



# Innovation. Growth. Excellence.

Celebrating the journey of limitless evolution in healthcare.



Bengaluru. Hyderabad. Gurugram. | Visit us at [carelonglobal.in](https://carelonglobal.in)

Scan to know more





# yono SBI BUSINESS

**BANKER TO EVERY BUSINESS**

Boost growth with digital ease



Optimised for tablet & mobile

Proprietor

Mid Corporate

Large Corporate



**Digital Offerings**



Payments, Collections, FDs



LC, BG, International Payments



Book Forex Rates



Liquidity Management, Cash, Cheque Collection



Vendor, Dealer Finance

For assistance, write to [support.yonobusiness@sbi.co.in](mailto:support.yonobusiness@sbi.co.in)

Follow us on



**STRONG ROOTS DIVERSE OFFERINGS**

**NIRMAL BANG**  
a relationship beyond broking

Disclaimer: **NIRMAL BANG SECURITIES PVT LTD:** Investment in Securities market are subject to market risks. Read all the related documents carefully before investing. Please read the Do's and Don'ts prescribed by the Commodity Exchange before trading. We do not offer PMS Service for the Commodity segment. Opening of account will not guarantee allotment of shares in IPO. Investors are requested to do their own due diligence before investing in any IPO. The securities quoted are exemplary and are not recommendatory. BSE (Member ID- 498): INB011072759, INF011072759, Exchange Registered Member in CDS; NSE MEMEBR ID- 09391): INB230939139, INF230939139, INE230939139; MSEI Member ID-1067): INB260939138, INF260939138, INE260939139; Single Registration No. INZ000202536, PMS Registration No: INP000002981; Research Analyst Registration No: INH000001766; NSDL/ CDSL: IN-DP-CDSL 37-99; Exchange Member ID: MCX - 56460, NCDEX - 1268, ICEX - 2073. Regd. Office: B-2, 301/302, 3rd Floor, Marathon Innova, Off Ganpatrao Kadam Marg, Lower Parel (W), Mumbai - 400013. Tel: 62738000/01; Fax: 62738010 | **\*NIRMAL BANG NIVESHALAYA PVT LTD:** ARN - 111233, Mutual Fund Distributor. Mutual Fund Investments are subject to market risks. Please read the offer documents carefully before Investing." Regd. Office: B - 201, Khandelwal House, Poddar Road, Near Poddar Park, Malad (East), Mumbai - 400097. | **\*\*NIRMAL BANG INSURANCE BROKING PVT LTD:** IRDAI Registration No: 795 and Registration Code For the Insurance Broker: IRDAI/DB889/2021. Insurance is the subject matter of the solicitation. For more details on policy terms, conditions, exclusions, limitations, please refer/read policy brochure carefully before concluding sale.

**For free account opening, call on +91 022 62738000 | [www.nirmalbang.com](http://www.nirmalbang.com)**

**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

Scan the QR code to register your feedback

THE HINDU **businessline**

FRONTLINE SPORTSTAR THE HINDU

**PUNJAB STATE POWER CORPORATION LIMITED**  
(Regd. Office PSEB, Head Office, The Mall, Patiala)  
Corporate Identity Number: U40109PB015GCO33813  
Website: www.pspcl.in  
(Contract Number-96461-17607)

**Tender enquiry No.: 32/AHP -143(N)/MM-II/O&M Dated:25.01.2024**

SE/MM-II/O&M, GHTP, Lehra Mohabbat-151111 invites e-tender for the Work of Operation & Maintenance and General Cleanliness of PLC based Complete Ash Handling Plant Stage-I and Stage-II units along with operation & routine maintenance of 1 No. 100 MT electronic pitless weighbridge and issuing of Excise Gate Pass cum Invoice to each dry fly ash loading trucks and Work of Decantation of LDO/HSD/HPS/HFO wagons/BTPN wagons/Tankers and general House Keeping and maintenance of Decantation system & storage tank area at GHTP Lehra Mohabbat. For detailed NIT & tender specifications please refer to <https://eproc.punjab.gov.in> from 25.01.2024 from 6:00 PM onwards  
Note: corrigendum and addendum, if any will be uploaded online at <https://eproc.punjab.gov.in>

**GHTP-08/24 76155/12/2643/2023/31815**

**PUNJAB STATE POWER CORPORATION LTD.**  
Regd. Office: PSEB Head Office, The Mall Patiala-147001.  
Corporate Identity Number: U40109PB015GCO33813  
Website: www.pspcl.in, (Contact No. 96461-22185)

**Tender Enquiry No. 309/SS(D)-361/Spares Dated: 29.01.2024**

Dy.CE/Substation Design/ TS Organization, PSPCL, C-1 Shakti Vihar, PSPCL, Patiala invites E-tender for Manufacture, Testing and Supply of Armoured ISI Marked Single Core 11KV 300mm<sup>2</sup> Size Stranded Aluminum Conductor, XLPE insulated, PVC Sheathed, Screened Cable (31 Kms) in Accordance With IS: 7098 (Part-2) With Latest Amendments Manufactured With CCV/Sioplas Technology. For detailed NIT & Tender Specification, please refer to <https://eproc.punjab.gov.in> from 31.01.2024 (11:00 AM onwards).  
Note:- Corrigendum and amendments, if any, will be published online at <https://eproc.punjab.gov.in/>

**C-71/24 76155/12/2646/2023/31819**

**BANGALORE DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY**  
T. Chowdaiah Road, Kumara Park West, Bangalore - 560 020

**No. BDA/EME/ID/TENDER/PRR-210/2023-24 Date : 25.01.2024**

**Development Of Peripheral Ring Road to Bengaluru City Under Public Private Partnership**

The Bangalore Development Authority, Government of Karnataka (hereinafter referred to as the "Authority"), is the nodal agency for the development of the Bangalore region by providing various civic amenities, quality infrastructure and as part of this endeavour, the Authority has decided to undertake Development of Peripheral Ring Road to Bengaluru City ("Project") through Public Private Partnership ("PPP") on Design, Build, Finance, Operate and Transfer ("DBFOT") basis. In this regard, the Authority is desirous of selecting the Concessionaire through a transparent and competitive bidding process.

**Name of the work :** Development of 8 lane Peripheral Ring Road with service road to Bengaluru City for approx. length of 74 km and in RoW width of 100m.including cloverleaf junctions, flyovers/underpasses, ROB, RUBs, vehicular underpass/overpasses, Toll Plazas, transport zones, culverts, minor and major bridges, utility ducts along and across the road, green corridor with operation and maintenance for a lease period of 50 years on revenue sharing basis through PPP mode (Design, Build, Finance, Operate and Transfer DBFOT) along with funding the land acquisition cost for 2560 Acres (Approx). **EMD Rs. Crore : 270.00.**

The Authority invites proposals ("Bids") through e-tendering mode from Interested parties ("Concessionaires") in accordance with the Request for Proposal ("RFP"). The RFP document containing instructions to Bidders, criteria for qualification and criteria for evaluation may be downloaded from the Karnataka Public Procurement Portal of Government of Karnataka ("Gok") viz. <https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in> and the Bids shall be submitted as per the provisions of the RFP. **Important Details: RFP, Issue Date: 29.01.2024, Submission of bid queries 07.02.2024 at 16:00 Hrs IST, Pre bid meeting Date: 09.02.2024 at 16:00 Hrs IST, Last Date for submission of bids:29.02.2024 upto 16:00 Hrs IST, Opening of Technical Bids: 02.03.2024 at 16:30 Hrs IST.**

**Project :** Bangalore, **Proponent:** Development Authority, **Contact Person:** Executive Engineer, **Address :** Bangalore, Development Authority, Government of Karnataka, T.Chowdaiah Road, Kumarapark West, Bangalore-560020. **Phone :** 080-2334 0258, **E-mail :** bdaepr@gmail.com, **Transaction :** Infrastructure, **Advisor :** Development Corporation (Karnataka) Limited (DeCK), **Contact Person Address :** Divakaran K, **Address :** 9/7, K.C.N. Bhavan, Yamunabai Road, Madhavanagar Extension, Off Race Course Road, Bangalore-560001, **Phone :** +91 80 4344 000/33, 9739080400, **E-mail :** divakaran.k@ideck.in.

**Note :** Bangalore Development Authority reserves the right to cancel the invitation and/or invite fresh Bids with or without amendments to this invitation, without liability or any obligation for such invitation and without assigning any reason.

**Sd/- Engineer Member, BDA, Bangalore**

**JAMMU AND KASHMIR POLICE**  
**DISTRICT POLICE HEADQUARTERS JAMMU**  
0191-2561578 (O), 0191-254780 (F), email:sspjammu@jkpolice.gov.in

**LOOK OUT NOTICE**

SHO P/S Akhnoor, Jammu dated 15.01.2024 intimated that one Pooja Devi W/O Parshotam Singh R/O Nardiwala (Dhana) Tehsil Maira Mandrian District Jammu had gone missing, since 23.05.2023. Accordingly, her missing report was entered at P/S Akhnoor, Jammu vide DDR No. 32 dated 23.05.2023. Despite thorough search her whereabouts are still unknown.

As such photograph of above named missing is being published for the information of Police establishments/public in general and if anybody having any clue related to his whereabouts / present location, kindly communicate and same on the below mentioned contact/ Telephone numbers.

**Description Roll :-**

Name : Pooja Devi  
W/O : Parshotam Singh  
Residence : Nardiwala (Dhana) Tehsil Maira Mandrian, District Jammu  
Age : 28 Years  
Height : 5' 3"  
Complexion : Wheatish

**Contacts/Telephone Numbers:-**

1. DPO, Jammu : 0191-2547807, 0191-2561578
2. SSP Jammu Mail I.D : [sspjammu@jkpolice.gov.in](mailto:sspjammu@jkpolice.gov.in)
3. PCR Jammu : 0191-2542000
4. SP Rural Jammu : 0191-2439949
5. SDPO Akhnoor : 01924-252244
6. SHO P/S Akhnoor : 01924-252225

**For Sr. Superintendent of Police Jammu**  
DIP/J-14470/23

**Jammu & Kashmir Bank Limited**  
Corporate Banking Department  
Corporate Headquarters  
M. A. Road Srinagar, 190 001 J&K

**Online Request for Quote (e-RFQ)**  
for  
**Appointment of consultant for conducting TEV Study of CA Store Industry in UT of J&K**

RFQ Notice along with Complete Tender document outlining the minimum requirements can be downloaded from and Bids can be submitted on the Banks' e-Tendering Portal <https://jkbank.abcpocure.com> w.e.f. **January 29, 2024, 16.00 Hrs.** Tender Document can also be downloaded from Bank's Official Website [www.jkbank.com](http://www.jkbank.com). Last date for submission of Bids is **February 19, 2024, 17.00 Hrs.**

\*RFP Ref. No.:J&K/CHO/CB/Appointment-Consultant-TEV/2024-965  
Dated: 25-01-2024

Registered office: Corporate Headquarters, M.A.Road, Srinagar 190001, Kashmir, India  
CIN: L65102JK1983SC000048 | T: +91 (0)194 2481 930-35 | F: +91 (0)194 248 1928 | E: info@jkbank.com | W: www.jkbank.com

**CLASSIFIEDS MART**

**TO ADVERTISE VISIT**  
[www.thehinduads.com](http://www.thehinduads.com)  
**CALL: 011-43579738 • 011-43579797**  
or Contact your nearest Authorised space sellers

**LEGAL NOTICE**

Before the Hon. Munsiff Court, at Thrissur, Kerala (1<sup>st</sup> Additional) O. S. 2167 of 2022  
**Dr. P. V. Govindan Nair - Plaintiff**  
Vs.  
**Philips India Ltd. and Others - Defendants**

Summons to defendants Nos. 1, 2, 4, 5 and 6 by way of substituted service as per Order 5 Rule 20 of the Code of Civil Procedure 1908.

**NOTICE**

Whereas the above court has ordered issuance of summons to the following defendants on the ground that summons could not be served to them in the usual procedure.

1. Philips India Limited represented by its Managing Director, 3rd Floor, Tower A, DLF IT PARK, OB Block, AF, Major Arterial Road, New Town (Rajarahat) Kolkata- 700156, West Bengal, India.
2. Mr. Daniel Mazon, Vice Chairman & Managing Director, Philips India Ltd., 3rd Floor, Tower A, DLF IT PARK, OB Block, AF, Major Arterial Road, New Town (Rajarahat), Kolkata-700156, West Bengal, India.
4. K. M. Ramkumar, Territory Manager, Customer Support, Philips India Ltd. (Philips Health Care, Krishnakripa, X1215A, Layam Road, Cochin-682011.
5. U. Sunil, Regional Manager, Customer Support, Philips India Ltd., Sunny Side, 3d Floor, Block No. 817, Shafee Mohammad Road (Off Greens Road, Chennai, 600 006).
6. R. Subramanian, Director and Head, Customer Support, Philips India Ltd., Sunny Side, 3d Floor, Block No. 817, Shafee Mohammad Road (Off Greens Road, Chennai, 600 006).

Whereas the plaintiff has instituted the above suit against you for a declaration order and the case is pending before the above honourable court.

Please take notice that the Hon. Munsiff Court has ordered substituted service of summons to defendants Nos. 1, 2, 4, 5, and 6, here to above and it is informed that the above suit stands posted to 15-02-2024 and you are hereby directed to appear before the above court on 15-02-2024 at 11 a.m. failing which all of you will be set aside and the suit will be proceeded accordingly.

Dated this 20 day of January 2024.  
Dr. P. V. Govindan Nair (Plaintiff)  
Mob: 09447618709

**EDUCATIONAL PUBLIC NOTICE**

**VACANCIES**

**ETHIC IAS**  
**HIRING NOW**  
POSITION: FACULTY FOR IAS COACHING CENTRE  
EXPERIENCE: 5 TO 10 YEARS  
GOOD COMMUNICATION SKILLS IN ENGLISH & HINDI  
SALARY: AS PER INDUSTRY STANDARD  
FOOD AND ACCOMMODATION FACILITY AVAILABLE.  
INTERESTED CANDIDATES MAY SEND RESUME TO [INFO.ETHICIAS@GMAIL.COM](mailto:INFO.ETHICIAS@GMAIL.COM)  
WhatsApp - 97772 10937

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

TO WHOM SO EVER IT MAY CONCERN The Company M/s. S N Jee Build Well Pvt. Ltd. vide NCLT order dated 25.11.2022 has been taken over by M/s. CRS Towers Pvt. Ltd. Accordingly, shareholding pattern is being changed from the existing shareholders to new shareholders i.e. CRS Towers Pvt.Ltd. If any allottee has any objection to the above stated change in shareholding pattern, the same may be submitted in the office of senior Town Planner, Gunugram, within a period of 30 days from the date of issue of public notice.

**PERSONAL CHANGE OF NAME**

**I, REHMAT BI SHEIKH D/O HASMUD-DIN R/O B-152,RAJIV NAGAR MANDOL,MAND NAGRI,DELHI-93 HAVE CHANGED MY NAME FROM REHMAT B TO REHMAT BI SHEIKH FOR ALL PURPOSES AND REHMAT B AND REHMAT BI SHEIKH ARE ONE THE SAME PERSON.**

**OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE**

**DEATH**



**R. CHAMPAKALAKSHMI**  
Retd Professor of JUNU Historical Studies  
Attained Acharyan Thiruvadi on 28-01-2024  
Deeply mourned by Sisters Sumathi Rangarajan, C.P. Radha  
Nephews : Karthik Rangarajan, Saiprasad Rangarajan  
Contact No. 7550090231

**REMEMBRANCE**



**A Loving Tribute to Dr.N.D.JEYASEKHARAN**  
ON HIS 18<sup>th</sup> DEATH ANNIVERSARY. A LIFE SPENT ON PROMOTING HEALING WITH EMPATHY AND COMPASSION.  
**FOREVER REMEMBERED AND WILL BE**  
**15 MAR 1925 - 30 JAN 2006**  
Lovingly Remembered by Family & Staffs of **Dr JEYASEKHARAN MEDICAL TRUST**

**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](http://www.thehinduads.com)  
**DONATE EYES - GIFT SIGHT**

**BRUHAT BANGALURU MAHANAGARA PALIKE**  
Office of the Executive Engineer, SWD, Rajarajeshwari Nagar Zone, BBMP, 9th Floor, Jayanagara Shopping Complex, 4th Block, Jayanagara, Bengaluru - 560011.

**No: EE/SWD/RRZ/TEND/01/2023-24 Date: 29-01-2024**  
**INVITATION FOR SHORT TERM TENDER (IFT)**  
(Two Cover System) (Through GOK KPP Portal only)

The Executive Engineer, SWD - R.R. Nagar Zone, BBMP, Bengaluru invites tenders from eligible Contractors registered in BBMP or equivalent registration with CPWD / KPWD / Railways / MES / National Highway or any State Government Organizations for the construction of works detailed below.

**(Standard Tender Document - KW-4)**

Sl. No.	Name of the Work	Approximate Amount of Work (Rs. in Lakhs)	EMD Amount (Rs. in Lakhs)
1	Construction of RCC Retaining Wall to Vrushabhavathi Valley V-200 from Chainage 3650.00 to 3800.00m and Service Road along Drain in Freedom Fighters Colony in Laggere Ward of Rajarajeshwarinagara Zone.	400.00	Rs. 6.00 Lakhs (Rs. 1.00 Lakh Through e- Payment & Rs. 5.00 Lakhs balance in form of BG)

**Calendar of Events:** 1) The tender documents can be downloaded from the GOK Karnataka Public Procurement Portal Website: <https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in> 2) Pre Bid Meeting will be held on **05-02-2024 at 15.00 Hours at the Office of the Executive Engineer, SWD, R.R. Nagar Zone, BBMP, 9th Floor, Jayanagara Shopping Complex, 4th Block, Jayanagara, Bengaluru - 560011.** 3) Last Date for Receipt of Tenders is **12-02-2024 upto 16.00 Hours.** 4) Date of Opening of the Bid is **14-02-2024 at 16.30 Hours or next working day.** 5) Date of Opening of the Financial Bid: **Will be intimated to successful bidder.** Further details can be had from the above office.

