for the former India player and coach, who passed away after a long battle with cancer.

Gaekwad, who also served Indian cricket as a selector, passed away on Wednesday in Vadodara. He donned the national jersey in 40 Tests and 15 ODIs.

The demise was mourned by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and big-wigs of Indian cricket.

A member of the 1983 World Cup-winning side and current BCCI chief Roger Binny, who was a one-time teammate of Gaekwad, said the cricketing community will miss him.

"His dedication, resilience, and love for the game were unparalleled. He was not just a cricketer but a mentor and a friend to many. The cricketing community will miss him dearly, and his contributions will always be remembered," said Binny.

"Saddened by the demise of Gaekwad. May god give strength to his family

and loved ones," wrote India head coach Gautam Gambhir, who is currently in Sri Lanka with the Indian team for a white-ball series, on his X account.

Former off-spinner Harbhajan Singh had a close relationship with Gaekwad, having made his international debut in 1998 when the latter was the team coach.

"Gaekwad's demise is heartbreaking news. Have fond memories of making my Test debut under him as coach. He was a thorough gentleman. Indian cricket will be poorer in his absence," said Harbhajan.

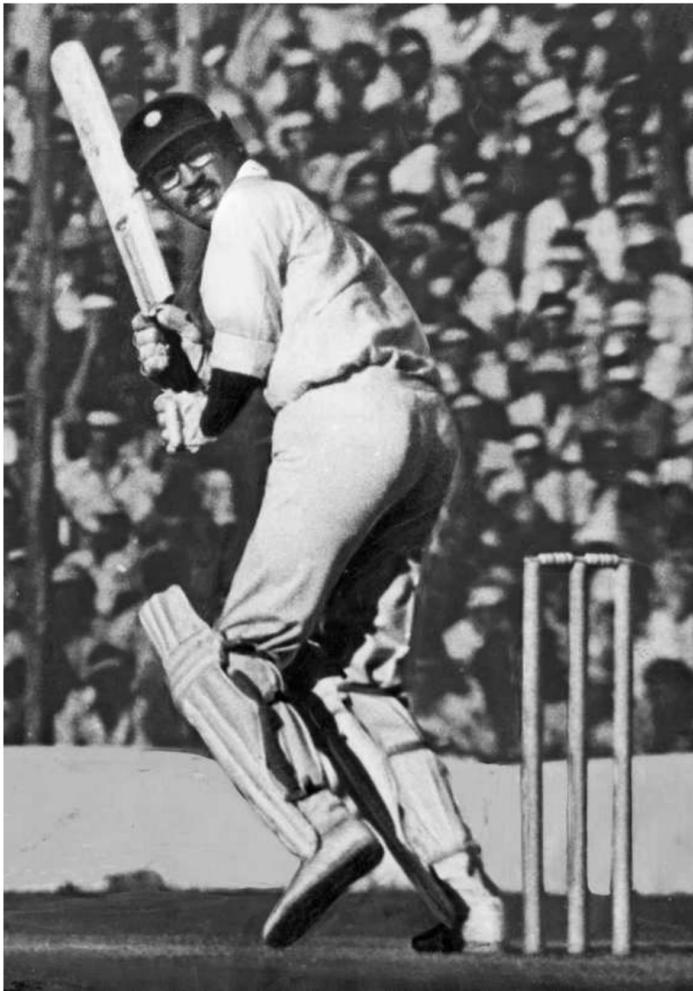
Prime Minister Modi condoled the death of Gaekwad, saying he had made an immense contribution to Indian cricket.

"Gaekwad was a gifted player and an outstanding coach. Condolences to his family and admirers," Modi said through his official X account.

BCCI secretary Jay Shah termed it a "profound loss". "A true servant of Indian cricket, he will be remembered for his courage, wisdom, and dedication to the sport.

"His contribution to the game has been significant, and he leaves behind a lasting legacy," said Shah in a BCCI statement.

The BCCI added that Gaekwad faced the best bowlers in the world without flinching one bit.



**True servant:** The courage and dedication he showed will be Gaekwad's legacy. THE HINDU ARCHIVES

# Lucky to have had a few conversations with Gaekwad, says India skipper Rohit

**S. Dipak Ragav**  
COLOMBO

Rohit Sharma shared his heartfelt thoughts about former India cricketer and coach Aunshuman Gaekwad, who passed away on Wednesday. He also recalled interacting with him during his early days during the First Class matches.

"I was absolutely devastated to hear the news. I was lucky to have had a few conversations with him when we had the BCCI



When I was playing Ranji Trophy, he was there to watch, and I had a chance to speak to him

awards. Also, on a personal note, when I was playing Ranji Trophy, he was there to watch, and I had a chance to speak to him. He had a few things to talk about my game as well, which was overwhelming

for me because he had been a great cricketer for India," said Rohit.

"It is always nice to learn from your seniors and understand how cricket was played back in the day, how tough it was, his experiences about how he played, and what his visions were for cricket.

"For me to understand that, it was a great learning experience at that point. I was lucky that I had few chances to meet and talk to him personally."

THE HINDU GROUP

?