**Sd/- Executive Engineer, SWD, Rajarajeshwari Nagar Zone, BBMP.**



# Drishti IAS

8010 440 440 | 87501 87501

**IAS GS Foundation Courses**  
(Prelims + Mains) | Offline Batches

Delhi English Medium 16 February	हिंदी माध्यम 31 जनवरी	Register Now
Jaipur English Medium 6 February	हिंदी माध्यम 6 फरवरी	





**'FOMENTING TERRORISM'**  
Centre extends ban on SIMI for 5 years  
NEWS » PAGE 10



**FINANCE MINISTRY REPORT**  
GDP growth pegged closer to 7% in 2024-25  
BUSINESS » PAGE 14



**IN GULF OF ADEN**  
INS Sumitra foils hijack attempt on fishing vessel  
NEWS » PAGE 10

## Soren 'untraced' as ED team visits house over land fraud case

Agency officials camp at Jharkhand CM's Delhi residence for more than 12 hours; in a letter, Soren says agency is motivated by political agenda

The Hindu Bureau  
NEW DELHI/PATNA

A team of Enforcement Directorate (ED) officials visited the Delhi residence of Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren on Monday for questioning him in connection with a land fraud case. While the ED team, which camped at the house for more than 12 hours, said the CM could not be located, Mr. Soren later sent a letter to the agency saying it is "motivated by political agenda".

The ED teams will be at the residence till Mr. Soren returns, the sources said, adding that authorities are also keeping vigilance at the Delhi airport.

The ED had questioned



**Long watch:** Security tightened outside Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren's residence in Ranchi on Monday. PTI

Mr. Soren at his official residence in Ranchi on January 20 in connection with the case and had issued fresh summons asking him to confirm his availability for questioning on either January 29 or 31, sources said.

Officials of the Central

probe agency, accompanied by Delhi Police personnel, reached the CM's residence at Shanti Niketan in South Delhi around 9 a.m. and were still there after 9 p.m.

**CONTINUED ON**  
» PAGE 10

## In top court, DGP flays bid to paint T.N. govt. as 'anti-Hindu'

Krishnadas Rajagopal  
NEW DELHI

In response to a petition alleging that an "oral" order was issued by Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin to ban the live telecast and conduct of religious events in connection with the consecration of the Ram idol at the Ayodhya temple on January 22, State Director-General of Police Shankar Jiwal on Monday told the Supreme Court that a deliberate attempt was made to portray the State government as "anti-Hindu".

The petition was filed by a Chennai resident, Vinoj Pannerselvam, who was represented by senior advocate Dama Seshadiri Naidu and advocate G. Balaji in the court.

In a brief hearing, a Bench headed by Justice Sanjiv Khanna gave the State of Tamil Nadu 15 days to separately file a counter-affidavit. When Mr. Naidu

**He says CM did not issue any oral order to ban live telecast of the Ayodhya event in temples in the State**

requested permission to file a rejoinder to the State's counter-affidavit, Justice Khanna said the "event [consecration] is already over... do not push it further".

Tamil Nadu Additional Advocate-General Amit Anand Tiwari submitted that the case was pending in the Madras High Court and the petitioner should approach it. In his separate counter-affidavit, Mr. Jiwal told the Supreme Court that live telecasts of the temple ceremony, and religious events were held across the State without any interference from the police or authorities.

**CONTINUED ON**  
» PAGE 10

## Judge vs judge: SC takes over case from HC

Krishnadas Rajagopal  
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday transferred from the Calcutta High Court to itself a case of medical admissions with the help of fake caste certificates in West Bengal, after conflicting orders in the High Court by a Single Judge Bench and a judge presiding over a Division Bench led to mudslinging. A five-judge Bench of the Supreme Court, headed by the Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud, had to take *suo motu* cognisance of the happenings, and convened on Saturday to stay proceedings in the High Court.

**CONTINUED ON**  
» PAGE 10

**1st Feb 2024** **PLUTUS IAS**  
Mathematics  
Both Online & Offline (Karol Bagh)  
+91 8448440231  
www.plutusias.com

Join **STUDYIQ'S UPSC** 

## Flagship Courses

### UPSC IAS LIVE

### GS FOUNDATION P2I

## New Year Batches

**HINGLISH BATCH**

Batch Starting On  
30th Jan '24 | 6:00 PM

**ENGLISH BATCH**

Admissions Closing on  
31st Jan '24 | 6:00 PM

**HINDI BATCH**

Admissions Closing on  
2nd Feb '24 | 6:00 PM

Price: ₹70000 **₹23,999** Use Code | **HINDU**

---

**UPSC IAS LIVE**

### Gs Foundation P2I

### Long Term Batch 2026

Admissions Closing on 10th Feb '24 | 6:00PM

Price: ₹70000 **₹29,999**

Use Code | **HINDU**

---

**SIP+**

**-2024-**

SUCCESS IN PRELIMS

**Hinglish**

Batch Starting on on  
5th Feb '24 | 5:00 PM

Price: ₹4,999

Use Code | **HINDU**

**Hindi**

Admissions Closing on  
10th Feb '24 | 12:00 PM


Price: ₹4,499

079-7142-0466

Our Offline  
Counselling Centres

Address - 1  
53/1, Ground Floor, Old Rajinder Nagar,  
Rajinder Nagar, Delhi, 110060

Address - 2  
869, Banda Bahadur Marg, next to ICICI Bank opposite  
Batra Cinema Gate No. 2, Mukherjee Nagar, 110009



**यूनियन बैंक ऑफ इंडिया**  
भारत सरकार का उपक्रम

**Union Bank of India**  
A Government of India Undertaking

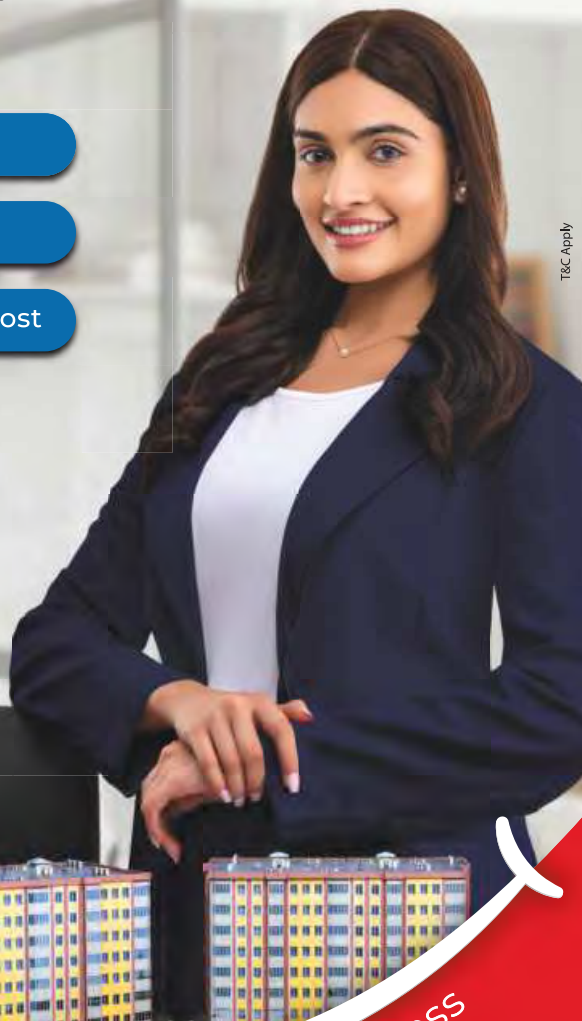
## Unlock your passion on your own terms

Accelerate your growth story with **Union Nari Shakti** loan for women entrepreneurs:

Loan from ₹2 lakh to ₹10 crore

No processing fee

Loan up to 95% of the project cost

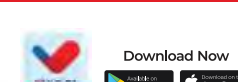


**Union Nari Shakti**

Scan for digital sanction (Upto ₹10 lakh)

#ChooseHappiness

Download Now



(Toll Free No.) 1800 222 244 / 1800 222 243 / 1800 425 1515 / 1800 208 2244 | www.unionbankofindia.co.in

unionbankofindia | UnionBankTweets | UnionBankInsta | UnionBankIndiaTube | unionbankofindia | unionbankinst

## INBRIEF



## Kalkaji stage collapse: main organiser yet to be identified

Six people have been questioned to trace the main organiser of the religious event at Kalkaji Temple on Saturday, where a woman was killed and 17 others were injured when a stage collapsed, an officer said on Monday. The officer said the application for the function was submitted by a man named Satish Kumar on behalf of 'Sri Kalkaji Sajja Sevdar Mitr Mandal'. Notices have been served on many others to join the probe, the officer also said. PTI

## AAP chief's poaching allegations: BJP to seek police inquiry

**The Hindu Bureau**  
NEW DELHI

Leaders of the BJP's Delhi unit said they will meet the Police Commissioner on Tuesday and submit a letter regarding the "false" claims made by AAP national convener and Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal about BJP's attempt to poach MLAs of the ruling party. The BJP leaders said they will demand an investigation into Mr. Kejriwal's "baseless allegations".

On Saturday, the CM took to X (formerly Twitter) to charge the BJP with trying to poach his party's MLAs in Delhi by offering

₹25 crore each and a ticket in next year's Assembly election to topple the government.

Delhi BJP president Virendra Sachdeva on Monday accused the AAP chief of corruption and demanded that he furnish whatever evidence he had regarding the alleged poaching bid before the Police Commissioner.

"Arvind Kejriwal has lost his political prestige. We will demand that the police take information from Arvind Kejriwal as to which AAP MLAs were contacted by the BJP and what inducements were offered," said the senior BJP leader.

## CM unveils new solar policy, says will help cut power bill to zero

Govt. to spend ₹570 crore on implementation of the scheme; 20% of city's electricity demand likely to be met through solar power in three years

**The Hindu Bureau**  
NEW DELHI

Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Monday unveiled the Delhi Solar Policy-2024, under which consumers installing solar power panels on their rooftops will be given generation-based incentives.

According to the government, around 20% of Delhi's electricity consumption will come from solar power by 2027. The government will spend ₹570 crore for the implementation of the policy.

The Chief Minister said the scheme would help cut households' power bills to zero if their electricity consumption is below 200 units a month after adjusting against the electricity they generate.

"Let us say if a household has consumed 400 units and generated 100 units of solar power, it will be charged only for 300 units," he said.

But if, after offsetting the solar power generated, the total units are less than 200, then the bill amount will be zero, the CM said. Currently, households consuming electricity up to 200 units a month are exempted from paying bills, while those consuming between 201 and 400 units get a 50% subsidy.

Mr. Kejriwal said a dom-

## Incentives galore

Delhi govt.'s policy on rooftop solar panels offers benefits to residents willing to shift to cleaner, renewable energy source

Capital subsidy for installation of solar panels  
**₹2,000 per kW**  
(up to a maximum of ₹10,000 per consumer)

Delhi's current solar power capacity - 1,500 MW (including 250 MW from rooftop plants)

Targeted solar capacity - 4,500 MW by March 2027

Monthly generation-based incentives for every unit of solar power generated

₹3 for small rooftop plants (up to 3 kW)

₹2 for larger plants (3kW to 10 kW)



SOURCE: DELHI GOVERNMENT

estic consumer could earn ₹700-900 per month after installing rooftop solar panels, which would help recover the installation costs within four years.

"Let us say a residential consumer's average monthly consumption is 360 units and the consumer installs a 2kW rooftop solar plant at an approximate cost of ₹90,000 with taxes and subsidy included. The consumer will start getting zero electricity bills right away [saving ₹1,370 per month] as well as the generation-based incentive of about ₹700 per month," he said.

"This way, their total annual saving will be around ₹24,000. Since the con-

sumer spent ₹90,000 initially, the cost will be recovered in four years," Mr. Kejriwal added.

**'Will offset inflation'**  
The CM said the aim of the policy is to reduce Delhi's air pollution caused by diesel generators and help fight inflation by bringing electricity charges to zero for households. He said the move would also help industrial consumers cut their electricity bills to half.

He said the shortcomings of the 2016 policy have also been removed as the requirement of minimum power generation to be eligible for benefits has been done away with.

## 14-year-old boy assaulted at knifepoint in south Delhi; three boys, aged 12-14, held

**The Hindu Bureau**  
NEW DELHI

A 14-year-old boy in south Delhi's Hauz Khas area was made to lick shoes and perform unnatural sex at knifepoint allegedly by three of his friends, who also recorded the act and posted it on a social media platform, the police said on Monday.

The incident took place on Saturday around 6.30 p.m. when the victim was returning home after playing at Central Park in Hauz Khas.

The purported video of the incident showed the boy being forced to crouch at knifepoint and made to lick shoes and perform un-

## A purported video of the act was sent to the victim's mother, who lodged a police complaint

natural sex, the police said. It came to light on Sunday night when another friend of the victim sent the video to the boy's mother, who lodged a complaint with the police.

The accused have been apprehended and are being questioned.

Deputy Commissioner of Police (South) Ankit Chauhan said the accused, aged between 12 and 14, committed the crime to intimidate the victim follow-

ing a spat with him a few days ago.

A senior police officer said the accused threatened him with dire consequences if he told anyone about the act.

Out of fear of retaliation, the victim hid his ordeal from his parents.

The police have registered an FIR under Sections 377 (unnatural sex) and 506 (criminal intimidation) of the IPC and Section 12 of the POCSO Act (sexual harassment).

They took the boy for a medical examination and counselling. The victim is the son of a migrant labourer and lives in a rented accommodation with his parents, the police said.

## Ruckus in MCD House over panel constitution

**Press Trust of India**  
NEW DELHI

A ruckus erupted amid proceedings in the MCD House on Monday as the Opposition BJP demanded the constitution of a Standing Committee. Mayor Shelly Oberoi has moved the Supreme Court seeking a direction to allow the functions of the Standing Committee to be exercised by the MCD House till the constitution of the panel.

## Drug cases on the rise, peddlers target college students

## Growing menace

Police say youngsters are getting hooked on cheap drugs like ganja, ordered through social media applications



Districts	Cases registered		Arrests made	
	2022	2023	2022	2023
South East	171	175	182	191
North	61	152	72	165
Dwarka	110	111	141	142
Central	37	101	42	104
South West	78	91	80	100

SOURCE: DELHI POLICE

## Samridhi Tewari

A police officer said youngsters mostly order cannabis, which costs around ₹1,200-1,500 per 10 grams. Ankit Solanki, who runs a drug rehabilitation centre in Dwarka, said cannabis use has picked up among teenagers. "In Delhi's rehabilitation centres, we find schoolchildren explaining to us about the craze for the consumption of cannabis, and it's not going down," Mr. Solanki said.

Modus operandi  
The police said drug peddlers are finding novel ways to deliver drugs to customers.

Several customers drop a message on a WhatsApp account, which is circulated among drug peddlers, who send a delivery man donning the garb of an employee of an e-commerce platform to hand over the consignment to the drug user's doorstep.

The payment is made through an instant money transfer app or cash, depending on the relationship with the peddler.

**Government Of Gujarat**  
Narmada, Water Resource, Water supply & Kalpsar Department Gandhinagar

**E-TENDER NOTICE NO.22 OF 2023-24**

(1) Name of work: Providing, Fabricating and Erecting Gate leaf Assembly, Embedded Parts, Hoist Platform, Hoist mechanism of Radial Gate size 51' x 48.5'-9 Nos. as per the Drawings & Specifications by Dismantling existing of Main Spillway for Kadana Reservoir Project, At- Kadana, Dist-Mahisagar. (Gujarat) Under DRIP-II

(2) Estimated Cost: ₹ 18,24,58,283/-

(3) Pre-Bid Meeting (Off line) Dt. 14/02/2024 @ 12.00 hrs.

(4) Last Date/Time for receipt of tender (ON LINE) Dt.: 02/03/2024 up to 16.00 Hrs.

(5) Name & Address of the Executive Engineer Concerned Ex.Engr. Irri. Mech. Division No. 1, E-814, Kuber Bhavan, Kothi Compound, Raopura, Vadodra-390001 (Gujarat) Ph. No.0265-2427833 FAX No.0265-2429170

(6) Further details can be downloaded from [www.tendersprocure.com](http://www.tendersprocure.com) and also seen on Information & Broadcasting Department's website [www.statetenders.gujarat.gov.in](http://www.statetenders.gujarat.gov.in). Any kind of amendments will be published only online & it will be consider final & binding to all bidders (INF-VAD-1328-23-24)

**GOVERNMENT OF HARYANA CORRIGENDUM**

Sr. No.	NAME OF DEPARTMENT	OLD REFERENCE/ NIT NO.	NATURE OF CORRIGENDUM	WEBSITE OF THE DEPARTMENT	NODAL OFFICER/ CONTACT DETAILS/EMAIL
1	UHBVN	CH-15/SHK/XP/PV/O/4H/ 2114/BOLTS & NUTS DATED 19.01.2024	PROCUREMENT OF GI HEXAGONAL NUTS AND BOLTS UHBVN & DHBVN. LAST DATE OF SUBMISSION EXTENDED UPTO 22.02.2024 (13.00 HRS.)	<a href="http://www.uhbvn.org.in">www.uhbvn.org.in</a>	8950934535 cenm@uhbvn.org.in

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION KINDLY VISIT : [www.haryanaeprocurement.gov.in](http://www.haryanaeprocurement.gov.in) or [www.etenders.hry.nic.in](http://www.etenders.hry.nic.in)**

SAMVAD-13/2024/40/24514/II/199/7

**THE HINDU PRESENTS SCHOOL BUZZ**

A Newspaper exclusively curated for School Students

**SCHOOL HOSTS VIRTUAL SESSION**

Prof. George Derick Omondi, a research scientist from Kenya conducted a virtual class on advanced research methodology, hosted by Alpine Convent School. The session, held via video conferencing, unfolded as an engaging exploration of cutting-edge quantitative and qualitative techniques. Prof. George's teaching approach not only provided theoretical insights but also showcased practical applications through real-world examples and case studies. The interactive format facilitated a dynamic exchange, enabling students to actively engage, ask questions, and contribute to discussions.

**EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION AWARD 2023**

Bal Bharati Public School, GRH Marg became the recipient of the Excellence in Education Award 2023 instituted by the Directorate of Education, GNCT of Delhi in the category, Region Best Recognised Private Unaided Schools. This honour was bestowed upon the school at an award ceremony, which was presided over by the Chief Minister of Delhi, Arvind Kejriwal and the State Education Minister, Atishi Marlena.

**SCHOOL HOSTS ALUMNI MEET**

Cambridge School, Indirapuram hosted Cambridge Alumnet Indirapuram Chapter 2023 to celebrate the 25<sup>th</sup> year of its journey. The event started with welcoming the alumni with a musical rendition by the school choir group, followed by Salsa, Latin, and Chhau dance performances by Western dance teachers of the school and a dancer, Yukti Talwar. A slideshow consisting of the pictures of the alumni was presented, taking the guests down memory lane. A video compilation of Christmas wishes from across the sister Cambridge Schools was then played. Principal, Hardeep Kaur extended her warm wishes and blessings to them.

For Subscription related queries, please contact Kapil Nagar:  
Handphone:+91 9810089457/Email: [kapil.nagar@thehindu.co.in](mailto:kapil.nagar@thehindu.co.in)

**Delhi Timings**

**TUESDAY, JAN. 30**

RISE 07:11 SET 17:59

RISE 22:03 SET 09:46

**WEDNESDAY, JAN. 31**

RISE 07:11 SET 18:00

RISE 22:55 SET 10:12

**THURSDAY, FEB. 01**

RISE 07:10 SET 18:00

RISE 23:49 SET 10:39

**Delhi Weather** max min

Delhi City 23 07

Safdarjang 23 07

Palam 21 08

**Delhi Palam Today**  
21°C The weather will be dry. Moderate to dense fog will occur in cold morning. The Afternoon will be cool and hazy. Night also will be cold.

**Delhi Palam Tomorrow**  
18°C Morning will be cold with moderate to dense fog. The Afternoon will be cool with cold breeze. Spell of rain and thundershower to occur.

© Copyright Skymet Weather 2024  
All rights reserved.

**TO ADVERTISE PLEASE CONTACT**

**Mr. N SELVA KUMAR**

**PH: 9820350726**

[selvakumar.n@thehindu.co.in](mailto:selvakumar.n@thehindu.co.in)

**THE HINDU**  
India's National Newspaper

**PUBLIC NOTICE Property Tax, MCD**

**DELHI PROPERTY OWNERS**

Just 2 Days left! TIME IS RUNNING OUT

Dear Residents and Property Owners, Have you completed the Geo-Tagging process for your property? If not, Please Hurry up! Last date for Geo-tagging of properties is **31<sup>st</sup> January 2024**, Properties not geo-tagged cannot avail rebate on timely payment by **30<sup>th</sup> June** in next financial year.

Is your property not registered with A&C department? Please log in to [www.mcdonline.nic.in](http://www.mcdonline.nic.in) to register your property and create Unique Property Identification Code (UPIC) latest by **31<sup>st</sup> January 2024** and pay your outstanding dues to avoid legal action including prosecution and imprisonment.

RWA & GHS must register on [www.mcdonline.nic.in](http://www.mcdonline.nic.in) to avail 10% developmental incentive and additional 5% waste disposal incentive under "Sahbhagita" scheme.

**Be Compliant and Self-Reliant!**

**MUNICIPAL CORPORATION OF DELHI**  
ASSESSMENT & COLLECTION DEPARTMENT

**G2**

RO No. : 71/DPM/CD/2023-24

# NEXT IAS

BIG LEARNINGS MADE EASY

Take your CSE preparation to the NEXT level

Under the guidance of



**Mr. B. Singh (Ex. IES)**  
Renowned Educationist  
CMD, NEXT IAS and MADE EASY Group



**Mr. Bhim Sain Bassi (IPS Retd.)**  
Former Honourable Member of UPSC  
Chief Advisor to NEXT IAS & MADE EASY Group

Renowned & Experienced Faculties	Enriched & Quality Content	Dedicated Academic Coaches	Student Centric Approach
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quality teaching</li> <li>Concept building</li> <li>Thorough coverage</li> <li>Current based approach</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enriched &amp; updated books</li> <li>Daily &amp; weekly current affairs analysis &amp; PDFs</li> <li>Monthly current affairs magazine</li> <li>All India Pre &amp; Mains test series</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Personalised support</li> <li>Mentoring &amp; answer writing</li> <li>Doubt solving &amp; motivation</li> <li>Weekly &amp; monthly class tests</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Backup for missed classes</li> <li>Supportive learning ecosystem</li> <li>Robust infrastructure</li> <li>Technology enabled academic sphere</li> </ul>
1	2	3	4

## Learn from top faculties

<p><b>INDIAN ECONOMY</b></p> <p> </p> <p>Kapuria Sir    Vibhas Jha Sir    B. K. Reddy Sir</p>	<p><b>HISTORY, ART &amp; CULTURE</b></p> <p> </p> <p>Abhishek Parmar Sir    R. C. Sinha Sir    Mathimaran Raju Sir    Rahul Sengar Sir</p>
<p><b>GEOGRAPHY</b></p> <p> </p> <p>Alok Ranjan Sir    Sikandar Khan Sir    Prashant Rathore Sir</p>	<p><b>POLITY</b></p> <p> </p> <p>Ashish Kumar Sir    Piyush Chaubey Sir    Niraj Kumar Sir</p>
<p><b>ENVIRONMENT, IR, ESSAY &amp; SOCIETY</b></p> <p> </p> <p>A. P. Singh Sir    Ruchika Ma'am    Raj Rai Sir</p>	<p><b>ETHICS AND CURRENT AFFAIRS</b></p> <p> </p> <p>K. M. Pathi Sir    Prince Luthra Sir    Ravi Dutt Kaushik Sir</p>
<p><b>SCIENCE TECH &amp; GENERAL SCIENCE</b></p> <p> </p> <p>Ayaz Khan Sir    Mohit Sharma Sir</p>	<p><b>GOVERNANCE &amp; SECURITY</b></p> <p> </p> <p>Manjul Tiwari Sir    Nitish Sharma Sir</p>

## GS FOUNDATION BATCHES FOR CSE 2025-26

DELHI	BHOPAL	JAIPUR	LIVE-ONLINE
<p>29<sup>th</sup> Jan   5<sup>th</sup> Feb   15<sup>th</sup> Feb</p> <p>8:00 AM-11:00 AM   11:30 AM-2:30 PM   6:00 PM-9:00 PM</p>	<p>19<sup>th</sup> Feb</p> <p>5:30 PM-8:30 PM</p>	<p>1<sup>st</sup> Feb</p> <p>5:00 PM-8:00 PM</p>	<p>29<sup>th</sup> Jan   5<sup>th</sup> Feb   15<sup>th</sup> Feb</p> <p>8:00 AM-11:00 AM   11:30 AM-2:30 PM   6:00 PM-9:00 PM</p>



More batches to be announced soon.

Scan to Enroll

NEXT IAS कोर्सज अब हिन्दी माध्यम में भी उपलब्ध हैं | • Visit: [www.nextias.com](http://www.nextias.com)

**Delhi Centre :**  
Old Rajinder Nagar : 27-B, Pusa Road, Metro Pillar No. 118, Near Karol Bagh Metro, New Delhi - 110060 | Ph : 8081300200  
Mukherjee Nagar : 1422 Main Mukherjee Nagar Road, Near Batra Cinema | Ph : 9311667076

**Bhopal Centre :**  
Plot No. 46, Zone - 2, M.P. Nagar, Bhopal - 462011  
Ph : 8827664612

**Jaipur Centre :**  
A-1, Lion's Colony, Sitabari, Near The Theme Hotel, Tonk Road, Jaipur - 302018  
Ph : 9358200511

[www.nextias.com](http://www.nextias.com)  
info@nextias.com

Our Other Initiatives



ESE & GATE



MADE EASY SCHOOL  
CBSE K-12 School (Delhi & Gurugram)



NEET & IIT-JEE





# DESTINATION UTTARAKHAND

Uttarakhand marching on development path

## ONE DISTRICT TWO PRODUCTS: ENCOURAGING LOCAL ECONOMY

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE NEEDS OF THE PEOPLE, PM NARENDRA MODI'S IDEA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF RURAL INDIA, AIMS AT ESPOUSING LOCAL PRODUCTS. THE 'ONE DISTRICT TWO PRODUCTS' SCHEME OF THE UTTARAKHAND GOVERNMENT LAUNCHED IN OCTOBER 2021, STRIVES TO PROMOTE AND GENERATE SELF-EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES



With a focused approach for inclusive growth of the state, the mantra that is being followed is, 'Reform-Perform-Transform'. Uttarakhand has the potential in diverse fields, and the same is being tapped so that it benefits the hardworking youth of the state seeking employment. To promote and develop a conducive ecosystem, investors and stakeholders have our support in all the endeavours."

**- Pushkar Singh Dhami**  
Chief Minister, Uttarakhand

Under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, officials believe that the increase in business and demand will create employment (in packaging, testing, logistics) in the hill state at the local level, while the export of products will

also go up. The PM has urged tourists to shell out at least 5% of the total spending to purchase local products. Under Uttarakhand's 'One District Two Products' the local products specific to each district will be identified and two of them will be developed. The scheme aims to give a boost to traditional manufacturing and the craft industry of the state and help promote them on a national and international scale. It will also create employment opportunities for local farmers, artisans, craftsmen, etc. Everything, from sweets, snacks, and herbal products to brass crafts, woollens, etc, is being identified and promoted. Millet biscuits of Bageshwar, handicrafts from Champawat, baked goods and mushrooms from Dehradun, candles from Nainital, honey products from Haridwar, kidney beans from Munsiyari, temple artefacts from Rudraprayag are some of

PICS: DIPR, GOVT OF UTTARAKHAND



CM Pushkar Singh Dhami gifting grain of Uttarakhand to Prime Minister Narendra Modi

the products identified for promotion under the scheme. The products will be developed based on the market demand with the help of modern technology, skill, and design development.



PM Narendra Modi, interacting with hill women with local produce

District-wise local products that are gaining acclaim via the One District Two Product Scheme:

- Almora:** Baal mithai and tweed
- Bageshwar:** Copper products and kiwi products
- Chamoli:** Handloom products and rose



The construction of a developed India for the 21st century rests primarily on two pillars — pride in our heritage, and second, every possible effort that is being made towards development. Today, both these pillars are being strengthened by the state of Uttarakhand. This decade surely will be the decade of Uttarakhand."

**- Narendra Modi**  
Prime Minister

- water**
- Champawat:** Iron-based products and honey
- Dehradun:** Bakery products and mushroom
- Haridwar:** Jaggery and honey
- Nainital:** Aipan crafts and fruit processing
- Pauri:** Wooden craft and herbal products
- Rudrapur:** Woollen carpets and Munsiyari rajma
- Rudraprayag:** Temple imitation and chaulai products
- Tehri Garhwal:** Paneer and tehri nath
- Udhampur:** Mentha oil and moonj grass products
- Uttarkashi:** Red rice and apple products

## Uttarakhand Government's MSME Policy 2023 to drive sustainable growth and inclusivity

The Government of Uttarakhand has taken a bold step towards bolstering its economy through the Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSME) sector by introducing the Uttarakhand MSME Policy 2023

PIC: DIPR, GOVT OF UTTARAKHAND



With the vision of propelling the state into a global hub for sustainable and innovative industries, this policy underscores the significance of MSMEs as vital contributors to employment generation and economic growth, particularly in the industrially backward hill districts.

### OBJECTIVES

Uttarakhand aims to position itself as a key global destination for various industries, including startups, renewable energy, and eco-friendly ventures. By fostering a conducive ecosystem, the state strives to promote inclusive development, high-quality manufacturing, and abundant employment opportunities. Recognizing the challenges faced by MSMEs, the policy emphasizes improved access to capital, simplified procedures, and enhanced market access. Moreover, it seeks to bridge regional disparities and uplift different segments of society by extending financial incentives to enterprises.

### STRATEGY

To realize the objectives of the policy, the state government has outlined a multifaceted strategy that encompasses various aspects of the MSME sector. In a concerted effort to boost economic growth and inclusivity, the policy aligns seamlessly with the "One District One Product" initiative introduced by the Government of India. Building upon this

framework, Uttarakhand's forward-thinking approach introduces the "One District Two Product" policy, a state-specific endeavour aimed at amplifying the uniqueness of local products.

The policy places special emphasis on encouraging products to attain the esteemed GI tag of the state, a testament to their exceptional quality and distinctiveness.

The Uttarakhand MSME Policy 2023 showcases a proactive approach toward nurturing the MSME sector. With its focus on inclusive development, innovative industries, and targeted incentives, this policy paves the way for a resilient and thriving economy while reducing regional disparities and enhancing the competitiveness of the state on the national and global stage.

### Financial subsidy on machinery and equipment for MSME as per the classified areas:

- Category A:** Subsidy of 50% up to 50 lakh for Micro Scale Industries which goes up to 2.50 crore + 3.75 % on every additional 10 crore (maximum 4 crore) for Medium Scale Industries
- Category B:** Subsidy of 40% up to 40 lakh for Micro Scale Industries which goes up to 2 crore + 2% on every additional 10 crore (max 3 crore) for Medium Scale Industries
- Category C:** Subsidy of 30% up to 30 lakh for Micro Scale Industries which goes up to 1.20 crore + 2% on every additional 10 crore (max 2 crore) for Medium Scale Industries
- Category D:** Subsidy of 20% up to 20 lakh for Micro Scale Industries which goes up to 0.90 crore + 1.50% on every additional 10 crore (max 1.50 crore) for Medium Scale Industries

### Rebate in Stamp Duty as per the classified area:

- This rebate shall be paid to the enterprise post establishment of the Unit & starting of Production:
- Category A - 100% duty rebate on stamp duty
- Category B - 100% duty rebate on stamp duty
- Category C - 75% duty rebate on stamp duty
- Category D - 50% duty rebate on stamp duty

Under Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chief Minister Pushkar Dhami's capable leadership, Uttarakhand's tourism sector has blossomed into a thriving industry, witnessing substantial growth

## Uttarakhand Tourism Policy 2030

Charting a transformative path for sustainable development

PICS: DIPR, GOVT OF UTTARAKHAND



As the Uttarakhand Tourism Policy 2030 unfolds, the state is poised to witness a paradigm shift in its tourism sector. By embracing innovation, sustainability, and inclusivity, Uttarakhand is set to emerge as a game-changer in the Indian tourism landscape.

Nestled in the lap of the majestic Himalayas, Uttarakhand has long been revered as a land of spirituality and natural beauty. Now, with the unveiling of the Uttarakhand Tourism Policy 2030, the state is set to embark on a remarkable journey towards becoming a global tourism hub, offering diverse and authentic experiences. This visionary policy aims to not only harness the state's potential for tourism but also ensure sustainable growth.

The key philosophy driving the policy is the empowerment of all stakeholders involved

in the tourism sector, enabling them to benefit from Uttarakhand's growth story. By streamlining the goals and interests of various



stakeholders, the policy establishes a unifying framework that paves the way for tourism development. Breaking away from the traditional

image of Uttarakhand as a religious and wellness destination, the policy seeks to unleash the state's latent potential as a diversified tourist hotspot. Embracing a mix of heritage, religion, nature, wildlife, health, and wellness tourism, Uttarakhand aims to offer unforgettable experiences for every type of traveler. The policy also highlights the importance of promoting Uttarakhand as an all-weather destination, including winter and Alpine tourism, to attract visitors throughout the year.

Central to the policy is the creation of authentic and immersive tourism experiences. By leveraging the state's unique offerings, such as its cultural heritage and natural wonders, Uttarakhand aims to develop tourism clusters and circuits.

These initiatives will foster the growth of new tourism destinations, catering to various segments of tourists and providing unmatched experiences.

With a strong focus on sustainability, the policy recognizes the importance of preserving Uttarakhand's environmental and cultural assets. Efforts to preserve natural reserves, wildlife, and intangible heritage are integral to the state's tourism development. Additionally, the policy emphasizes the revival of lost natural and cultural assets, ensuring that Uttarakhand remains a safe and tourist-friendly destination for years to come.

In the digital age, Uttarakhand aims to meet the changing expectations of tourists. Leveraging technology, the policy prioritises reaching out to potential visitors in the comfort of their homes. This includes utilising online platforms for promotion, marketing, bookings, reservations, and information dissemination. By harnessing the power of digital tools, Uttarakhand seeks to provide comfort and confidence to travelers, enhancing their overall journey experience.

## Empowering startups, supporting entrepreneurship

While till the end of the year 2018, there were only 100 startups in Uttarakhand, the figure had gone beyond 500 by the end of 2021

Prime Minister Modi has always emphasised that startups are a crucial component of Aatma Nirbhar Bharat. The Uttarakhand Startup Policy encompasses measures to support and facilitate all the key stakeholders in the start-up ecosystem. The policy contains provisions for various incentives and assistance to startups, incubators, mentors, educational institutes, investors, etc.

Under the leadership of CM Pushkar Singh Dhami, the state government has also launched a startup official portal as a one-stop interactive platform for innovators, entrepreneurs, incubators, mentors, investors, educational institutes, students, service providers, etc, to connect them and keep themselves updated about the startup ecosystem. From adding the number of startups to the number of incubators, mentors, partners, etc, the growth of all key stakeholders has been encouraging.

**Key Points of Uttarakhand Start-up Policy:**

- Under the new policy to set up 1,000 start

ups in five years, the objective is to set up at least one incubation center in each district.

- To registered startups Rs 15,000 monthly allowance per month, up to one year. Startups based on scheduled caste/tribe/divyang/transgender or grassroots innovations will get Rs 20,000 monthly allowances.
- Registered startups will get up to Rs 10 lakh, one-time seed funding. Startups based on scheduled caste/tribe/divyang/transgender or grassroots innovations will get up to Rs 12.50 lakh in seed funding.

PIC: DIPR, GOVT OF UTTARAKHAND



- For national patents, per patent Rs 1 lakh help, and for international patents Rs 5 lakh reimbursement.
- Application for trademark & industrial design will invite the assistance of Rs 10,000.
- One-time free-of-cost pre-incubation support and incubation assistance.
- For the establishment of new incubation centers Rs 1 crore, and for expansion of existing incubation center capital subsidy of up to Rs 50 lakh.
- For the establishment of an enterprise Rs 200 crore fund provision.

## The Uttarakhand Logistics Policy 2023

- Logistics Park, inland container depot, warehouse, truck terminal, logistics vehicle, cold storage, etc.
- Development of eco logistics or green logistics/ technology logistics facilities.