**THE HINDU**  
**AT THE GAMES**  
**PHOTO CONTEST**

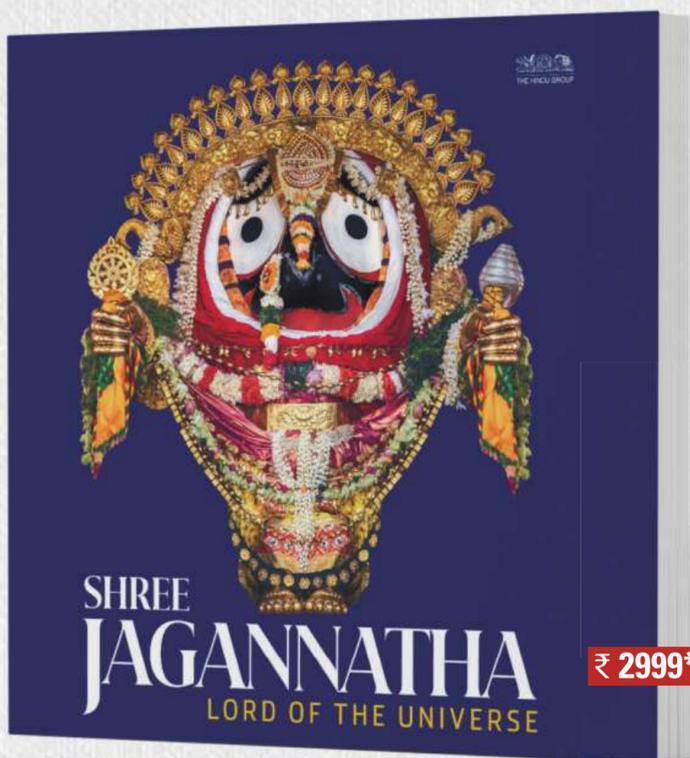
💡

An athlete who was advised by his coach to skip an edition of the Olympics but instead went on to succeed nationally and win gold in the following Olympics too. Who is this Olympic athlete who also acted in films and TV series?

Scan QR code or visit [newsth.live/THOPH](https://newsth.live/THOPH) to take the quiz. Top 3 winners\* every day win gift vouchers.

Answer to yesterday's quiz: Michael Phelps

A SPECIAL PUBLICATION FROM THE HINDU GROUP



**AVAILABLE NOW**

**Shree Jagannatha- Lord of the Universe** is a picture-rich coffee-table book on the fascinating Lord Jagannatha temple in Puri, Odisha.

The book is a collection of pictures and articles by well-known writers from Odisha on culture and religion. It covers the temple's history, the unique rituals that characterise Jagannatha-worship and, of course, the famous Ratha Yatra.



**BOOK YOUR COPY ONLINE**



Visit: [publications.thehindugroup.com/bookstore/](https://publications.thehindugroup.com/bookstore/)  
For bulk booking, e-mail: [bookstore@thehindu.co.in](mailto:bookstore@thehindu.co.in)  
For any enquiries call: 1800 102 1878

\*Shipping charges extra | conditions apply

# India looks to tame the Lions in ODIs too

The visitors have been bolstered by arrival of seniors like Rohit and Virat; Sri Lanka squandered winning opportunities in the T20s

## INDIA IN SRI LANKA

S. Dipak Ragav  
COLOMBO

Well begun is half done. India's newly-appointed head coach Gautam Gambhir, couldn't have asked for a better start to his tenure as the Men in Blue blanked hosts Sri Lanka 3-0 in the T20s in Pallekele.

As the action now shifts to Colombo for the three-match ODI series starting at the R. Premadasa International Cricket Stadium on Friday, the visitors – bolstered by the arrival of seniors like skipper Rohit Sharma, Virat Kohli, K.L. Rahul, and Kuldeep Yadav – will look to maintain the winning run.

Unlike in T20s, where the team is undergoing a transition, India has a solid core in the 50-over format. The upcoming series allows it to shore up a few spots and build a bench strength for the future.

Considering Rohit's men are scheduled to play only three ODIs – three here and three against England next year at home – before the Champions Trophy in February 2025 in Pakistan, these matches could be vital for the new coach and captain to decide on their vision for the team.

One area of focus will be finding a third pacer to complement Jasprit Bumrah and Mohammed Siraj.

Mohammed Shami was



Way to go: Skipper Rohit will be delighted by the camaraderie between coach Gambhir and Kohli. PTI & AFP



a revelation at last year's ODI World Cup, but the management will look to start grooming someone as cover for Shami, who will soon be 34-years-old. Apart from left-arm pacers Arshdeep Singh and Khaleel Ahmed, the selectors have included young pacer Har-

shit Rana, who impressed in the IPL for Kolkata Knight Riders.

Siraj will lead the pace attack here and the 30-year-old will have fond memories of this venue, where his fiery spell of six for 21 in the Asia Cup final last year helped India bun-

dle out the Lankans for just 50 and secure the title.

The other puzzle will be the wicketkeeper's slot and whether Rahul will be continue to be the custodian behind the stumps. The Karnataka batter has done well playing in the middle-order and donning the big

gloves over the last two years. But, with Rishabh Pant back in the ODI set-up after two years, it poses an interesting dilemma for the think-tank. While Pant gives the batting line-up an extra left-handed option, playing him alongside Rahul will force India to play

only five front-line bowlers.

Sri Lanka, in contrast, looks unsettled after suffering a twin blow on the eve of the series opener, losing pacers Dilshan Madushanka (hamstring) and Matheesha Pathirana (shoulder) due to injuries. The T20 series saw the hosts squander winning opportunities in all three games because of middle-order collapses and it is an area Charith Asalanka's men will look to quickly address.

With an inexperienced pace attack, the home side may bank on the strength of its spin attack, on a pitch that has historically been slow-paced, to tie down a strong Indian batting line-up.

Having lost its last 10 encounters against India across formats, the Lions will look to get one over their neighbours and give their fans something to cheer about.