### Financial Incentives

- Financial incentives range from 10 to 25 percent on project costs.
- A maximum grant of Rs 8 cr for project costs up to Rs 50 cr, a maximum grant of Rs 24 cr for project costs of Rs 50 cr to Rs 150 cr, and a maximum grant of Rs 32 cr for project costs above Rs 150 cr.
- For the warehousing facility, a 5,000 sq ft area with a minimum investment of Rs 2.50 cr in the hilly area and a 10,000 sq ft area required in the plain area, with a minimum investment of Rs 5 cr.
- 45,000 sq ft of land is required for a truck terminal with a minimum investment of Rs 5 cr.
- Minimum area for cold storage of 5,000 sq ft.

## SINGLE-USE PLASTIC BAN POLICY: A boost for sustainable solutions

Towards endorsing environmental protection, plastic has been banned in Uttarakhand

Single-use plastic, be it of any shape – plastic carry bags (with or without handles) of thickness, size, and color and non-woven poly single-use bags made of polypropylene, thermocol (polystyrene), polyurethane, styrofoam and the like; disposable cutlery or plastic, such as plate trays, bowls, cups, glasses, spoons, forks, straws, knives, stirrers, etc – the production, purchase, sale, import, storage, use and supply of these have been banned in the state of Uttarakhand. In addition, by notification of the government dated August 12, 2021, the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, India, from July 1, 2022, the manufacture, import, storage, distribution, sale, and use of expanded polystyrene articles are also prohibited.

By banning the use, storage, manufacturing, buying, and selling of single-use plastic products, produc-

tion work has stopped in the units engaged in the manufacture of these products in the state. Employment has also been affected by this. To combat plastic waste pollution and eradicate single-use plastic by promoting innovation and entrepreneurship, and to encourage manufacturing of alternative products in the form of substitutes to single-use plastic, financial incentives have been provided in the MSME Policy 2015 (as amended from time to time). Giving incentives, this policy has been approved by the cabinet as well.

**The following provisions have been made for additional financial incentives:**

**INVESTMENT PROMOTION ASSISTANCE:** Fixed capital made in plant and machinery and workshop building of the enterprise. Top-up

investment incentive subsidy of 10% (maximum Rs 10 lakh) on investment.

**INTEREST SUBSIDY:** Payable on term loan taken from financial institution/bank for the establishment of enterprises an additional interest reimbursement assistance up to Rs 1 lakh/ annum/ per unit for C category

**By banning the use, storage, manufacturing, buying, and selling of single-use plastic products, production work has stopped in the units engaged in the manufacture of these products in the state**

districts, up to Rs 2 lakh/ annum/ per unit for D category districts, (as classified by the MSME policy).

**REIMBURSEMENT OF SGST:** In the diversification of existing enterprise or establishment of new enterprise for the manufacture of alternative products, the total gross SGST to be received by the state government from the SGST chargeable on new plant and machinery reimbursement assistance of 20 per cent (after adjustment of ITC). The benefits of all the above facilities will be available only to those units which have been affected or closed due to the ban order of the Central/ state government.



## Changing partners

Nitish Kumar's unedifying volte-faces are an insult to voters of Bihar

Ideological infidelity is not a rare affliction among career politicians. Power, wealth and the many vices that often motivate political actors are not unfamiliar to Indian voters. Even by these low standards, Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar appears to be plumbng new depths with his recurrent somersaults. He has changed partners multiple times, with little more reasoning than satisfying his desire for power. Mr. Kumar's about-turn in 2017 betrayed the mandate of 2015 and in 2022, he betrayed the mandate of 2020. In 2020, Mr. Kumar's Janata Dal (United) had won the election in alliance with the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), but two years later he broke from it to form an alliance with the Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) and the Congress. That was a clear insult of the mandate. He has now made yet another turn, this time returning to the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance. Within the day, he resigned as Chief Minister, claimed the post again with new partners, and was sworn-in again as Chief Minister. Only a few weeks ago, Mr. Kumar was fashioning himself as the leader of the anti-BJP Opposition alliance. It might be true that politics makes for strange bedfellows, but Mr. Kumar has turned his acts of disloyalty into a familiar script. Meanwhile, his claim of being a champion of good governance appears so distant in the past, and completely unfamiliar.

Until the moment of the turnaround, the BJP was loudly proclaiming that it would never again align with Mr. Kumar and the JD(U). There is no explanation from either side on their sudden change of heart. Mr. Kumar had tried to corner the BJP on the question of caste, in alliance with the RJD and the Congress. The socio-economic survey of castes in Bihar that his previous government ordered did not turn out to be a watershed moment as Mr. Kumar perhaps hoped. At the same time, the BJP felt insecure enough to look for a rapprochement with the JD(U), which commands considerable following among non-Yadav Other Backward Classes in Bihar. The opening of the Ram temple in Ayodhya marked a new phase of Hindu consolidation behind the BJP, but the party is always watching out for erosion triggered by caste mobilisation. By redrafting Mr. Kumar, the BJP has defanged the limited potency that was left in his social justice politics. The BJP is the biggest beneficiary of the realignment in Bihar, while the biggest loser might be Mr. Kumar himself. His political base is being raided, and his legacy stands besmirched. But, he is still the Chief Minister, and nothing else seems to matter to him. It is not exactly future perfect, but it is happily present continuous.

## The best of Tests

Test cricket showcases skill better, but is not short of excitement

Hyderabad and Brisbane are split by an aerial distance of 9,443 kilometres and yet on Sunday, the two cities were seemingly fused together through some cricketing magic. The old sporting trope of the underdog toppling the fancied rival was again in play as England at Hyderabad and the West Indies at Brisbane, respectively humbled their potent hosts India and Australia. Test cricket, often lost in the stardust and breathless hype that permeates its younger and faster siblings, ODIs and T20Is, found its mojo and again reiterated its durability and the potential to alter scripts and presumptions. At Hyderabad's Rajiv Gandhi International Stadium, England conceded a 190-run first innings lead to India and on a surface tipped to aid spin, it was deemed that Ben Stokes and his Bazball troops were down for the count. However, in the second innings tussle, Ollie Pope's splendid 196 and left-arm spinner Tom Hartley's seven for 62 left India stranded by 28 runs while chasing a target of 231. Pope's sweeps, both conventional and reverse, employed against the Indian spinners were effective, and debutant Hartley, whose first ball in Test cricket was hammered for a six by Yashasvi Jaiswal, made a stirring comeback in the second dig to hoodwink Rohit Sharma's men. England now leads the five match series at 1-0.

The absence of Virat Kohli, due to personal reasons, did leave a vacuum in the middle order even as the other batters, including K.L. Rahul, tried hard to bridge that gap. England spinners choking Indian batters in their backyard is not new as Phil Edmonds and Pat Pocock showed in 1984, and Graeme Swann and Monty Panesar in 2012. As the series shifts to Visakhapatnam, India will have to find a method to reiterate its dominance. Meanwhile at Brisbane's Gabba, it was the turn of another debutant to prosper. Despite an injured toe, Shamar Joseph's fiery pace and his second innings tally of seven for 68 blew away the Australians, who pursued a target of 216. The eight-run triumph helped the West Indies draw level the two-Test series at 1-1. The stalemate hinted at the need for a minimum of three Tests to judge teams and find the real victor. The men from the Caribbean have floundered in the past, but the latest result hints at a turnaround. The West Indies had its sunshine phases in limited overs cricket, winning the ICC Champions Trophy in 2004 and the ICC T20 World Cups in 2012 and 2016. Sunday's Test victory offers a fresh path laden with hope for the West Indies.

# Growth mania can be injurious to society

The nation's media, present in full force at the annual conference of the World Economic Forum (WEF), dutifully relayed back to India sound bytes uttered by the allies of the world's giant corporations. Among these was the laudatory statement by the WEF's President that India was a \$10 trillion economy in the making. This is only the most recent of a spate of predictions on the future size of India's economy. At least it can be said for them that it is India's own leaders who were the first to make these. Thus, in 2019, upon returning to office, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said that India aimed to become a \$5 trillion economy by 2024, which would have been the end of his current term.

That this has not materialised as yet has not deterred other political leaders from making predictions of, or expressing an aspiration for, a \$1 trillion economy for their States. This includes the Chief Ministers of Uttar Pradesh and Tamil Nadu. Though these leaders represent political parties with widely differing social agendas and ideologies, they seem united in their economic goals. From Davos to Lucknow and Chennai, never before has growth dominated the economic agenda in democracies. This bears mentioning, as a democracy is also meant to deliver other things.

Growth is a legitimate aspiration in India where the majority of the population is yet to attain a reasonable standard of living. Indeed, it should remain on the table so long as this is the case. The point, though, is that going all out for economic size may not do much by way of levelling the income of the presently excluded even as it may generate outcomes that are undesirable to all. Such outcomes are already in evidence in India, and an economic policy that privileges growth could exacerbate them.

### Growth plus rising inequality

The first thing to note about the recent growth in India is that it has been accompanied by growing inequality. It is important to recognise that this trend is not new. Having commenced in the 1980s, it picked up in the next decade, after which it has been unstoppable. It has, by now, reached levels that make India one of the more unequal societies in the world. With government agencies appearing reluctant to supply data, it is difficult to provide precise estimates of this inequality, but the world's leading inequality



**Pulapre Balakrishnan**  
is an economist

researchers are very likely right in describing India as "a poor country with an affluent elite" ('World Inequality Report', 2022). This augurs badly for the country. It is not just that the growth we are witnessing is unequalising, it is that it appears to be making little difference to the income levels of the poorest. The rising tide may not be lifting all boats after all.

### Rural wage rates

A simple exercise would cast light on how unequal recent growth in India has been. I rely on what is one of the more reliable sources of data on wages – that on rural wage rates published by the Labour Bureau. These are based on actual market quotations rather than responses given to surveys. Also, unlike data gathered from income-tax records, which have value in determining the distribution of income, the wage data can convey information on the level of living at the bottom of the pyramid. A weakness of the Labour Bureau data, however, is that it presents data on wages of male workers alone. The absence of data on women workers is a serious omission as women have historically constituted approximately half the workforce in the cultivation of certain crops. We are left to assume that the agricultural wage rate for women has moved alongside that of men, so that we may rely on the latter alone.

Once the data have been adjusted for inflation, we find the following trends in the real wage rate. With respect to agricultural labour, there is a mild increase. To be precise, the real wage rate has grown by 4.6% over the nine years from 2014 to 2022-23. However, even this bare movement is truncated. The real wage rate peaks midway through the period and has remained stagnant since. Nevertheless, it is higher on average since 2014. Compared to the wages of the agricultural workers, the real wage rate of non-agricultural and construction workers, respectively, is actually lower at the end of the period studied. The Sixth Economic Census of India (2013-14) reports that 51.7% of the employed are in rural India, and, of these, the overwhelming majority (68.9%) are non-agricultural workers.

This implies that for about 35% of India's workforce, real wages have not grown since 2014. So, even though there is growth of the economy, per capita income at the bottom of the pyramid is not rising. Even for the section of the rural workforce for which data show an increase in the

real wage rate, the increase is dwarfed by the growth of per capita income in the economy as a whole. Over the period 2014-23, real per capita income in India has increased by 37% while the real wage of agricultural labour has increased by less than 5%.

### Why inequality does matter

Should it matter to us that the growth in India is unequal? We can think of at least two reasons why it does. First, as has been carefully documented, unequal societies are subject to the worst forms of social pathology. These range from violence to disease and mental health disorder. The rich are not immune from the pathologies, for they must now build moats around their urban castles to protect their riches – which is what the gated communities of India in effect are. Second, inequality stands in the way of achieving collective action at a time when it is most needed. It does so by lowering trust between groups for they stand differently in their valuation of some public goods. Think of India's challenge at achieving total sanitation, which is what the Swachh Bharat Mission ostensibly aims for. The rich, who have all their basic needs and more met, want clean public spaces, while the poor, whose basic needs are unmet, are not as motivated to contribute towards this. The persistence of open defecation, which reflects an unwillingness to shift to practices that contribute to the greater public good, is an example of this. Inequality can defeat attempts to build public goods in spheres as diverse as the conservation of natural capital and urban waste management to lowering the threat from climate change, for those excluded from economic growth have less of a stake in these goals.

However, whatever its pernicious effects, the reduction of inequality ought not to be seen merely in terms of its instrumentality in overcoming some of our most pressing challenges. India is a democracy, as the Prime Minister constantly reminds us, and it is not in the spirit of democracy to have such divergent economic outcomes. India has not, historically, given enough space in its economic policy to the gross inequality of opportunity across its population. If at a time of an already unequal distribution of income the preoccupation of political parties is how to maximise the size of the economy, it is unlikely that we will ever bridge the gap.

# Populism does not help public health

In the heart of India's bustling cities and tranquil villages, there is a silent but significant fight raging on the public health front. It is not the dramatic triumphs of curative medicine that dominate this story but the quiet victories of preventing diseases such as smallpox (though eradicated, it is still under surveillance), polio, neonatal tetanus, and measles, through improved sanitation and vaccines. These are unsung wins where the absence of illness speaks volumes. Yet, in a democratic setup, leaders often chase tangible achievements and, inadvertently or otherwise, overlook these vital preventive efforts.

In particular, political leaders across the spectrum have leaned towards initiatives that promise immediate results, such as new hospitals, subsidised treatments in private hospitals, emergency response (over preventive response), and populist health policies. Many of these measures do not have much of an impact because of a lack of action beyond public announcements, which is almost always due to budgetary constraints. But even before being implemented, these schemes and the focus of our leaders on them divert attention from critical areas such as sanitation, disease surveillance, and public health education, which are important to maintain population health and prevent disease outbreaks.

### The case of dengue

Consider the story of dengue, a disease that has only symptomatic treatments, and no definitive cure. When cases surge, political leaders often mobilise the State machinery to set up immediate relief camps at the expense of long-term strategies such as understanding vector bionomics or developing effective vaccines. We need both, yet, dengue stands out as a classic example of prioritising immediate response over sustainable prevention.

The focus on providing emergency relief also sidelines the availability of public attention for the root causes of dengue and its long-term prevention, and the research required in vector control, vaccine development, and improvement in public health infrastructure. As a result, the current approach fails to prevent future outbreaks and strains the health-care system.

Research and development in these areas are crucial. For example, despite its limitations and restrictions, the existing dengue vaccine underscores the need for more research. Climate



**Dr. C. Aravinda**  
is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Community Medicine, Thanjavur Medical College, Tamil Nadu

change is also affecting mosquito breeding and movement patterns, and public health strategies need to adapt to these changes.

To borrow an idea from the architecture of India's judicial setup and also the space programme, health care will benefit from being separated from political processes. Public health decisions should be based on scientific evidence and long-term goals rather than short-term political interests. This separation will ensure public health policies are driven by data and expertise, not electoral cycles.

Civil servant Joseph Bore's insights from 1946, into the economic and human cost of neglecting preventive health measures, still ring true. Investments in nutrition programmes, while not immediately visible, have far-reaching implications for health and productivity.

The contemporary Prime Minister's Overarching Scheme For Holistic Nourishment (POSHAN) Abhiyan Scheme plans to reduce stunting by 2%, undernutrition by 2%, anaemia by 3%, and low birth weight by 2% every year. But the fifth National Family Health Survey found 35.5% of children under five were stunted and 32.1% were underweight in 2019-21. The prevalence of anaemic children aged 6-59 months increased from 58.6% to 67.1%, and 54.1% to 59.1% among women aged 15-19 years. This disparity between prevalence and policy targets highlights a significant gap in public health efforts.

The influence of the pharmaceutical industry in public health is undeniable. While instrumental in advancing curative medicine, its profit-driven nature often sidelines areas such as public health. For instance, despite having the same medicines to fight tuberculosis (TB), India reported 21.4 lakh TB cases in 2021, an 18% increase from 2020, translating to an incidence of 210 cases per 1,00,000 population. In contrast, the United States reported only 8,331 TB cases in 2022, about 2.5 cases per 1,00,000 persons. This disparity is not merely a matter of the availability of medical treatment but is deeply linked to socio-economic factors such as poverty, sanitation, and overcrowding (as a result of poorly organised urban housing) prevalent in India.

### Some gaps

Behavioural change is key to managing public health challenges. Yet, it can be challenging in political environments influenced by populist tendencies. The absence of specialised courses

such as public health engineering in India's educational institutions points to a gap in the multidisciplinary approach required in public health management.

Public health is not just about treating diseases. It is about preventing them, requiring expertise from various fields such as environmental science, sociology, urban planning, and economics. The current physician-centric focus of India's public health system often fails to capture this comprehensive nature.

### A degree of autonomy is needed

Effective public health management should encompass preventive measures, policy formulation, community health, and environmental health, among others. In public health, adopting a separation of powers approach is essential. A fair and effective health system requires freedom from political influence, focusing on policymaking and implementation driven by scientific evidence and long-term objectives. While prioritising health decisions based on scientific evidence and overarching public health goals are crucial, there is a risk of disconnecting from the immediate health concerns of the general populace.

To address this, an ideal solution would be to place Health Ministries directly under the leadership of elected officials, such as the Chief Minister or the Prime Minister, similar to the management of the space and the atomic energy departments. This structure would not only provide a degree of autonomy but also ensure that health policies are aligned with the people's immediate and practical needs, striking a balance between expert-driven decisions and public aspirations.

In sum, democracy is not inherently harmful to public health but the way public health is managed within democratic systems often leads to significant shortcomings. Infectious diseases, non-communicable diseases, health-care access, mental health, and misinformation pose challenges that demand a more holistic, long-term approach in public health policy. A separation of health-care decision-making from short-term political goals is crucial to develop sustainable health strategies that address both the immediate and future health needs of the population.

*The views expressed are personal*

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Operation Bihar

Are elections held to serve the people or political parties? It is painful that Governors support these actions.

Further, to see the Bharatiya Janata Party, which says that it is a party with a difference, indulge in this unethical power game,

especially after the consecration of Lord Ram temple in Ayodhya, is saddening.

The political developments in Bihar are a dark shadow and do make right-thinking people lose confidence in the electoral system (Page 1, "Nitish switches sides yet again, takes oath as CM",

January 29).  
**Kshirasagara Balaji Rao,**  
Hyderabad

It is appalling that Mr. Kumar still continues to call the shots. His latest political 'turnaround' demolishes the much touted 'secular-communal' rhetoric and also the electoral

prospects of the 'INDIA' bloc. It is fervently hoped that

the electorate of Bihar will definitely give a befitting reply to Mr. Kumar in the

### Corrections & Clarifications

The report, "3-D Ramayana shows will be on display for devotees in Ayodhya" (January 28, 2024), erroneously said a three-storey museum at the Ram Katha Park in Ayodhya would be built over an area of 30,000 sq km. It should have been 30,000 sq ft.

The Readers' Editor's office can be contacted by Telephone: +91-44-28418297/28576300; E-mail: readerseditor@thehindu.co.in

elections.

**B. Suresh Kumar,**  
Coimbatore

### Old is gold

Rohan Bopanna's win, as the oldest number one in doubles history, shows that age is just a number.  
**C.G. Kuriakose,**  
Kothamangalam, Kerala

## Early nutrition impacts cognitive development

Stunting irreversibly affects not just the height, but also the cognitive development of a child. While the long-term impact of early childhood stunting on educational levels is recognised, the processes by which it results in lower educational achievements, particularly in low- and middle-income countries, are not well understood. A deeper insight into the underlying mechanisms is crucial for formulating effective policies to enhance educational outcomes in these contexts.



**Aditya Sinha**

is Officer on Special Duty, Research, Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister

The study done in Ethiopia and Peru provides an understanding of how stunting really affects cognitive ability. It found that stunting at approximately age 5 is negatively related to executive functions measured years later. This relationship remains strong even when accounting for household fixed effects. These are a statistical technique used to control for unobserved factors that are constant within a household but differ between households. This method allows researchers to focus on the effects of variables like stunting on outcomes such as cognitive development by comparing individuals within the same family.

The findings also suggest that the impact of stunting on working memory might occur as early as age 5, influenced by vocabulary development. These results add to the body of literature that connects early nutrition with educational achievement.

Empirical studies have shown that women's height and educational attainment are strong predictors of child stunting in India. Interventions that improve these can indirectly contribute to better nutritional outcomes in their children.

These findings have implications for India as they underscore the critical importance of early childhood nutrition as a determinant of cognitive development and later educational outcome. India is addressing stunting in two ways. First, Poshan Abhiyaan and Integrated Child Development Services have played a significant role in addressing the issue of stunting. With the objective of reducing malnutrition in districts with the highest burden, Poshan Abhiyaan focuses on enhancing the utilisation and quality of Anganwadi services to ensure holistic development and adequate nutrition for pregnant women, mothers, and children.

Second, studies, including those by Spears (2013), found that improved sanitation reduces the

incidence of diarrhoea and stunting. Investments in clean water and sanitation infrastructure are crucial. India has been addressing these with the Jal Jeevan Mission and the Swachh Bharat Mission.

### Three key strategies

To markedly improve child nutrition and combat under-nutrition in India, three key strategies can be the largest needle movers. First, promoting early breastfeeding, along with continued breastfeeding for two years, coupled with appropriate complementary feeding starting at six months, is essential. This not only prevents stunting but also fosters optimal child development. Government initiatives, such as the Mother's Absolute Affection Programme, need expansion to provide comprehensive lactation support and create breastfeeding-friendly environments. Leveraging mobile technology to educate mothers about the criticality of exclusive breastfeeding in the first six months is also vital. At the same time, improving maternal nutrition is crucial, as healthier mothers have healthier babies.

Second as children grow, diversifying their diet becomes crucial. India should implement and scale up community-based complementary feeding programmes. These can educate parents about the importance of adding a variety of foods to their child's diet after six months of age, focusing on locally available, nutrient-rich food options.

Finally, adding an extra Anganwadi worker to each Anganwadi centre could help. Studies, including a randomised trial in Tamil Nadu, have shown that extra staff can double preschool instructional time and improve math and language scores and reduce child stunting and severe malnutrition. This approach promises better developmental outcomes for children and creates substantial employment opportunities.

## Garnering votes, statue by statue

Jagan Mohan Reddy is leaving no stone unturned to fetch votes

### STATE OF PLAY

**G.V.R. Subba Rao**

subbarao.gavaravarapu@thehindu.co.in



Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy unveiled a 206-foot-tall statue of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar at Swarajya Maidan in Vijayawada on January 19, in what is being seen as an attempt to attract the votes of the Scheduled Caste (SC) population in the Assembly and parliamentary elections due later this year.

"This towering statue reflects Ambedkar's immense contribution to India's social, economic, political and gender landscapes," Mr. Reddy said while inaugurating the Statue of Social Justice. "Even a century later, his visionary words echo, steering the nation towards progress. Recognising his enduring principles, our government has woven them into our 'Navaratnalu' initiatives," he added.

The SC community constitutes about 19% of Andhra Pradesh's population. The YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) contested the general elections for the first time in 2014. It won 13 seats from the SC segment out of the total 29 it contested. In 2019, the party won 33 SC and ST seats. In comparison, the Telugu Desam Party (TDP) managed to win only one SC seat in 2019. Despite its success with the SC community over the years, the YSRCP is leaving no stone unturned, especially given the alliance between the TDP and the Jana Sena Party.

While inaugurating the statue, Mr. Reddy said, "Untouchability doesn't mean mere physical distance but disinterest and unwillingness in hand holding the oppressed people as well. The Opposi-

tion's unwillingness to support the YSRCP government's endeavours for socio-economic change in society, as perceived by Dr. Ambedkar, was nothing but untouchability in another form," he said.

There have been several attempts in Andhra Pradesh to garner votes by installing statues. Politics too has been played over the installation of such statues. In 2011, the statue of a Chief Minister of combined Andhra Pradesh, Y.S. Rajasekhara Reddy, was installed near the Police Control Room in Vijayawada. The base of the structure was a replica of the Polavaram Project. The cost of installing the statue was borne by the Rajagopal Foundation, which was then headed by Vijayawada MP from the Congress, Lagadapati Rajagopal. He was one of the participants of the padayatra taken out by Reddy, which is said to have brought the Congress back to power in 2004. In 2015, the statue was removed by the then TDP government, which claimed that it was obstructing traffic. After returning to power, the YSRCP reinstalled the statue.

Earlier, in 1995-96, Rajasekhara Reddy visited Vijayawada as Congress Legislature Party leader to unveil the statue of Congress MLA Vangaveeti Mohana Ranga Rao (Vangaveeti Ranga). Vangaveeti Ranga was seen as a champion of the dominant Kapu com-

munity. The cost of installing the statue was borne by his followers in the Congress. However, Vangaveeti Ranga's widow, Ratnakumari, who was a TDP MLA, opposed this. She even preempted Reddy by getting her son Radhakrishna, then a teenager, to unveil the statue. Vangaveeti Ranga's statues can be seen not just in Vijayawada, but as far as composite East and West Godavari districts. Ranga's statues are fewer in number in the city compared to those installed in the rural areas of Krishna and Godavari districts.

When N. Chandrababu Naidu planned to install a statue of former Chief Minister N.T. Rama Rao on the Godavari ghats, it led to a controversy. Mr. Naidu also planned to construct a 125-foot Ambedkar statue at Amaravati and laid the foundation stone for it in April 2016. The TDP government planned to construct an Ambedkar memorial, comprising a statue, a park, a convention centre, a Buddhist meditation hall, and a library. But when the government changed, the project was shifted to Vijayawada. As sentiments were running high in Amaravati, a statue of Buddha came up overnight in the city soon after the bifurcation of Andhra Pradesh.

Installing statues does not ensure victory, however. In Telangana, for instance, when the previous Bharat Rashtra Samithi government installed a statue of Ambedkar in Hyderabad, it did so with much fanfare. But it lost the elections soon after. To compete with the YSRCP, the Opposition parties in Andhra Pradesh are now promising to install statues of N.T. Rama Rao across the State, if voted back to power. This, they hope, will fetch them Kamma votes.

## Majority use Digi Yatra unknowingly or under compulsion: survey

Only 15% of the survey respondents said that they used the facility knowing the benefits of it

### DATA POINT

The Hindu Data Team

A majority of air travellers who flew out of Delhi using Digi Yatra, the biometric boarding system that helps in processing passengers at select airports, did so unknowingly or were compelled to use it. A relatively small number of people signed up for the system knowing the benefits it offered. Moreover, a significant share also said that they had not signed up for the service and always took the normal queue.

These conclusions are based on a survey conducted by LocalCircles on its online portal. The portal received 21,000 responses from citizens who flew out of Delhi airport in the last six months. Over 60% of the respondents were men and the rest were women. Only Indian citizens who were registered with LocalCircles were allowed to participate in the survey, which was published on January 27.

The Digi Yatra facility has come under severe criticism in recent days. Last month, many passengers complained on social media about how their biometric data was collected without their consent at various checkpoints in airports. The scheme was rolled out in December 2022 as a voluntary programme. However, 15% of the respondents in the LocalCircles survey said that they signed up for the facility as there was no "regular queue", as shown in Chart 1. Chart 1 shows answers to the following question in the survey: "When you travelled by air in the last six months, how did you sign up for the Digi Yatra programme?"

Last week, responding to a letter from Trinamool Congress MP Saket Gokhale raising the privacy concerns of travellers, the Minister for Civil Aviation, Jyotiraditya Scindia, said that the process is voluntary and the consent of the passenger a prerequisite. Survey data show that 29% signed up for it

without knowing that the queue was meant for Digi Yatra. Among the rest of the passengers, 41% did not use the app, while 15% used it knowing the benefits it offered.

Though Digi Yatra was first launched in Delhi, along with Bengaluru and Varanasi, over a year ago, 85% of the passengers who flew out of Delhi in the last six months said that the organisations responsible for Digi Yatra are not doing an effective job of educating citizens about the app. Chart 2 shows answers to the following question in the survey: "Are the Ministry of Civil Aviation and its affiliated organisations doing an effective job of educating citizens on Digi Yatra (information shared by citizens, its usage, risk and benefits) before they sign up?" Only 15% said that they were aware of the risks and the benefits of the scheme.

While the above data is limited to the passengers who flew from Delhi, as the facility has now been expanded to 13 more airports, the seriousness of the issue has amplified. The number of passengers across airports who have used the facility has surged since its introduction in December 2022. As shown in Chart 3, the total number of passengers who used the facility increased from 1.6 lakh by February 2023 to 17.5 lakh by June 2023 to 91 lakh by December 2023.

The total number of downloads of the Digi Yatra app also shot up from just 10 lakh in June 2023 to 35 lakh in December 2023 (Chart 4). Recent news articles also show that the Civil Aviation Ministry is thinking about using Digi Yatra for international travel as well.

There have been reports of heavy traffic in busy airports such as Delhi. This has led to chaos at the terminals. This validates the need for a hassle-free, paper-less system such as Digi Yatra. However, it is a matter of concern that a high share of passengers were compelled to use it or were unaware of the process.

## Convenience at a cost

The data for the charts are sourced from a Local Circles survey and the Ministry of Civil Aviation



Chart 1: When you travelled by air from the Delhi airport in the last six months, how did you sign up for the Digi Yatra programme?

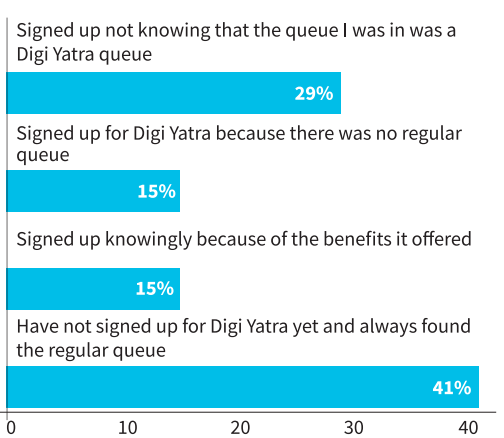


Chart 3: The chart shows the total number of passengers who have used the Digi Yatra process since December 1, 2022

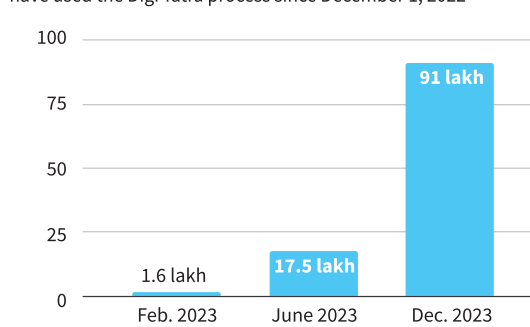


Chart 2: Are the Ministry of Civil Aviation and its affiliated organisations doing an effective job of educating citizens on Digi Yatra (information shared by citizens, its usage, risk and benefits) before they sign up?

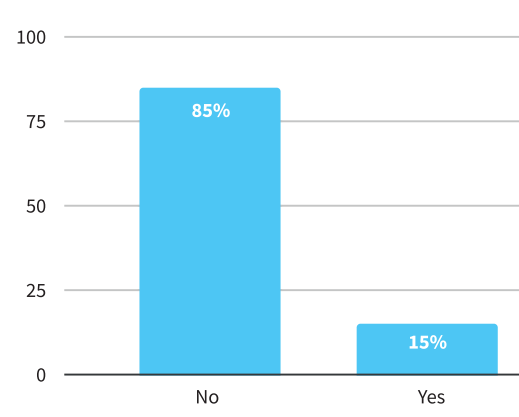
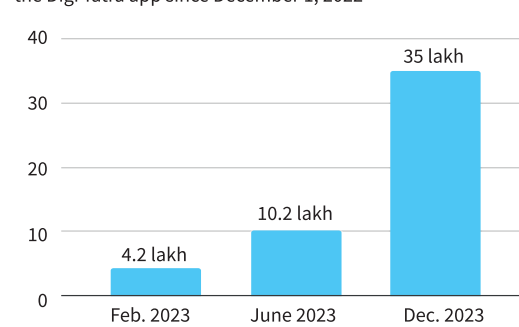


Chart 4: The chart shows the total number of downloads of the Digi Yatra app since December 1, 2022



### FROM THE ARCHIVES

The Hindu

FIFTY YEARS AGO JANUARY 30, 1974

## Indo-Sri Lanka accord on the stateless

New Delhi, Jan. 29: India and Sri Lanka have finally settled the problem of the people of Indian origin in the island by agreeing to divide equally the remaining 150,000 persons not covered by the 1964 Shastri-Sirimavo Pact.

The joint communique issued to-day at the conclusion of Mrs. Bandaranaike's visit disclosed that Sri Lanka will confer its citizenship on 75,000 of these persons, while India will take back the other 75,000.

The two Prime Ministers, Mrs. Gandhi and Mrs. Bandaranaike, who had detailed discussions on all aspects of this long-standing problem noted with satisfaction that with the full implementation of the 1964 agreement and the present one relating to the remaining 150,000, India and Sri Lanka would have finally settled the question of all persons of Indian origin there. The wording of the communique fully reflected the feeling of relief on either side that the most serious irritant in Indo-Sri Lanka relations had been removed at last.

The joint communique also stated that "satisfactory progress" had been made during these discussions on Kachativu and other related issues. It was agreed at the talks that a decision would be taken "in the very near future" regarding the sea limit in the historic waters dividing India and Sri Lanka between the Palk Straits and Adam's Bridge.

Though it has not yet been officially disclosed, it is generally known that the two Prime Ministers have agreed to resolve the question of Kachativu on the basis of a fresh delimitation of the territorial waters which would automatically settle the issue without going further into the historical claims of either side to this disputed islet.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO JANUARY 30, 1924

## Third expedition to Everest

Leafield (Oxford) Mid. Jan 28: Brigadier General Bruce, leaves for India on Wednesday to command the new expedition which will attempt the ascent of Mount Everest in the coming spring. This will be the third assault on the world's highest mountain and it will be the second time that Mr. Bruce has been in command.

# Text & Context

THE HINDU

**NEWS IN NUMBERS**

**Mobile subscribers added by Jio in the month of November**

**34.5** in lakh. Reliance Jio cemented its market lead while rival Bharti Airtel gained 17.5 lakh new wireless users, according to TRAI data. Vodafone Idea, however, slipped further by losing 10.7 lakh subscribers in November. PTI

**The share of Indians still using biomass for cooking**

**41** in percentage. Indians relying on wood, cow dung or other biomass as cooking fuel, emit around 340 million tonnes of carbon dioxide into the environment every year, which is about 13% of India's greenhouse gas emissions. PTI

**The U.S. issued record number of visas to Indians in 2023**

**1.4** in million. The U.S. embassy said that there was a 60% increase in visa applications from Indians compared to 2022. Process improvements and investments in staffing have brought down appointment wait times for visitor visas. PTI

**The increase in gold imports from April to December**

**26.7** in percentage. India's gold imports, which have a bearing on the country's current account deficit, increased to \$35.95 billion during April-December of this fiscal. India is the world's second-largest gold consumer after China. PTI

**The nuclear reactors Ukraine will build as war hits power supply**

**4** Ukraine will begin building four new nuclear reactors to compensate for Russia's seizure of the country's largest nuclear plant. The new reactors would be at the Khmelnytskyi nuclear power plant in western Ukraine. AFP  
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)

## Pros and cons of simultaneous elections

What are the various benefits of holding Lok Sabha and State elections at the same time? How would simultaneous elections go against the federal character of the Constitution? What are international practices on the same in other Parliamentary democracies?

**EXPLAINER**

**Rangarajan.R**

**The story so far:**

A High-Level Committee (HLC) headed by Ramnath Kovind, former President of India, was constituted in September 2023 to examine the issue of holding simultaneous elections for the Lok Sabha, State Legislative Assemblies and local bodies of all States. The HLC has invited responses from political parties, the Law Commission and other groups on the proposal to hold simultaneous elections.

**What is the background?**

During the first four general election cycles in 1952, 1957, 1962 and 1967, the elections to the Lok Sabha and State legislative assemblies were held simultaneously. However, due to the subsequent premature dissolution of the Lok Sabha on seven occasions and the premature dissolution of legislative assemblies on various occasions, the elections to the Lok Sabha and various State assemblies are held at different times. In 2019, only four States had their assembly elections, along with the Lok Sabha. The idea of simultaneous elections has been mooted in the past by the Election Commission of India (1982) and the Law Commission (1999).

**What is the case for simultaneous elections?**

The desirability of simultaneous elections can be discussed from the perspectives of cost, governance, administrative convenience and social cohesion. Firstly, it is estimated that the cost of holding general elections to the Lok Sabha is around ₹4,000 crore for the Central government. Each State assembly election would also cost considerable amount of money according to the size of the State. While this is the official expenditure of the government, the expenditure by parties and candidates are manifold times higher. Simultaneous elections would entail a reduction in these costs.