### The teams (from):

**India:** Rohit Sharma (Capt.), Shubman Gill, Virat Kohli, K.L. Rahul, Rishabh Pant, Shreyas Iyer, Shivam Dube, Kuldeep Yadav, Mohd. Siraj, Washington Sundar, Arshdeep Singh, Riyan Parag, Axar Patel, Khaleel Ahmed and Harshit Rana.

**Sri Lanka:** Charith Asalanka (Capt.), Pathum Nissanka, Avishka Fernando, Kusal Mendis, Sadeera Samarawickrama, Kamindu Mendis, Janith Liyanage, Nishan Madushka, Wanindu Hasaranga, Dunith Wellalage, Chamika Karunaratne, Maheesh Theekshana, Akila Dananjaya, Asitha Fernando, Mohamed Shiraz and Eshan Malunga.

Match starts at 2.30 p.m. IST.

## INBRIEF



### Pragg, Arjun join Superstar Men for GCL Season 2

R. Pragganandhaa, Arjun Erigaisi and Nodirbek Abdusattorov will join Magnus Carlsen and Viswanathan Anand in the Superstar Men line-up in season two of the Global Chess League, a FIDE-rated tournament, from October 3 and 12. Others in Superstar Men include US GM Hikaru Nakamura, Wei Yi, Vidit Gujrathi, Jan-Krzysztof Duda, Richard Rapport, Shakhriyar Mamedyarov, Teimour Radjabov, Alexander Grischuk, Parham Maghsoodloo and Vladislav Artemiev.

### Indian MotoGP calendar from 2025 confirmed

The Indian Grand Prix calendar for MotoGP from 2025 was confirmed on Thursday with Dorna Sports, the exclusive commercial rights holder of MotoGP, confirming a new contract with the government of Uttar Pradesh. A new three-year contract between MotoGP and Eurosport, through to 2026 was also finalised. "We have a strong established audience that also offers huge opportunities for exponential growth," Dorna's chief sporting officer Carlos Ezpeleta said during a virtual meet, adding that Shikhar Dhawan had been roped in as the ambassador.

### Milan beats Real Madrid via Chukwueze's strike

Samuel Chukwueze scored in the 55th minute as AC Milan beat Real Madrid 1-0 on Wednesday night at Soldier Field in an international friendly. Chukwueze left-footed Mattia Liberali's pass behind goalkeeper Thibault Courtois.



Who'll get the nod? There is likely to be a toss-up between Pant and Rahul. AFP

## It is a tough call, says Rohit

S. Dipak Ragav  
COLOMBO

Rohit Sharma, refreshed and rejuvenated after a month's break post the successful T20 World Cup campaign, made it clear India will look to maintain the high quality of cricket it has played in recent times in the upcoming one-day series against Sri Lanka, which begins on Friday.

The Indian skipper also refused to see the series as preparation for the Champions Trophy next year. "It's not a practice ground; it's still an international game," said Rohit. "We will keep in mind what we want to achieve as a team, but this is by no means a preparation or practice," he said.

"When you are representing the nation, the quality of the cricket you want to play should remain the same as how we have played in the last few years," he added.

While India has been a strong force in ODIs recently, the 37-year-old insisted that teams can't afford to stand still.

"It is not one particular area we are looking to improve; it is the overall game because in sports you cannot sit happily doing something."

"We want to challenge ourselves and see what we can do differently as a team. Whatever we have done in the past was good

## 'My favourite bowler is Bumrah'

Press Trust of India  
HYDERABAD

Mahendra Singh Dhoni picked Jasprit Bumrah as his favourite bowler, but the multiple World Cup-winning former Indian skipper refrained from picking between Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma as batsman of his choice.

Bumrah played a vital role in India's recent T20 World Cup triumph in the Americas, picking up 15 wickets from eight matches at an economy rate of 4.17, best among the regular bowlers in the ICC showpiece.

The effort earned Bumrah the player of the tournament award.

"It's easy to pick my favourite bowler because Bumrah is there. It's difficult to pick a batsman because we have many good batsmen. But that doesn't mean bowlers aren't good," said Dhoni during a promotional event here.



Bumrah and Dhoni. AP

Bumrah has been given a rest post the World Cup, and he is not playing the ongoing white ball series in Sri Lanka. Dhoni said it is tough to pick one batsman as his favourite because several batters churn out excellent knocks.

"It's difficult to pick one among batters as whomever I see batting, he looks the best. But when I see someone else he also looks great. But as long as Team India is winning, I don't want to pick a batter (as my favourite). I hope they will keep scoring runs for the team," Dhoni said.

## NEW DELHI ROUND-UP

### Yash, Divjot star for Pioneer Club

An unbeaten century by Yash Bhatia and three wickets by Divjot Singh helped Pioneer Club beat Paragon Club by 77 runs in the DDCA T20 League.

**The scores:**  
Pioneer Club 270/2 in 20 overs (Yash Bhatia 144 n.o.) bt Paragon Club 130 in 16 overs (Gurdeep Sodhi 31, Divjot Singh 3/23).  
Bright Club 209/8 in 20 overs (Tilak Thakur 120) bt Delhi Police 151/7 in 20 overs (Kapil Dagar 70, Keshav Dua 3/26).  
Rohtak Road Gymkhana 154/7 in 20 overs (Lakshay Thareja 45 n.o., Vikas Rana 2/26, Pragyan 2/21) lost to Pelican Club 155/5 in 16 overs (Deepanshu 54 n.o., Bhavya Tiwari 36, Lakshay Thareja 2/24).  
Young Friends 162/6 in 20 overs (Akshay Saini 46, Anis 2/30) lost to RP Academy 166/3 in 16 overs (Vaibhav Rawal 100 n.o.).  
Lala Ram Charan Aggarwal Club 130/3 in 11 overs (Nitin Basoya 45, Keshav Dabas 2/26) lost to Golden Hawks 131/3 in 9 overs (Monu Shukla 57 n.o., Keshav Dabas 43).  
Darling Club 91 in 13 overs (Parwan Dahiya 49, N.N. Subramaniam 4/20, Aman Kumar 3/3) lost to Delhi Admin 92/2 in 11 overs.  
Sporting Club 145/8 in 20 overs (Sourov Dagar 57) bt Madras Club 119 in 19 overs.

## Kerala Blasters drowns Mumbai City in a glut of goals

### DURAND CUP

Sports Bureau  
KOLKATA

A full strength Kerala Blasters FC inflicted a 8-0 defeat on the Indian Super League Cup champion Mumbai City FC in a Group C league match of 133rd Durand Cup football, at the Kishore Bharati Stadium here on Thurs-

day. The combination of Moroccan forward Noah Sadaoui and Ghanaian striker Kwame Peprah in the Blasters' attack scored a hat-trick each to contribute to the bulk of goals.

### Ishan on song

Ishan Pandita, who came in for Peprah as a late substitute, fired two quick goals to complete the massive scoreline for Ker-

ala Blasters.

Mumbai City, which fielded its reserve team, was left to defend its citadel for a greater part of the action as Kerala Blasters proved too big a challenge for its youthful team.

### The result:

**Group C:** Kerala Blasters FC 8 (Noah Sadaoui 31, 50, 76, Kwame Peprah 38, 45, 53, Ishan Pandita 86, 87) bt Mumbai City FC 0.



Unstoppable: Kerala Blasters' players celebrate after the third goal against Mumbai FC. DEBASISH BHADURI

## Mukund enters the last eight in Taipei

### TENNIS

Sports Bureau

S. Mukund sailed past Derek Pham of Australia 6-4, 6-1 to enter the quarterfinals of the \$25,000 ITF men's tennis tournament in Taipei, Taiwan, on Thursday.

In the \$75,000 ITF women's event in Lexington, USA, qualifier Shrivalli Bhamidipaty reached the pre-quarterfinals with a 6-4, 7-5 victory over Fiona Crawley.

**The results: €148,625 Challenger, Porto, Portugal: Doubles (pre-quarterfinals):** Joshua Paris (GBR) & Ramkumar Ramanathan bt Pedro Araujo &

Joao Domingues (Por) 6-4, 6-4; Jeevan Nedunchezhiyan & Vijay Sundar Prashanth bt Hunter Reese (USA) & Divij Sharan 6-3, 6-7(7), [10-6]; Arjun Kadhe & Arthur Raymond (Fra) bt Jonathan Eysseric (Fra) & George Goldhoff (USA) 2-6, 6-4, [10-6].  
**€74,825 Challenger, Liberec, Czech Republic: Doubles (pre-quarterfinals):** Nikolas Izquierdo & Carlos Taberner (Esp) bt Siddhant Banthia & Courtney Lock (Zim) 6-2, 6-7(5), [10-8].  
**\$25,000 ITF men, Taipei, Taiwan: Singles (pre-quarterfinals):** S Mukund bt Derek Pham (Aus) 6-4, 6-1; Tsung-Hao Huang (Tpe) bt Sidharth Rawat 3-6, 6-4, 6-2.  
**Doubles (quarterfinals):** Makoto Ochi & Ryotaro Taguchi (Jpn) bt Sai Karteek Reddy & Wishaya Trongcharoenchaikul (Tha) 6-2, 6-4.  
**\$25,000 ITF men, Brazzaville, Congo: Singles**

**(pre-quarterfinals):** Rishab Agarwal bt Etienne Teboh (Cmr) 6-3, 6-4; Eric Vanshelboim (Ukr) bt Parth Aggarwal 6-3, 6-1; Bor Artnak (Slo) bt Dev Javia 6-1, 6-0; Mathys Erhard (Fra) bt Muni Ananth Mani 6-0, 6-0; S.D. Prajwal Dev bt Hillel Rousseau (Hai) 6-1, 1-0 (retired); Karan Singh bt Yuwan Nandal 2-6, 6-3, 6-3.  
**Doubles (quarterfinals):** Prajwal Dev & Adil Kalyanpur bt Maxime Gouge (Fra) & Eytan Miessen (Bel) 6-2, 6-0; Rishab & Eric Vanshelboim (Ukr) bt Parth & Abraham Asaba (Gha) 6-3, 6-4; Isaac Nortey (Gha) & Karan bt Ethan Sibanda & Mehulji Sibanda (Zim) 6-2, 6-4; Dev & Rishi Reddy bt Aditya Balsekar & Yash Chaurasia 7-6(4), 6-3.  
**\$75,000 ITF women, Lexington, USA: Singles (first round):** Shrivalli Bhamidipaty bt Fiona Crawley (USA) 6-4, 7-5.  
**\$25,000 ITF women, Roehampton, Britain: Doubles**

**(pre-quarterfinals):** Sarah Grey (GBR) & Ankita Raina bt Lauryn John-Baptiste (GBR) & Eri Shimizu (Jpn) 6-4, 6-2.  
**\$25,000 ITF women, Mohammedia, Morocco: Singles (pre-quarterfinals):** Ikumi Yamazaki (Jpn) bt Vaishnavi Adkar 4-6, 6-4, 6-2.  
**\$15,000 ITF women, Ust-Kamenogorsk, Kazakhstan: Singles (pre-quarterfinals):** Vaidehi Chaudhari bt Aglaya Fedorova 6-1, 6-1.  
**Doubles (quarterfinals):** Vaidehi Chaudhari & Elena Malygina (Est) bt Ekaterina Khayrutdinova & Tatyana Nikolenko (Kaz) 6-1, 6-7(2), [10-4].  
**\$15,000 ITF women, Tbilisi, Georgia: Doubles (pre-quarterfinals):** Daria Egorova & Rada Zolotareva bt Saumya Vig & Elina Zakharova 7-5, 6-3.