Secondly, there are at least 5-6 State elections that happen every year. This results in political parties, including Ministers, being in 'permanent campaign' mode, which acts as a hindrance to policy making and governance. Further, the Model Code of Conduct that is enforced during the election process ranges usually from 45-60 days where no new schemes or projects can be announced by the Centre and concerned State governments.

Third, administrative machinery in the districts slow down during the election period with the primary focus being the conduct of elections. There are also paramilitary forces that are withdrawn from the locations in which they are posted and deployed to the concerned State for the smooth conduct of elections. Frequent elections every year have an impact on administrative efficiency.

Lastly but very importantly, high-stake elections each year in various States result in polarising campaigns by all parties in order to win the elections. This trend has exacerbated in the last decade with the advent of social media thereby creating and deepening the fissures in our multi-religious and multilingual country.

**What are the challenges involved?**

There are tangible benefits that accrue due to simultaneous elections. However, there are also significant issues that surround such a proposal both from democratic and constitutional perspectives.

India is a federal country of

### India's democratic behemoth

While there are tangible benefits that accrue due to simultaneous elections, there are also significant issues for such a proposal both from democratic and constitutional perspectives

**Table 1** shows when the term for the Assemblies of each State ends, and the number of months that would be curtailed if simultaneous elections are held in these States in June 2024.

State	Term ends	No. of months
Karnataka	May 2028	-47
Meghalaya	March 2028	-45
Nagaland	March 2028	-45
Tripura	March 2028	-45
Himachal	Jan. 2028	-43
Gujarat	Dec. 2027	-42
U.P.	May 2027	-35
Goa	March 2027	-33
Manipur	March 2027	-33
Punjab	March 2027	-33
Uttarakhand	March 2027	-33
Puducherry	June 2026	-24
Assam	May 2026	-23
Kerala	May 2026	-23
Tamil Nadu	May 2026	-23
West Bengal	May 2026	-23
Bihar	Nov. 2025	-17
Delhi	Feb. 2025	-8
Jharkhand	Jan. 2025	-7
Haryana	Nov. 2024	-5
Maharashtra	Nov. 2024	-5
Andhra	June 2024	0
Arunachal	June 2024	0
Odisha	June 2024	0
Sikkim	June 2024	0
Chhattisgarh	Jan. 2024	5
M.P.	Jan. 2024	5
Rajasthan	Jan. 2024	5
Telangana	Jan. 2024	5
Mizoram	Dec. 2023	6

**Table 2** shows the number of Lok Sabha seats, Assembly representatives, urban local wards, and elected panchayat representatives for each State.

State	Lok Sabha seats	Assembly seats	Urban local wards	Elected panchayat representatives
U.P.	80	403	10,440	9,13,417
West Bengal	42	294	2,938	59,229
Maharashtra	48	288	7,489	2,40,635
Bihar	40	243	3,322	1,36,573
Tamil Nadu	39	234	12,448	1,06,450
M.P.	29	230	7,626	3,92,981
Karnataka	28	224	7,125	1,01,954
Rajasthan	25	200	8,160	1,26,271
Gujarat	26	182	1,374	1,44,080
Andhra	25	175	3,903	1,56,050
Odisha	21	147	2,092	1,07,487
Kerala	20	140	3,529	18,372
Assam	14	126	910	26,754
Telangana	17	119	3,587	1,03,468
Punjab	13	117	3,163	1,00,312
Chhattisgarh	11	90	3,234	1,70,465
Haryana	10	90	1,649	70,035
Jharkhand	14	81	1,120	59,638
Delhi	7	70	280	-
Uttarakhand	5	70	1,134	62,796
Himachal	4	68	560	28,723
Arunachal	2	60	59	9,383
Manipur	2	60	306	1,736
Meghalaya	2	60	164	-
Nagaland	1	60	371	-
Tripura	2	60	324	6,646
Goa	2	40	226	1,555
Mizoram	1	40	242	-
Sikkim	1	32	51	1,153
Puducherry	1	30	116	-

sub-continental proportions. Various States have their own unique set of issues that are significantly different from one another. The Union and State governments have their respective powers and responsibilities towards the electorate as per the division of powers under the Constitution. Conducting elections simultaneously to the Lok Sabha and all State assemblies would result in national issues overshadowing regional and State specific issues. National political parties would have a significant advantage over regional parties on account of this mechanism. This would be detrimental to the federal spirit of our country which has been declared as a basic structure of the Constitution. Elections also serve as an effective feedback mechanism for governments in power. There have been many policies that have been initiated by various Central and State governments in the past due to such electoral feedback. If elections are held only once in five years, it can affect this process.

Apart from the federal and democratic issues discussed above, simultaneous polls will also require constitutional amendments. India is a parliamentary democracy where the governments at the Centre and the State need to enjoy majority in the Lok Sabha and the Legislative Assembly respectively. The duration of these houses is five years but it may be dissolved earlier if the party or coalition in power loses majority, and no alternative government can be formed. It may also be dissolved prematurely by the council of ministers in power to seek an early election. Further, State legislative assemblies can also be dissolved by imposing President's rule under Article 356 of the Constitution. Having a fixed tenure of five years for the Lok Sabha and State assemblies will therefore require

constitutional amendments to Articles 83, 85, 172 and 174 that deal with the duration and dissolution of Lok Sabha and Legislative assemblies. It will also require the amendment of Article 356.

**What are the various recommendations?**

The reports of the Law Commission (1999), and the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Personnel, Public Grievances, Law and Justice (2015), have dealt with the issue of simultaneous elections. The Law Commission had also submitted a draft report in 2018. The highlights of these discussions and recommendations can be summarised as follows – (a) the elections to the Lok Sabha and nearly half of the State assemblies may be clubbed together in one cycle, while the rest of the State assembly elections can be held in another cycle after two and half years. This will require curtailing or extending the tenures of existing assemblies that will entail amendments to the Constitution and the Representation of the People Act, 1951; (b) any 'no-confidence motion' in the Lok Sabha or Legislative Assembly should be mandatorily accompanied by a 'confidence motion' for the formation of an alternate government. If for any unavoidable reason, the Lok Sabha or State Assembly is to be dissolved prematurely, the duration of the newly constituted House should be only for the remainder period of the original House. This would act as a deterrent for MPs and MLAs pushing for premature dissolution of the House. It would instead encourage the members to explore the possibility of forming an alternate government through feasible realignments; (c) the bye-elections necessitated by death, resignation or disqualification of

members can be clubbed together and conducted once in a year.

It may be noted that Parliamentary democracies like South Africa, Sweden and Germany have fixed tenures for their legislatures. The elections to the National Assembly and provincial legislatures happen simultaneously in South Africa every five years, with the President of the country being elected by the National Assembly. The Prime Minister of Sweden and the Chancellor of Germany are elected by their respective legislatures every four years. A lack of confidence against the German Chancellor can be moved only by electing a successor.

**What can be an ideal solution?**

There is a lack of consensus among various political parties about the conduct of simultaneous elections. The ideal middle ground may be to conduct the Lok Sabha election in one cycle and all State assembly elections in another cycle after two and a half years. The rest of the recommendations as discussed in the previous section with respect to the formation of an alternative government in case of the fall of an incumbent government, the duration of the newly constituted houses being only for the remainder period in case of premature dissolution and, the clubbing of bye-elections to be held once every year may be adopted through suitable amendments. This will ensure that the major benefits of simultaneous polls are achieved without compromising on democratic and federal principles. If all political parties are taken into confidence, this may be achieved over the next decade and continued thereafter.

Rangarajan. R is a former IAS officer and author of 'Polity Simplified'. Views expressed are personal.

**THE GIST**

During the first four general election cycles in 1952, 1957, 1962 and 1967, the elections to the Lok Sabha and State legislative assemblies were held simultaneously.

It is estimated that the cost of holding general elections to the Lok Sabha is around ₹4,000 crore for the Central government. Each State assembly election would also cost considerable amount of money according to the size of the State.

Conducting elections simultaneously to the Lok Sabha and all State assemblies would result in national issues overshadowing regional and State specific issues. National political parties would have a significant advantage over regional parties on account of this mechanism.

CACHE



GETTY IMAGES

# Improving battery technologies for speedy EV adoption

The projected growth of the Indian Electric Vehicle (EV) market is dependent on advances in battery technology translating to better economics and enhanced user experience. However, today's Li-ion batteries still leave a lot to be desired

Sandeep Rao

Last year was a good year for Electric Vehicles (EV) in India with sales recording a 50% growth compared to 2022. While actual volumes remain small (6% of vehicles registered in 2023), the industry is poised for phenomenal growth with the Indian EV market expected to reach \$100 billion by 2030. The heart of an EV is its battery – with the battery system accounting for 40% of the vehicle cost. The projected growth of the EV market is dependent on advances in battery technology translating to better economics and enhanced user experience (longer range, faster charging and improved safety).

### The lithium battery

Almost all EVs on the road today are powered by lithium-ion batteries. It consists of two electrodes (an anode and a cathode) separated by a liquid electrolyte. Lithium atoms in the anode give up electrons which travel to the cathode through an external wire – this stream of electrons provide the current which powers the motor of the vehicle. Simultaneously, lithium ions (now positively charged from loss of an electron) travel through the electrolyte to reach the cathode. During charging, the process is reversed with lithium ions being forced to travel back through the electrolyte to the anode.

There is a good reason why lithium is the material of choice for EV batteries. Lithium, the lightest solid element known to man, has a high propensity to give up its electron. Its small size enables the lithium ion to efficiently travel between

electrodes through the electrolyte. This translates to lighter and smaller batteries with an ability to store large amounts of energy. However, today's Li-ion batteries still leave a lot to be desired. Its energy density while high compared to earlier battery technologies, pales in comparison to petrol. Batteries are still slow to charge (compared to the few minutes it takes to fill petrol at a pump). There is a need to make batteries more affordable and increase their life-span. And then there are environmental concerns primarily related to the mining of lithium and other elements (such as cobalt, nickel).

### On improving the battery

The efforts toward improving the EV battery can be broadly classified into three approaches. The first approach retains the basic structure of the lithium-ion battery while making tweaks to the electrodes. An ideal electrode should be light weight; store a lot of lithium; provide sufficient pathways for lithium to easily enter and exit the electrode (=> higher voltages and faster charging); and be made of materials that are cheap, non-toxic and easily available. But invariably there are trade-offs involved. For example, Tesla uses cathodes based on Nickel-Manganese-Cobalt (NMC) and Lithium Iron Phosphate (LFP) in their batteries. While NMC batteries have high energy density and thus provide longer range, LFP batteries have longer life, better stability, are less toxic and have faster charging times.

Another approach to improving battery performance involves deploying sensing and control infrastructure around the battery to increase safety, extend battery

life and speed-up charging. For instance, a temperature sensor can be installed to detect dangerous conditions and shut down the battery, preventing a fire. Monitoring parameters such as internal temperature, voltage and current and appropriately modulating the charging current and voltage can result in faster charging while maintaining battery life. This can be understood using a simple analogy. Charging a battery involves moving lithium ions from the cathode to the anode. This is akin to moving a bunch of kids from one classroom to another through a common door. Left to themselves the kids are likely to jump across benches and rush to the door – potentially damaging furniture, resulting in crowding around the door and slowing down movement. A couple of monitors to control the kids can result in faster movement with lesser damage. A Battery Management System (BMS) consists of sensors to measure parameters such as temperature, voltage and current; electronic circuitry to control the battery; and a compute engine to process the sensor data and issue appropriate control commands. Advances in battery management and charging algorithms are generally easier to deploy since they do not involve any fundamental changes to the battery chemistry.

### Paradigm shifts

There is considerable effort being invested in approaches that promise quantum jumps in battery performance. One such approach is the Solid-State Lithium Battery (SSB), which seeks to fix two common drawbacks in prevalent batteries. The liquid electrolyte used in EV batteries is highly flammable. The SSB

replaces this with a heat resistant lightweight solid electrolyte. Further, the anode of an EV battery consists of a carbon based porous/layered scaffolding (typically graphite) – which houses lithium atoms (a crude analogy is water stored in a sponge). The carbon scaffolding provides the required stability during charging and discharging, as lithium is reactive. However, the solid electrolyte in an SSB provides sufficient structural stability and good separation between the anode and the cathode, that the carbon scaffolding is no longer needed at the anode. This can significantly reduce the weight of battery and also improve charging speed. If SSB's live up to their promise, consumers can expect EVs that travel further with a single charge, are faster to charge and are safer across a wider range of temperatures, sometime before the end of this decade.

India has a good eco-system that can support further progress in EV batteries – an expanding market, an environment that supports start-ups, friendly government policies, and successful home-grown EV companies (Ather, Ola Electric). Further, fundamental research in material science at India's premier universities (IIT-Madras and Mumbai) and government research labs promotes innovation. The semiconductor industry in India (Texas Instruments included) is also contributing advanced sensors and processors that will power the next generation of BMS. So, if you are an entrepreneur looking for a next start-up idea, or student/researcher looking for an area of specialisation, battery technology is something that you could consider.

(The author is with Texas Instruments)

## THE DAILY QUIZ

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

Some significant events occurred on January 30. Here is a quiz on observances, birthdays and everything else that happened on the day

Abhinaya. K

### QUESTION 1

A film written, directed and starring Charlie Chaplin premiered on this day in 1931. Often considered his magnum opus, the film marked the first time Chaplin composed a film score for one of his own productions. Identify the film.

### QUESTION 2

Across the world every year the last Sunday of January is observed as \_\_\_\_\_ Day to raise awareness about this disease. In India, it is observed on January 30. Identify the disease?

### QUESTION 3

An Indian politician and Independence activist who was jailed during the Quit India Movement was born on this day in

1910. He served as Governor of Maharashtra and is also one of the individuals credited for ushering in the Green Revolution. Name the politician.

### QUESTION 4

The legendary band performed their last live gig, known as the 'rooftop' concert, on this day in 1969 for a limited audience. Last year, they came together for one last song with the help of AI which gained millions of views on YouTube. Which is the band?

### QUESTION 5

One of the first memorial museums established in India on Mahatma Gandhi, houses many key artifacts related to the leader including the garment worn by the leader on the day of his death. He was shot and killed on January 30, 1948. Where is the museum located?



### Visual question:

Identify the man with Former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi who is the inventor of a 3-D combination puzzle. He filed the patent for his famous invention on this day in 1975.

### Questions and Answers to the previous day's daily quiz:

- The bodies the Supreme Court replaced in 1950. **Ans: The Federal Court of India and the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council**
  - The motto of the SC. **Ans: Yato Dharmastato Jayah' (Whence Justice, Thence Victory)**
  - The current strength of judges in the Supreme Court. **Ans: 34 judges including the CJJ**
  - The Supreme Court is shaped as this. **Ans: In the shape of a balance with a pair of the Scales of Justice**
  - The black bronze sculpture installed in 1978 in the Supreme Court portrays this. **Ans: It portrays Mother India sheltering the Republic of India represented by the symbol of a child holding an open book said to uphold the laws of the land**
  - The record the Kesavananda Bharati versus State of Kerala case holds. **Ans: With 13 judges it was the largest-ever Bench constituted at the SC**
- Visual: Identify this woman. **Ans: Fathima Beevi**  
**Early Birds:** K.N. Viswanathan| Ashraf Basha| Amartya Vikram Singh| Prashant Nain| Vinoth A.R



## FROM THE ARCHIVES

# Know your English

K. Subrahmanian

"C. H. Vijayawada wants to know whether the following sentence is correct: 'Both the chief minister as well as his rival attended the meeting'."

"You can say 'Both the chief minister and his rival attended the meeting'. You can also say 'The chief minister as well as his rival attended the meeting'. 'Both' and 'as well as' don't go together. 'Both' means 'the one as well as the other'.

*Both Ram and Ahmed came.  
Both of them came. Both came.  
They are both fine.  
Both Ram and Ahmed are good students. Ram and Ahmed are both good students.*

The negative of 'Both of them are good' is not 'Both of them are not good'. It would mean that one of them is good. The negative is 'Neither of them is good'. Neither of them came to the meeting. 'Neither' means 'not one and not the other'. 'As well as' means 'in addition to (being)'.

*Ram as well as John came to see me yesterday.*

*He was kind as well as sensible.  
Ram as well as John is kind to me.*

In 'both' and 'as well as' two things are involved. In 'both', the emphasis is on the two things together; in 'as well as', you want to emphasise a second thing besides a thing already mentioned. The difference is a difference in emphasis."

"Mr. N. Subramanyam and Mr. P. N. Rao of Berhampur want to know the meaning of the idiom 'Heads I win, tails you lose'."

"It means you lose in any case. 'Head' here means the picture on one side of a coin. Tail is the other side of the coin. You toss a coin to decide which of the two alternatives is to be followed. When you say 'heads' and the coin falls with the head facing you, you win; otherwise, the other person wins. When you say 'Heads I win, tails you lose', you win all the time. It is a grossly unfair deal."

"Ms. S. Kaur, Ludhiana, wants to know how to use 'worry at'."

"You worry about something. *He is worried over this problem.*

"To worry at' is 'to keep attempting to conquer or persuade'. When you worry at a problem, you keep on thinking of ways of solving it.

*He worried at the minister to get an LPG dealership."*

"Mr. D. K. Bhatnagar, Dibrugarh, wants to know the difference between 'odious' and 'odorous'."

"Odious" means 'hateful, detestable, most unpleasant'.

*He is an odious liar.  
I have nothing to do with that odious woman.*

"Odorous" means 'having a smell, especially a pleasant one'. This is a literary word.

*Published in The Hindu on December 11, 1990.*

## Word of the day

**Maelstrom:** a powerful circular current of water (usually the result of conflicting tides)

**Synonyms:** Vortex, whirlpool

**Usage:** She found refuge from the whirling maelstrom.

**Pronunciation:** bit.ly/maelstrompro

**International Phonetic Alphabet:** /meɪlˈstrʌm/; /-stɹʌm/

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

## From Page One

## Soren 'untraced' as ED team visits house

"Our team came to the residence of the CM but he was not here. The ED teams also went to the Jharkhand Bhavan and a few other locations but could not find the CM," a source said. Mr. Soren had left Ranchi for Delhi on January 27, with his party claiming that he had gone for personal work and would return. But the Jharkhand unit of the BJP alleged that the CM is "absconding" fearing ED action. It urged Governor C.P. Radhakrishnan to look into the matter.