## HCL National squash in Mumbai from August 4

Sports Bureau  
NEW DELHI

The 80th National squash championship, sponsored by HCL, will be staged at the Bombay Gymkhana Club in Mumbai from August 4 to 10.

About 670 players, a record number as compared to the figures of 450 and 417 in the last two editions, will be competing in the championship which will also serve as the selection criteria for the World Team championship to be staged in Hong Kong in December. Anahat Singh and Vela-

van Senthilkumar, the champions of the last edition, are expected to be

seen in action along with a host of other prominent players.

"HCL aims to foster the growth of squash by increasing awareness and participation while unlocking the full potential of athletes, coaches and referees by providing them with global opportunities," said Rajat Chandolia, brand head, HCL.

"The overwhelming response to this year's championship is a testament to the growing popularity of squash in India. We anticipate good competition and believe this event will inspire countless individuals to take up the sport," said SRFI secretary-general.

# CSR wings for Olympic dreams

What started as a philanthropic act a decade ago, capital investment in sports as part of Corporate Social Responsibility by India's private sector is driving a change. Building infrastructure, funding potential medallists and increasing the participation of women are now serious nation-building activities



AP, GETTY IMAGES, RITU RAJ KONWAR

**N. Sudarshan**  
**Vijay Krishnamurthy**

**S**arabjot Singh, the second Indian to win a medal at the ongoing Paris Olympics, grew up in Dheen, a village in Ambala district of Haryana. In an expensive sport like shooting, Sarabjot's family could not have imagined his journey without systemic support, especially the financial aspect.

Regardless of the sport, associated funding in a developing country is always tough to come by. When education, health and sanitation are more pressing concerns, government allocation for sports is often considered a luxury than a necessity.

But in the present-day world where sporting success is considered one of the most important vehicles of national identity and an indicator of soft power, governments are more eager than ever to undertake the tough balancing act between bankrolling sporting activities and taking care of the nation's prime developmental needs.

It has been no different in India and something that has given governments leeway has been the increasing footprint of finances as part of various companies' Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) interventions.

The likes of Reliance, Tata, JSW, Infosys and many others have joined hands with various government bodies as well as other private not-for-profit organisations like Olympic Gold Quest (OGQ) and GoSports Foundation to develop infrastructure, improve existing facilities, provide access to sports science, and support athletes in areas where focus has been historically low.

India's latest shooting sensation Manu Bhaker, Javelin champion Neeraj Chopra, shuttlers P.V. Sindhu, Satwiksairaj Rankireddy, Chirag Shetty and Lakshya Sen, boxer Lovlina Borgohain and hurdler Jyothi Yarraji among others have been beneficiaries of such partnerships.

## The triggers

This transformation in the funding space has been catalysed by two legislative moves. Section 135 of the Companies Act, 2013, mandated CSR projects by every company having net worth of ₹500 crore or more, or turnover of ₹1000 crore or more, or a net profit of ₹5 crore or more. Under Schedule VII of this act, "training to promote rural, nationally recognised sports, Paralympic and Olympic sports" was added as a CSR-eligible activity.

Then, in 2016, the scope was widened by including the "creation and maintenance of sports infrastructure, upgradation and renovation of existing sports facilities, and sports science support including setting up of gymnasiums and rehabilitation centres." The Odisha Reliance Foundation Athletics

High Performance Centre, JSW's Inspire Institute of Sports and Infosys Foundation's investment in Prakash Padukone Badminton Academy (PPBA) are examples of this.

"The CSR Act (2013) is a big motivator," Prof. Sanjeev Tripathi from the Indian Institute of Management (Indore) told *The Hindu*. "Now that firms have to spend 2% of their net profits on CSR, they are looking for opportunities to spend. The other factor is the visibility and impact of the investment. Compared to healthcare and education, the investment in sports, especially if they result in medals, is celebrated and has a halo effect on the corporates from the perspective of national glory. Further, the returns on sports investments seem to have a lower gestation period than investment in other avenues."

Sport, being a sunrise sector, had initial investments that were experimental in nature. However, with every Asian Games, Commonwealth Games and Olympics, the positive impact (i.e., medal tally) has encouraged an increase in investment. "What we are witnessing is the bandwagon effect. The success achieved by some corporates has encouraged others to follow," added Prof. Tripathi.

## Upward trajectory

Numbers back this hypothesis. According to a report prepared in April 2023 jointly by PACTA, a firm focusing exclusively on the legal needs of the social sector, and Sports and Society Accelerator, an independent not-for-profit organisation focused on building the sports ecosystem, CSR in sports has grown consistently.

In 2014-15, investments worth ₹58 crore were made and in 2020-21 it stood at ₹242 crore, with a Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of 27%. This matched the growth of all activities under CSR, which rose from ₹6043 crore in 2014-15 to ₹25,715 crore in 2020-21, again at a CAGR of 27%.

These outlays have been roughly through three types of models. First is the Public-Private-Partnership model like the one that the Odisha government has stitched with Reliance Foundation to create an Athletics High Performance Centre. The second is where the corporate houses manage everything, like how the Tata Group has done with the Tata Football Academy and Tata Archery Academy in Jamshedpur.

And in the third, firms like OGQ and GoSports act like bridges between corporates and the sporting world. Through fund-raising, these non-profit sports organisations receive grants from corporate and individual donors, and manage the program design and execution.

As a result, there have been improvements for all to see. Training areas are worldclass and impeccably maintained. There are resources for

exposure trips, and top coaches, physiotherapists and nutrition experts are being hired.

The PPBA, which is nestled amidst the sprawling Padukone-Dravid Centre for Sports Excellence on the outskirts of Bengaluru and the place where Lakshya – and now Sindhu – train, is a case in point. With help from Infosys Foundation and OGQ, a teenaged Lakshya trained under the legendary Morten Frost, winner of four All England titles, and the Dane was even hired as a consultant coach at PPBA.

"We could send Lakshya to Denmark for three months and there he made a mark and started winning. That gave him the confidence," said Vimal Kumar, former National champion and Lakshya's long-time mentor and coach.

## Enlarging the pool

There has also been a significant change in the narrative involving women sportspersons and differently abled athletes. The collaboration between Infosys Foundation and GoSports to help fund a weightlifting academy is the best illustration of this.

Sathish Sivalingam, a gold medallist at the 2014 and 2018 Commonwealth Games, wanted to open the doors to talented girls at his academy in Vellore district (Tamil Nadu). Sathish, who was once helped by a GoSports program, sounded out the idea to Deepthi Bopaiah, CEO of GoSports.

"When my team visited the weightlifting academy, it was pretty much just bricks and a basic setup that they had," recalled Bopaiah. "They didn't have a nutritionist, a physio, or anything. Yet, talented girls were attempting to get to the district-level competition."

Approximately 200km west of Vellore, at the Infosys offices in Bengaluru, projects were being shortlisted for meeting the organisation's mission of empowering women. While GoSports had worked with Infosys Foundation on a different project, Sathish's new proposal was unique. The trainees included only girls and women.

A scenario emerged wherein all three stakeholders – the sponsor, the implementation partner, and the beneficiary, had the same objectives in mind. "In the past, GoSports worked with athletes directly," said Nandan Kamath, Co-Founder and Managing Trustee, GoSports.

"Now, with the partnership, it became a real opportunity to build an athlete-centric, coach-led, academy-driven model that allows us to take a systemic approach to developing sports talent with a long-term view."

Thus, in May 2023, the 'Girls for Gold' program was launched to identify and support talented Indian women athletes aged 13 to 19. A grant of ₹30 crore was dedicated to provide a support system for athletes and coaches from five academies – Lakshya Shooting Club, Mary Kom

Regional Boxing Foundation, Sathish Sivalingam Weightlifting Foundation, Raman TT High-Performance Centre, and Yadav Pro Badminton Academy.

Viren Rasquinha, former India hockey captain, has witnessed both sides, earlier as an athlete and now as Director and CEO of OGQ. "CSR in sports has been a massive boon," he said. "When I was a player, if you got injured or fell sick, you're out of the team. We did not have any idea about the right nutrition, strength and conditioning, and recovery. Everything was via self-learning. All these things have massively improved."

What initially started as support for existing athletes has now expanded into identification of sporting talent at junior levels.

"We [OGQ] started supporting Sindhu when she was 13, and Lakshya when he was 11," Rasquinha pointed out. "It's been a 12-year journey with Lakshya just to reach the Olympics. Today, we support over 400 athletes, and 150 of those are in the age-group of 11 to 19. These are going to be the future Sindhus, Lakshyas and Mary Koms."

## Half-full, half-empty

However, it is also true that CSR in sports remains a small piece in the overall pie. Cumulative figures from 2014-15 to 2020-21 show that sports still accounts for just 1% of the total spends; health and education are 21% and 31% respectively.

Even among the corporates who spend, it is not more than 5% of their overall commitment. In 2020-21, Reliance alone contributed nearly thrice as much as the next best company. CSR in sports is also highly concentrated in just a few states like Maharashtra, Odisha, Tamil Nadu, Rajasthan, Karnataka, Delhi and Jharkhand, with the top-five states in this list accounting for 37% of the entire amount.

Another cautionary note, as Rasquinha pointed out, is the thin line that exists between CSR and marketing. This is perhaps why the Companies Act specifically excluded one-off events like marathons, awards, charitable contributions and advertisements from the CSR ambit.

Nevertheless, the private sector has played a noteworthy role in India's ongoing sporting transformation. In the early days of CSR donations, regulatory compliance and tax breaks were the tangible benefits. As time passed, sports offered much more. What started as a philanthropic act has now led to branding, employee engagement, and an overall sense of nation-building.

"We are in this for the long term," a Reliance Foundation spokesperson said. "We have been working towards developing India as a multi-sport nation, including leading its Olympic movement. India's sporting journey is at an inflection point, but there is still a long way to go."