Meanwhile, in an email to the federal agency on Monday, Mr. Soren alleged that the issuance of summons to him was "wholly vexatious and in colourable exercise of powers given by the statute." "Preserve video recording of seven-hour questioning [of January 20] to make available to the Court of Law," Mr. Soren said while agreeing to record his statement at his residence in Ranchi at 1 p.m. on January 31. Citing the upcoming Assembly session scheduled between February 9 and 29, he said under these circumstances, the ED's insistence to record a further statement on or before January 31 "reeks of malice". The case pertains to the alleged purchase and sale of tribal land by forging documents between 2020 and 2022.

Mr. Radhakrishnan said he is keeping an eye on the developments in the State.  
(With inputs from PTI)

## DGP flays bid to paint T.N. govt. as 'anti-Hindu'

Mr. Jiwala said 252 events, both indoor and outdoor, were held in Tamil Nadu. He said the petitioner was under the influence of an "illusion and false interpretation of reality".

"The allegations that the CM had orally instructed not to allow any ceremony or function including the *annadhanam*, organising bhajans about Prabhu Ram, on the auspicious occasion of January 22, the day of *pran pratishtha* of Ram Janmabhoomi, are totally baseless and false," the DGP said in his response.

The response said a total of 288 petitions were received by the government.

Initially, four of them were allowed. However, the Madras High Court directed the police to consider the petitions and regulate their conduct in order to ensure there was no hindrance to public movement. Subsequently, the police permitted a total of 248 events, taking the total to 252. Cases were registered in 13 instances for violations of police regulations.

## Judge vs judge: SC takes over case from HC

On Monday, the Bench directed the transferred case to be listed before it after three weeks.

The proceedings in the Calcutta High Court took an ugly turn when Justice Abhijit Gangopadhyay, sitting as a Single Judge Bench, made personal allegations of political bias against Justice Soumen Sen, who presided over the Division Bench which stayed his order to transfer the case to the Central Bureau of Investigation.

Senior advocate Kapil Sibal, for the W.B. government, drew attention to the fact that Justice Gangopadhyay had made personal comments in his judicial order against Justice Sen. Justice Gangopadhyay had accused Justice Sen of using his office to "act" in favour of the State government.

"The learned judge continues to take matters of this kind. He will continue to do such things in future also... You have to intervene," Mr. Sibal submitted. The Chief Justice cut short Mr. Sibal, saying, "You have made your point."

The Supreme Court declined a plea to intervene in the allocation of cases to Justice Gangopadhyay, saying that was entirely the domain of the Chief Justice of the High Court of Calcutta.

## ED questions Lalu for over 8 hours in land-for-job case

Modi government is harassing Opposition parties through investigative agencies, says RJD MP Misa Bharti; supporters and legislators gather outside ED office in Patna in show of support

The Hindu Bureau  
PATNA

A day after Chief Minister Nitish Kumar severed ties with the Mahagabandhan (grand alliance) in Bihar to align with the Bharatiya Janata Party, Rashtriya Janata Dal chief Lalu Prasad on Monday appeared before the Enforcement Directorate for questioning in the land-for-job scam.

Mr. Prasad reached the ED office in Patna at 11 a.m. and was questioned by officials for more than eight hours. The ED officials, said sources, presented a set of more than 50 questions in the case, which involves alleged sale of properties at throwaway prices or given as "gifts" to Mr. Prasad's relatives during his term as Railway Minister in the 2004-09 United Progressive Alliance government.

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) is investigating the allegations of bribery in the case, while the ED is probing the money-laundering trail.

Mr. Prasad was accompanied by his elder daughter and Rajya Sabha member, Misa Bharti.



Under scrutiny: RJD chief Lalu Prasad arrives at the ED office for questioning in Patna on Monday. ANI

A large number of RJD supporters, leaders, and present and former legislators gathered outside the ED office to show their support for their party leader and express their opposition to the Centre.

The security was tightened with the deployment of Central security force personnel at the ED office. Convicted in several fodder scam cases, Mr. Prasad is currently out on bail on health grounds. He underwent a kidney transplant in Singapore in December 2022.

"This is nothing new for our family. Whenever our family members are sum-

moned for questioning, we cooperate; though I must say that Mr. Prasad's health is not good," Ms. Bharti told presspersons outside the ED office.

## 'Inhuman behaviour'

"Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government has become scared with the upcoming 2024 Lok Sabha election and is harassing all those who are opposing the BJP through the might of the investigating agencies. This is true of the Opposition in Patna, West Bengal, Maharashtra as well as other places," she added.

Ms. Bharti's sister, Rohi-

## Centre extends ban on SIMI for 5 years for fomenting terrorism

The Hindu Bureau  
NEW DELHI

The Union Home Ministry has extended the ban on the Students Islamic Movement of India (SIMI) for five years.

The organisation was declared an "unlawful association" under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act for the first time in 2001.

The Ministry, in a post on X, said, "SIMI has been found involved in fomenting terrorism, disturbing peace and communal harmony to threaten the sovereignty, security and integrity of Bharat." It said that 17 cases had been registered against former SIMI cadres in the past five years and in 11 instances, SIMI members had been convicted by courts of law for various crimes committed between 2006 and 2014.

The fresh cases include two first information reports (FIR) registered at the Gangapur police station in Sawai Madhopur, Rajasthan on August 25, 2019 for "throwing stones from the top of Jama Masjid on the rally of Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) on the VHP's Foundation Day.

Some of the cases do not mention if the suspects are connected with SIMI. The notification said the

National Investigation Agency (NIA) registered a case against Athar Parvej and Mohammed Jalaluddin of Phulawari Sharif, Patna in 2022 "relating to conspiracy of disrupting the visit of Prime Minister in July 2022. Both the accused were arrested and charge-sheeted under various provisions, including Sections 17, 18, 18A, 18B 38 and 39 of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967".

Another case mentioned in the notification pertains to 2023 when the NIA registered a case against Saquib Nachan, ex-national general secretary of SIMI. "He was the main conspirator and was radicalising Muslims for violent 'Jihad' or 'Hijarat'. He was giving 'Baith' [pledge and allegiance to IS] to Muslim youth. Further, he motivated other persons to take 'Baith' of the Islamic State. He is alleged to have established 'Al Sham' like area in Padga village, wherein sharia law is followed," the notification said.

It said the governments of Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Jharkhand, Kerala, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Telangana and Uttar Pradesh recommended that SIMI be declared an "unlawful association".

## Dictatorship is inevitable if Modi is re-elected: Kharge

The Hindu Bureau  
BHUBANESWAR

The upcoming Lok Sabha election will be the last election in India if Prime Minister Narendra Modi is re-elected, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge said here on Monday. He was addressing a Congress workers' convention.

"Whether you acknowledge it or not, one of our leaders from INDIA departed yesterday... The current government's *modus operandi* involves serving notices on leaders one after another, instilling terror, and issuing threats. Individuals are abandoning friendships, alliances, and parties out of fear. The question arises: Can the country, democracy, or Constitution survive if so many cowards persist?" he asked.

## 'Last chance'

"This is the last opportunity before people to cast their votes decisively. Following this, no further vot-



Mallikarjun Kharge

ing will be possible as there will be no more elections. Elections will be held akin to election of Russian President Vladimir Putin. They will run the government on basis of accumulated authority and keep returning to power. They will get 200 seats, 300 and 400. They will even increase number of seats beyond 600," he said.

"It is people's responsibility to safeguard Constitution and democracy and ensure that elections are held recurrently... If you desire it, the democracy will stay on. However, if you choose to remain subservient, that is a decision

is up to you," he said.

"Former PM Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi had sacrificed their lives for people while Mr. Modi is taking lives... He is running government by this terror mechanism," the Congress leader said.

"We administered the government with love, embracing each other. Progress in education, health, industry, and the establishment of various visible institutions today can be credited to the contributions of Congress. The present government seems to derive pleasure from causing discord and conflict among the people."

On Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar leaving the INDIA bloc, Mr. Kharge said, "Does the country weaken when one person exits? No... We will emerge even stronger."

He said the the Bharatiya Janata Party and the Bi-Janata Dal had long been in an undeclared alliance aimed at looting money by selling mineral resources.

## CAA will be implemented in a week, reiterates Minister

Shiv Sahay Singh  
KOLKATA

Union Minister of State for Shipping Shantanu Thakur on Monday reiterated that the Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA) would be implemented across the country in a week.

The BJP MP for Bangaon had made a similar statement at a rally in South 24 Parganas district of West Bengal on Sunday.

In November 2023, Union Minister of State for Home Affairs Ajay Kumar Mishra had said that the CAA rules would be framed by March 2024.

The Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019 was passed by Parliament in December 2019. It seeks to grant Indian citizenship to Hindus, Sikhs, Jains, Buddhists, Parsis, and Christians from Bangladesh, Pakistan, and Afghanistan who entered India before December 31, 2014.

The remarks made by Mr. Thakur assume signifi-



Shantanu Thakur

cance ahead of the Lok Sabha election. The delay in framing rules for the CAA had irked a section of Matuas, including MLAs from the community representing the BJP. After the 2019 polls, a number of BJP leaders have been trying to allay the fears of Matuas regarding the delay in the implementation of the CAA.

Mr. Thakur, a descendant of the founders of the Matua sect, was elected in 2019 on the promise of implementation of the CAA.

Matuas, constituting a large chunk of the State's Scheduled Caste population, had been migrating to West Bengal since the

1950s, primarily due to religious persecution in erstwhile East Pakistan which later became Bangladesh. It is believed that the Matua community will benefit the most from the implementation of the CAA.

The remarks by the MP evoked a strong response from the political circles.

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee advised people in Cooch Behar, particularly those from the Rajbanshi community, to ensure that their names were on the voters' list to "protect themselves" from the Act. Ms. Banerjee has maintained that there was no need for implementation of the CAA in the State.

"Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee has clearly said that CAA won't be implemented in West Bengal. The BJP leaders are attempting political gimmickry by making such false promises before the Lok Sabha election," Trinamool Congress spokesperson Kunal Ghosh said.

## Navy ship foils hijack bid on Iranian-flagged vessel

Dinakar Peri  
NEW DELHI

A swift response by an Indian Navy ship, *INS Sumitra*, deployed in the Gulf of Aden ensured that a hijack situation was quickly resolved, ensuring safe release of an Iranian-flagged fishing vessel and its crew.

"*INS Sumitra*, on anti-piracy operations along the East coast of Somalia and the Gulf of Aden, responded to a distress message regarding hijacking of an Iranian flagged Fishing Vessel (FV) *Iman*. The FV had been boarded by pirates and the crew taken as hostages," the Navy said in a statement on Monday.

"*INS Sumitra* intercept-



To the rescue: The fishing vessel that was released from pirates following *INS Sumitra*'s intervention in the Gulf of Aden. PTI

ed the vessel, acted in accordance with the established Standard Operating Procedures to coerce the pirates for safe release of crew along with the boat and ensured successful release of all 17 crew members along with the boat." The fishing ves-

sel was subsequently sanitised and released for onward transit, the Navy said.

Piracy, which had vanished since its peak around 2010, has come back now in the region against the backdrop of the Houthis attacks on commercial shipping.

## Elections to 56 Rajya Sabha seats on Feb. 27

The Hindu Bureau  
NEW DELHI

The Election Commission on Monday said that elections to 56 Rajya Sabha seats would be held on February 27. Among the seats that will go to the polls are those held by BJP president J.P. Nadda, nine Union Ministers, and former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh.

The elections will not change the balance between the Treasury benches and the Opposition in the Upper House of Parliament drastically.

While the BJP is expected to keep its tally, the Opposition ranks will be further diminished by a few seats.

The seats held by Union Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnav, Education Mi-



Uttar Pradesh will have the highest number of vacancies of 10 seats. FILE PHOTO

nister Dharmendra Pradhan, Environment Minister Bhupendra Yadav, and Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya will also fall vacant.

With the BJP taking a position that its Ministers should take the Lok Sabha route instead of the Rajya Sabha, many of these Ministers may not return to the Upper House.

The BJP-led National De-

mocratic Alliance (NDA) is likely to gain around six seats - two each in Maharashtra, Bihar and Gujarat - after the February 27 elections, with the Janata Dal (United) and the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) faction led by Ajit Pawar having joined the ruling coalition. The NDA's current strength in the Upper House stands at 114, including 93 of the BJP.

## Depleting numbers

The Opposition ranks will be depleted, especially in Maharashtra, where of the six seats falling vacant, three are held by the BJP and one each by the NCP, the Shiv Sena (UBT) and the Congress. The three parties that together form the Maha Vikas Aghadi will only be able to send one nominee.

Uttar Pradesh will have the highest number of vacancies of 10 seats. Here, currently, the BJP holds nine seats and the Samajwadi Party (SP) one. The Opposition will make up for its loss in Maharashtra here with the SP expected to gain two additional members, as it is likely to win three of the 10 seats up for grabs and the BJP seven.

For renomination to the Rajya Sabha, Mr. Nadda will have to look for a seat outside his home State of Himachal Pradesh as the Congress is in power there.

In Bihar, Rashtriya Janata Dal members Manoj Kumar Jha and Ahmad Ashfaq Karim, JD(U) members Aneel Prasad Hegde and Bashistha Narain Singh, BJP member Sushil Kumar Modi, and

Congress member Akhilesh Prasad Singh are completing their tenures in the Rajya Sabha.

The Congress can also look forward to sending its nominees to the Upper House, from Karnataka and Telangana - where it came to power last year. In Karnataka, four Rajya Sabha members are retiring, and in Telangana three.

The nomination process will begin on February 8. February 15 is the last date for filing nominations and February 20 the last date to withdraw candidature.

Separately, four nominated members are retiring in July, while two nominated seats are vacant. The nominated members retiring in July are Mahesh Jethmalani, Sonal Mansingh, Ram Shakal and Rakesh Sinha of the BJP.

## Nitish holds first Cabinet meeting of new NDA govt.

The Hindu Bureau  
PATNA

Chief Minister Nitish Kumar convened the first Cabinet meeting of the new National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government in Bihar on Monday.

The meeting decided to reschedule the Budget Session, which will now begin on February 29 instead of February 5. A letter seeking approval to reschedule the session has been sent to the Raj Bhavan.

Deputy Chief Ministers Samrat Choudhary and Vijay Kumar Sinha and other Ministers were present at the meeting.

Sources in the government said the Cabinet would be expanded in two or three days keeping the social equation in mind.

### 'Change Speaker'

Senior BJP MLA Nand Kishore Yadav has issued a notice for a no-confidence motion against Assembly Speaker Awadh Bahari Choudhary, who is an RJD MLA.

The notice states that since a new government has taken power, the House does not have confidence in the present Speaker. The notice has signatures of several MLAs, including Hindustani Awam Morcha (Secular) chief Jitan Ram Manjhi.

After the Cabinet meeting, Mr. Samrat Choudhary and Mr. Sinha addressed a press conference where they thanked the BJP for the opportunity to become Deputy Chief Ministers.

# With JD(U) back, NDA will have to balance seat aspirations of allies

Unlike in 2019, the alliance has more players in the mix, including Hindustani Awam Morcha, Rashtriya Lok Janata Dal, 2 factions of Lok Janshakti Party; BJP assures them of promised seats

### NEWS ANALYSIS

Sobhana K. Nair  
Nistula Hebbar  
NEW DELHI

The re-entry of the Janata Dal(U) into the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) in Bihar changes the equations in the BJP-led front, with smaller parties such as the Lok Janshakti Party (Ram Vilas) led by Chirag Paswan expected to get fewer Lok Sabha seats in the Lok Sabha election. Bihar has 40 seats.

In 2019, the BJP and the JD(U) contested 17 seats each, while six were allotted to the LJP. However, this time, with the Hindustani Awam Morcha (Secular), led by Jitan Ram Manjhi, the Rashtriya Lok Janata Dal (RLJD) of Upendra Kushwaha, and two factions of the LJP in the mix, the allies could feel the squeeze.

BJP president J.P. Nadda has assured allies which had been part of the NDA before Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar switched sides for the fifth time, that commitments made to them will be honoured.

According to sources, before agreeing to participate in Mr. Kumar's swearing-in on Sunday, Mr. Pas-



**Delicate balance:** The JD(U) had been allotted 17 seats in the 2019 elections; this time around, the BJP might expect it to make some concessions to accommodate other allies. PTI

wan, who flew in with Mr. Nadda from Delhi to Patna, insisted that the BJP give him a clear assurance that his faction of the LJP will be given the six seats that the party contested in the 2019 election. He also sought to reserve the Hajipur Lok Sabha constituency for himself. The BJP, however, will have to strike a balance between Mr. Paswan and the breakaway faction headed by his uncle and Union Minister, Pashupati Nath Paras.

Speaking to *The Hindu*, Mr. Paswan, whose politics in the past five years had been centred on opposition to Mr. Kumar, said he was happy that the NDA government was in power

and expressed hope that the vision of the allies would also be incorporated in the government's policy. "In 2019 too, we had the JD(U) on board and we managed to amicably fix the seat-sharing formula between us. The conversation on the division of seats has started on a positive note and I believe it will be finalised soon," he said. Yet, he sounded a word of caution, saying if Mr. Kumar were to pursue the "policies" that he was critical of under the new government, then he would not hesitate to speak out.

According to senior sources in the BJP, the party has said that the RLJD will be given three Lok Sab-

ha seats, the same number as in 2014, when Mr. Kushwaha, as president of the Rashtriya Lok Samata Party, had been an NDA ally.

The HAM has already been accommodated at the State level with Mr. Manjhi's son Santosh Suman Manjhi being made Minister. "Another Ministry may be offered to the party and perhaps one Lok Sabha ticket as well," a source said.

The appointment of two of Mr. Kumar's detractors - Samrat Choudhary and Vijay Kumar Sinha - as Deputy Chief Ministers indicated that the BJP will push for concessions from the JD(U) to balance the equa-

## Conspiracy to end SC, ST, OBC quota: Congress

The Hindu Bureau  
NEW DELHI

The Congress on Monday demanded the resignation of University Grants Commission (UGC) Chairman Mamidala Jagadesh Kumar over the now-withdrawn draft guidelines for de-reservation of posts in higher education for Scheduled Castes (SC), Scheduled Tribes (STs) and Other Backward Classes (OBCs). Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, in a post on X (formerly Twitter), called it a conspiracy to end reservations for these groups.