## THE GIST

▼ The Companies Act, 2013, mandating CSR activities that included sports training, and an amendment in 2016 that brought in creation of sporting infrastructure, have given a big fillip to investments by the corporate sector

▼ Companies like Reliance, Tata, JSW and Infosys are joining hands with the government alongside not-for-profit bodies like Olympic Gold Quest and GoSports Foundation to fuel India's Olympic journey

▼ From ₹58 crore in 2014-15, CSR in sports stood at ₹242 crore in 2020-21, a Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of 27%. This mirrored the overall CSR growth during this period, from ₹6043 crore to ₹25,715 crore at CAGR 27%

▼ However, CSR in sports remains a small piece in the overall pie. Cumulative figures from 2014-15 to 2020-21 show that sports still accounts for just 1% of the overall spends; health and education are 21% and 31% respectively

# Controlling gestational diabetes critical to mother, baby's future

GDM is glucose intolerance that develops or is first diagnosed during pregnancy. It has short-term and long-term implications for maternal and foetal health. It increases the risk of type 2 diabetes in women later in life. Children face consequences such as obesity, insulin resistance, and diabetes

V. Seshiah

The 18th Annual Conference of the Diabetes in Pregnancy Study Group India 2024 (DIPSI), which was held in March in New Delhi, marked a significant milestone in the fight against non-communicable diseases (NCDs) with the unveiling of the Delhi Declaration. This pioneering document provides a futuristic perspective on the primordial prevention strategy for diabetes, especially gestational diabetes (GDM), which has amplified the global threat of NCDs.

GDM was originally described as any form of glucose intolerance that develops or is first diagnosed during pregnancy. This condition is an antepartum complication that has short-term and long-term implications for maternal and foetal health. GDM increases the risk of type 2 diabetes in women later in life. At the same time, their children face consequences such as obesity, insulin resistance, and type 2 diabetes due to likely epigenetic modifications caused by exposure to high glucose concentrations in utero. Hence, identifying GDM at the right time and proper management are pivotal in reducing these risks.

Due to the increased attention paid to GDM, the Delhi Declaration encourages using the single test procedure formulated by DIPSI and approved by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India. This low-cost and effective strategy is crucial to identifying glucose intolerance in pregnancy to prevent the progression of NCDs.

## Foetal programming

One of the key issues emphasised in the Delhi Declaration is foetal programming. This refers to alterations in the structure, anatomy, and biochemical activities due to injurious influences or stress during specific developmental phases of foetal growth. One such adverse stimulus is hyperglycemia during pregnancy, which increases the risk of the fetus developing NCDs when it grows up, a concept known as the "Foetal Origin of Adult Diseases."

The studies show that women should be screened for glucose intolerance at eight weeks of pregnancy. Foetal beta cells begin to secrete insulin at the gestational age of 11 weeks of pregnancy. Maternal 2-hour postprandial blood glucose (PPBG) level of 110 mg/dL by the 10th week of pregnancy predicts GDM. This early glucose intolerance, called Early Gestational Glucose Intolerance (EGGI), requires treatment in order to keep blood glucose levels below 110 mg/dL at 10 weeks to avoid foetal hyperinsulinemia (higher than normal levels of insulin in the blood) and, subsequently, GDM.

A National Institutes of Health, US, and WHO analysis states that a 2 hour post prandial blood sugar of 110 mg/dl at the 10th week predicts early GDM. This will enable the launch of appropriate lifestyle changes and medical interventions even before GDM is actually established. The 2013 WHO guideline does not include A1c as a means of diagnosing diabetes in a pregnant woman and for monitoring. Screening between the 8<sup>th</sup> and 10th weeks enables healthcare



The Delhi Declaration has urged clinicians, researchers, diabetologists, obstetricians, and public health specialists to achieve set metabolic targets at the beginning of pregnancy for improved maternal and foetal health. GETTY IMAGES

providers to keep maternal glucose levels below 110 mg/dl. Taking early action can greatly change the course of NCD development.

The Delhi Declaration states that all pregnant women with PPBG  $\geq 110$  mg/dl should be put on medical nutrition therapy and begin taking metformin 250 mg twice a day until delivery. These interventions aim to ensure that glycemic levels remain between  $99 \pm 10$  mg/dl during the pregnancy. Metformin is still relatively safe at this stage because the advantages of better glycemic control outweigh the potential hazards.

A pilot study carried out in this regard has revealed some promising findings. Group A included 82 antenatal women with PPBG  $< 110$  mg/dl at eight weeks and no intervention; only one woman developed GDM in the third trimester because she was bearing multiple foetuses. On the other hand, in Group B, which had 70 antenatal women with PPBG of 110mg/dl at eight weeks on MNT plus metformin, only one woman had GDM resulting from discontinuation of the intervention. These outcomes provide proof that the primordial prevention of diabetes is possible and feasible.



The ultimate idea is to address the problem head-on and create a generation free of diabetes through primordial prevention

The Delhi Declaration has urged clinicians, researchers, diabetologists, obstetricians, and public health specialists to achieve set metabolic targets at the beginning of pregnancy for improved maternal and foetal health. The pledge involves the following principles:

- using advocacy to raise awareness of screening for PPBS at eight weeks of gestation,
- working with healthcare professionals and families to ensure euglycemia and
- ensure sound policies and programmes for the education, screening, and management of pregnant women.

## Freedom from diabetes

The Diabetes in Pregnancy Study Group India 2024 conference has also set a clear agenda for the future: to launch social media advocacy campaigns, improve

postpartum compliance, and reduce discrimination against pregnant women with diabetes. The ultimate idea is to address the problem head-on and create a generation free of diabetes through primordial prevention.

By adhering to these guidelines, the Delhi Declaration seeks to pave the way for healthier futures for the mom and her child.

The ideology of early detection and intervention is not only medically sound but also a public health call that holds out the prospect of dousing the epidemic of diabetes and other NCDs.

To sum up, we need to bear the following points as a mantra in the treatment of pregnant women: Prediction of GDM should be done on the basis of a 2hr PPBS reading of  $>110$  mg/dl at the 10<sup>th</sup> week. Preventive action has to be taken so that maternal PPBS remains under the 110 mg/dl blood sugar mark throughout the pregnancy. The mother should be on Maternal Nutrition Therapy and oral Metformin for the entire pregnancy. Follow-up for women who have recorded GDM is essential after delivery.

With these simple, practical guidelines and an understanding of what the Delhi Declaration offers, we now have the means and the know-how to create a real and lasting improvement in the health of future generations.

The focus on early identification and treatment is not only a requirement of modern medicine but also a social mandate. Together, we can pave the way for a healthier, diabetes-free generation in the future. The womb is more important than the home, in some senses. It all starts in utero. Hence, for a diabetes free generation we should concentrate on the development of offspring.

(Dr. V. Seshiah is an eminent Diabetologist practicing in Chennai and is the founder and patron of the Diabetes in Pregnancy Study Group India. [vseshiah@gmail.com](mailto:vseshiah@gmail.com))



The Delhi Declaration which provides a futuristic perspective on a prevention strategy for diabetes, especially gestational diabetes, was released by Union Minister Jitendra Singh in March. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT



Children take part in a walk to spread awareness on obesity in Vijaywada. FILE PHOTO

## 'Proper diet key to managing childhood obesity, diabetes'

Zubeda Hamid

Last week, Women and Child Development Minister Annapurna Devi stated in the Lok Sabha that 17% of children in the age group of 0-5 years in India are underweight (low weight for age), 36% are stunted (low height for age), and 6% are wasted (low weight for height) – all key indicators of malnutrition.

Malnutrition, as defined by the WHO, refers to deficiencies or excesses in nutrient intake, an imbalance of essential nutrients, or impaired nutrient utilisation. The double burden of malnutrition consists of both undernutrition, overweight, and obesity, as well as diet-related noncommunicable diseases, the WHO says.

India has struggled with malnutrition for decades – 56.4% of the total disease burden is attributed to unhealthy diets.

The Dietary Guidelines for India, developed by the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR)-National Institute of Nutrition (ICMR-NIN), Hyderabad, said a large proportion of children suffered impaired nutritional status while concurrently battling the rising prevalence of overweight, obesity, and pre-diabetic symptoms, creating a dual burden of malnutrition where both undernutrition and overweight and obesity coexist.

How do we combat the diabetes (obesity and type 2 diabetes) pandemic? Writing in *The Lancet* Chittaranjan S. Yajnik, director, diabetes unit, KEM Hospital, Pune, says: "The hope of shooing away the diabetes pandemic by controlling the lifestyle of adults and using biologics is tantamount to closing

## India has struggled with malnutrition for decades – 56.4% of the total disease burden is attributed to unhealthy diets

the door after the horse has bolted. Only promoting adolescent and female health in the reproductive years will help primordial and primary prevention in future generations."

Indians, says Nihal Thomas, senior professor, department of endocrinology, diabetes, and metabolism, Christian Medical College, Vellore start with a disadvantage: they already have a nutritional backlog of 150 odd years. Over a period of time, malnourishment leads to the thrifty phenotype, where more adipose tissue and fat are stored, even when fewer calories are consumed, at the cost of lean body muscle, he explains. This leads to changes in the pancreas and liver, and, as a result, when exposed to times of plenty, Indians put on weight easily, making them more susceptible to insulin resistance and therefore diabetes.

In addition, says independent development economist and food researcher Dipa Sinha, new challenges to food security compound the already existing burden of large deficits in the nutritional levels of people. These deficits, she says, are not just in terms of the amount of food available, but the right kind of food: a diverse diet, sufficient proteins, and micronutrients.

"Take price volatility with food – it is linked to multiple factors such as climate crises, which India is seeing more of with droughts and unseasonal rain, as well as fluctuations in global prices. This makes availability and access to a nutritious diet even more difficult. We know that pregnancy and the first two years of life are very important. But when prices go up, families reduce the number of expensive food items they buy, and the variety of their diet decreases. And almost always, if there isn't enough, the woman will be the one who gets the least." ([zubeda.h@thehindu.co.in](mailto:zubeda.h@thehindu.co.in))

## THE SCIENCE QUIZ

# The evolutionary edge to human survival

Anjali Srivastava

### QUESTION 1

The ability to metabolize alcohol effectively is an evolutionary adaptation found in populations with a long history of agriculture and fermentation. Which enzyme is responsible for this adaptation?

### QUESTION 2

\_\_\_\_\_ is a structural adaptation in the human foot that provides leverage and shock absorption during walking and running, distinguishing us from other primates.

### QUESTION 3

Which gene, known to affect skin pigmentation, underwent mutation around 20,000 to 50,000 years ago, allowing humans in Europe to have lighter skin?

### QUESTION 4

Humans have evolved to have specific type of sweat gland that helps with thermoregulation by secreting water and salts. What is the name of this gland?

### QUESTION 5

The ability to store large amounts of fat in the body as a survival mechanism in times of food scarcity is an adaptation known as what?



Visual question: Identify this evolutionary adaptation, highlighted in red, in the human hand which includes a muscle absent in some people and considered vestigial but was once used for climbing and grasping in our primate ancestors.

For feedback and suggestions for 'Science', please write to [science@thehindu.co.in](mailto:science@thehindu.co.in) with the subject 'Daily page'