"In the new draft of the UGC, there is a conspiracy to end the reservation given to SC, ST and OBC categories in higher education institutions. Today, out of approximately 7,000 reserved posts in 45 Central universities, 3,000 are vacant, and of which only 7.1% are Dalit, 1.6% are tribal and 4.5% are backward class professors. The BJP-RSS, which have even talked about reviewing reservation, now want to snatch the jobs of the deprived classes from such higher education institutions," he alleged.

Mr. Gandhi's post was contrasted with the 'clarification' from Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan that not a single post would be de-reserved. "There is no scope for ambiguity about reservations after the introduction of the Central Educational Institutions (Reservation in Teachers' Cadre) Act, 2019," he added.

## INBRIEF



## Narwekar gets more time to rule on disqualification pleas

The Supreme Court on Monday extended the deadline for the Maharashtra Assembly Speaker Rahul Narwekar to decide on the disqualification petitions against the breakaway Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) faction headed by Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar from January 31 to February 15. Solicitor-General Tushar Mehta, for the Speaker's office, informed a Bench headed by Chief Justice D.Y. Chandrachud that the tribunal would conclude disqualification proceedings on January 31 and would need three weeks to "dictate" its order. Senior advocate A.M. Singhvi, for petitioner Sharad Pawar loyalist Jayant Patil, said three weeks for dictation of an order was just too much. "My Lords may give the Speaker a week," Mr. Singhvi suggested. The Supreme Court gave the Speaker time till February 15.

## Manesar land case: ED takes statement of ex-Haryana CM

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Monday recorded the statement of former Haryana Chief Minister Bhupinder Singh Hooda in connection with the Manesar land scam case. The ED investigation was based on a First Information Report (FIR) registered by the Gurugram police, which was later re-registered by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) in 2015. It was alleged that in conspiracy with some Haryana government officials, private builders had acquired about 400 acres of land at throwaway rates, which caused a loss of about ₹1,500 crore to the previous owners in Manesar, Naurangpur and Lakhnoul villages. In February 2018, the CBI submitted a chargesheet against Mr. Hooda and 33 others, including 23 land-owning companies of private builders.

## UCC committee will submit report on February 2: Dhami

Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami on Monday said the Uniform Civil Code (UCC) committee formed by the State will submit its final report to the government on February 2 and soon after, the State will table it in the upcoming Assembly session. "The committee formed to prepare the draft of the UCC will submit the same to the State government on February 2. We will implement the UCC in the State by bringing a Bill in the upcoming Assembly session," Mr. Dhami wrote on X. "Our government has always been committed to implementing the UCC in Uttarakhand in accordance with the vision and principles of Prime Minister Narendra Modi ji of 'One India, Best India' and the determination and principles of the godlike people of Purvanchal," the Chief Minister said in a video post on X.

# In Bihar leg of yatra, Rahul slams Modi, stays mum on Nitish's switch

Amit Bhelari  
PATNA

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra on Monday reached Bihar, where he addressed a rally in Kishanganj district. In his speech, he slammed Prime Minister Narendra Modi and demanded a caste-based census across the country but failed to speak about Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar's shift to the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) from the Indian National Developmental, Inclusive Alliance (INDIA).

Mr. Gandhi termed Bihar "the land of social justice", and said the country was "looking at the people of Bihar" because no one



**Grand welcome:** Rahul Gandhi waves at supporters during the Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra, in Kishanganj. PTI

else understood social justice better than the people of the State. "At the time when the BJP and RSS talk about dividing the country on basis of caste and religion, apart from spreading hatred, the Congress party is focusing on spreading

love, respect and brotherhood," he said.

Mr. Gandhi said he added the word "nyay" (justice) to the name of the yatra because the poor in the country were unable to get economic and social justice. He said the country's

economy "has been handed over to a few billionaires" under Mr. Modi's leadership. "Airports, ports, infrastructure, hospitals, and universities... everything is being handed over to two or three industrialists," he said.

He said the Central government did not help the poor, labourers, or farmers and that the doors of banks were closed for the poor "but they are always open for industrialists at the behest of the Prime Minister's Office".

He stressed that everyone had the right to know the exact population of OBCs, minority communities, tribal and general classes, and for that, caste-based census was a "revolutionary step".

# Nitish's exit will have no impact on INDIA bloc, says Jairam

The Hindu Bureau  
NEW DELHI

Taking a swipe at Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar for his frequent switching of loyalties, Congress leader Jairam Ramesh on Monday joked that the Bihar Governor was surprised to see Mr. Kumar within 15 minutes of his swearing-in.

"When he came back halfway, the Governor was shocked as not even 15 minutes had passed. However, this time it was to collect his muffer that the Chief Minister had forgotten in the Raj Bhavan," Mr. Ramesh said in a post on X.

Interacting with reporters in Bihar's Kishanganj after the Bharat Jodo Nyay

Yatra entered the State, Mr. Ramesh mocked the Janata Dal(U) chief as "Aaya Kumar, Gaya Kumar".

Mr. Ramesh said that Mr. Kumar's exit won't have any impact on the Indian National Developmental, Inclusive Alliance (INDIA). "It will not have any impact on INDIA alliance...absolutely no impact. This is typical of Nitish Kumar," he said.

He said that Mr. Kumar's "betrayal was masterminded by the Prime Minister." "A large number of people participated in the padayatra held in Araria [Bihar] today under the Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra. The people of Bihar are welcoming the Yatra with great enthusiasm," he said.

## ACES SPORTS QUIZ

1. Which athlete established an Asian Games record in the men's 3000m steeplechase, clinching the Gold medal with a time of (8:19:53) at the 2023 Asian Games?
2. Boxer Narender Berwal was the sole Indian male medalist at the 2023 Asian Games. In which category did he compete and win?
3. In which sport did Sanjana Bathula become the youngest Indian to win a medal at the 2023 Asian Games after securing the bronze?

Scan the QR code, take part in the quiz and vote for your favourite stars.  
Top 3 winners every day will win gift vouchers.

Answer to yesterday quiz:

1. SILVER
2. SOUTH KOREA
3. HARINDER PAL SANDHU

### All India Institute of Medical Sciences Vijaypur, Jammu 184120

**TENDER ENQUIRY DOCUMENT (NIT) FOR PROVIDING OUTSOURCING OF SANITATION & HOUSEKEEPING SERVICES TO AIIMS, VIJAYPUR JAMMU**

Tender Enquiry Document (TED) for providing outsourcing of Sanitation & Housekeeping Services to AIIMS, Vijaypur, Jammu has been published on GeM Portal, GOI on **16<sup>th</sup> January, 2024**. Vide tender Reference No AIIMS/JMU-Hospital/HOUSEKEEPING/2024/01 dated 15<sup>th</sup> January, 2024 and GeM Bid No GEM/2024/B/4490665 dated 16<sup>th</sup> January, 2024. Bidders/owners interested to provide the services may please download the TED document from GeM Portal, GOI (<https://gem.gov.in> or website of AIIMS, Jammu (<https://www.aiimsjammu.edu.in>)).

**Deputy Director (Admin)  
AIIMS, Vijaypur, Jammu**

TELANGANA STATE POWER GENERATION CORPORATION LIMITED  
VIDYUT SOUDHA: HYDERABAD

NOTIFICATION FOR THE POST OF DIRECTORS

Notification No.01/TSGENCO/2024 Dated: 29.01.2024

The TSGENCO invite applications in the prescribed proforma from the eligible and qualified candidates to the Post of Director in TSGENCO, as detailed below: (i) Director (Hydel), (ii) Director (Thermal & Projects), (iii) Director (HR&R), (iv) Director (Coal & Logistics), (v) Director (Finance & Commercial). For detailed notification and application proforma, please visit TSGENCO website: [www.tsgenco.co.in](http://www.tsgenco.co.in).

DIPR R.No.3855-PP/CL/ADVT/11/2023-24 Dt. 28.01.2024 Sd/- CHAIRMAN & MANAGING DIRECTOR, TSGENCO

KERALA STATE ELECTRICITY BOARD LIMITED - E-Tender Notice

O/o the Deputy Chief Engineer, Electrical Circle, Pala, Kottayam

E-tender ID : 2024\_KSEB\_647766\_1, PAC : 8,55,67,300/-, Last Date - 14.02.2024, 04.00pm, E-tender ID : 2024\_KSEB\_647769\_1, PAC : 10,59,64,100/-, Last Date - 14.02.2024, 04.00pm, E-tender ID : 2024\_KSEB\_647634\_1, PAC : 12,45,73,200/-, Last Date - 14.02.2024, 03.00pm, E-tender ID : 2024\_KSEB\_645943\_1, PAC : 9,68,63,600/-, Last Date - 12.02.2024, 03.00pm, E-tender ID : 2024\_KSEB\_647727\_1, PAC : 10,62,93,100/-, Last Date - 14.02.2024, 03.00pm.

O/o the Executive Engineer, Transmission Division, Thiruvananthapuram

E-tender ID : 2024\_KSEB\_650329\_1, Last Date - 22.02.2024, 03.00pm. Visit [www.etenders.kerala.gov.in](http://www.etenders.kerala.gov.in) and [www.kseb.in](http://www.kseb.in)

Ref : PR/MC/1E461/E-tender/2024

TOURISM CORPORATION OF GUJARAT LIMITED (TCGL)

(A Government of Gujarat Undertaking)  
Udyog Bhavan, Block No. 16, 4th Floor,  
Sector - 11, Gandhinagar - 382 011  
Website: <https://www.gujarattourism.com>

TENDER NOTICE

Bids are invited from reputed and experienced parties towards "Development of Resort at Chorwad, Gujarat".

The project requirements, technical specifications, eligibility criteria, selection process, etc. are included in the Tender documents, which shall be available for download from the websites: <https://tender.nprocure.com> and <https://www.gujarattourism.com> from 30/01/2024 onwards.

The last date for online submission of the Technical Bid and Financial Bid is 23/02/2024 up to 6:00 pm, and physical submission of Technical Bid only is 27/02/2024 up to 3:00 pm.

Managing Director

**IN BRIEF**



**Committee examining Bill on marriage age gets extension**

A parliamentary committee examining a Bill seeking to raise the age of marriage of women from the present 18 to 21 has been given another extension to table its report. The Budget Session of Parliament beginning January 31 is the last session of the present Lok Sabha before the election is announced. The committee will now finalise its report by May, following the four-month extension, while the term of the 17th Lok Sabha ends on June 16. The Prohibition of Child Marriage (Amendment) Bill, 2021, which was introduced in the Lok Sabha and remains pending there, is likely to lapse when the tenure of the House ends in June. PTI

**School headmaster held for 'pledge against Hindu deities'**

A 60-year-old government school headmaster in Chhattisgarh's Bilaspur district has been arrested for allegedly hurting religious sentiments by administering a pledge to people "not to worship Hindu gods" and to embrace Buddhism, the police said on Monday. On January 22, Ratalal Sarovar, the headmaster of a government primary school in Bharari village, allegedly administered the pledge to a group of people. A clip of the incident surfaced online prompting a complaint by a Bajrang Dal activist, and the subsequent police action. In his complaint, it is claimed that Mr. Sarovar's actions hurt the sentiments of followers of Sanatan Dharma.

**Stop mentioning religion or caste of litigants in cases: SC**

The practice of mentioning caste or religion of litigants in court cases must be shunned, the Supreme Court has said while directing its registry and all other courts to stop it forthwith. A Bench of Justices Hima Kohli and Ahsanuddin Amanullah directed all High Courts to ensure that the caste or religion of a litigant does not appear in the memo of parties in any petition before HCs or subordinate courts under their jurisdiction. "We see no reason for mentioning the caste/religion of any litigant either before this Court or the courts below," the Bench said, while allowing a transfer petition in a marital dispute pending before a family court in Rajasthan. PTI

**Ahead of JEE, student found dead at her home in Kota**

An 18-year-old student was found dead at her home in Kota, a coaching hub in Rajasthan, on Monday. She was to give the Joint Entrance Examination for admission to the IITs and the NITs. She was facing study-related stress and found herself unable to tackle the exam, Deputy Superintendent of Police Dharmveer Singh said. Her father is a security guard at a private bank in the city, he said. The family hails from a village in Jhalawar district and has been staying in the city for the past three years. On January 23, a 19-year-old was found dead in his hostel room in Kota. (Those in distress can reach out to Sanjivini for help at 011-4076 9002) PTI

**Setting sun, evocative tunes set the mood**

President, Vice-President, and PM among top leaders in attendance for Beating Retreat where music bands of the Army, Navy, and IAF played 31 foot-tapping Indian tunes; for the first time, the CRPF had a women-led band; celebrations ended with the popular tune of *Sare Jahan se Acha*

**Samridhi Tewari**  
NEW DELHI

As the sun began to set on Monday, the Raisina Hills echoed with enthralling Indian tunes played by military and paramilitary bands during the Beating Retreat ceremony in the national capital.

"Beating retreat" is a military tradition which dates back from the days when troops disengaged from battle at sunset. The drumbeats recall the days when troops, billeted in towns and cities, were recalled to their quarters at an appointed time in the evening.

The ceremony creates a mood of nostalgia for the times gone by. It marks the culmination of the Republic Day celebrations.

The music bands of the Army, Navy, Indian Air Force and Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF) played 31 foot-tapping tunes.

The ceremony began af-



Military bands perform during the Beating Retreat ceremony at Vijay Chowk in New Delhi on Monday. PTI

ter the President and Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, Droupadi Murmu, arrived in a traditional colonial-era horse-drawn buggy. The tri-service chiefs welcomed the President. Vice-President Jagdeep Dhankhar, Prime Minister Narendra Modi,

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud, several Union Ministers, and senior officials were present.

It all began with the band's *Shankhaad* tune, followed by enthralling tunes such as *Veer Bharat*, *Sangam Dur*, *Deshon Ka*

*Sartaj Bharat*, *Bhagirathi*, and *Arjuna* by pipes and drums band. The public clapped to every beat, while some recorded the moment on their phones.

Akshay and Ritu have travelled all the way from Bengaluru and Mumbai to attend the Republic Day ce-

lebrations. "The ceremony is something we have been seeing for a very long time, and every time we did, it felt unreal. The energy cannot be matched," Mr. Akshay said.

**Women-led band**

For Mr. Akshay, the highlight was the CRPF's women-led band, which was a first.

"The tri-services formations were beautiful, especially the lighthouse and the symbol of Indian Army, with crossed swords - it was powerful," he said.

Delhi resident Parampara Sharma said: "The Navy had a formation of Mission Chandrayaan. It was unexpected. The beats were all Indian and were new, that too was a surprise. I am attending the ceremony after a gap of eight years, sitting here with my family I felt nostalgic. It brought back so many memories," Ms. Sharma said.

The CAPF bands played *Bharat Ke Jawan* and *Vijay Bharat* among others. The

Indian Air Force band played *Tiger Hill*, *Rejoice in Raisina* and *Swadeshi*.

The Navy band played several tunes, including *INS Vikrant*, *Mission Chandrayaan*, *Jai Bharati* and *Hum Taryar Hain*.

With new and unique formations, the Army band played *Faulad Ka Jigar*, *Ag-niveer*, *Kargil 1999* and *Taqat Watan* among others. The massed bands then played the tunes *Aye Mere Watan Ke Logon* and *Drummers Call*.

The event ended with the ever-popular tune of *Sare Jahan se Acha*. The public sang the National Anthem, and the National Flag was taken down.

Residents of Tilak Nagar in Delhi, Shalini, and her nine-year-old daughter, Madhuri, visited the ceremony for the first time. "It has been a dream to see this, and finally I am here. It was magical," she said. The mother-daughter duo said it was beautiful to see the Rashtrapati Bhavan lit up in different colours.

**Make yourself able to withstand pressure, PM advises students**

**The Hindu Bureau**  
NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi interacted with students, teachers, and parents at the Bharat Mandapam here on Monday during the 7th edition of *Pariksha Pe Charcha*.

The programme is a movement driven by Mr. Modi's efforts to bring together students, parents, teachers, and the society at large to foster an environment where each child's unique individuality is encouraged and allowed to express itself fully.

Dania Shabu from a private CBSE school in Oman and Mohammed Arsh from government-run Sarvodaya Bal Vidyalaya, Burari in Delhi raised the issue of addressing external factors such as cultural and societal expectations contributing to added pressure on students.

Mr. Modi highlighted the role of teachers in mitigating the impact of added pressure from external factors upon students, and also pointed out that parents have experienced this from time to time. He sug-



**Rapt attention:** Narendra Modi interacts with students at Pariksha Pe Charcha 2024. ANI

gested making oneself capable of handling pressure and preparing for it as a part of life. He also suggested assessing stress levels and moving forward by gradual increment so that the student's ability is not hampered by it.

**'Avoid comparison'**

During the interaction, he addressed the issue of competition and challenges during a student's life.

The Prime Minister pointed out that often the seeds of unhealthy competition are planted in the family situations leading to perverse competition among siblings. He asked parents to avoid comparison among their children.

**Foreign Secretary arrives in Bhutan amid focus on India's neighbours**

**Suhasini Haidar**  
**Kallol Bhattacharjee**  
NEW DELHI

Close on the heels of the appointment, or "Dak-kyen", ceremony for Bhutan's new Prime Minister Tshering Tobgay and his Cabinet on Sunday, Foreign Secretary Vinay Kwatra arrived in Thimphu on Monday for a three-day visit.

The visit comes amid other moves by the Modi government within the neighbourhood, including hosting the new Bangladesh Foreign Minister in Delhi next week, hosting the Indian Ocean Conference with Sri Lankan President Ranil Wickremesinghe, issuing visas for Pakistani diplomats ahead of elections on February 8 in Pakistan, as well as External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar's visit to Nepal earlier this month.

Mr. Kwatra is expected to discuss bilateral ties with his counterpart, meet Mr. Tobgay and the newly appointed Foreign Minister D.N. Dhungyel, and call on King Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck.

Mr. Tobgay, who was



**Nimble diplomacy:** Foreign Secretary Vinay Kwatra with Bhutan Foreign Secretary Aum Pema Choden in Paro, Bhutan. PTI

last in office from 2013 to 2018, was elected with a big majority in elections this month. In particular, the Foreign Secretary will discuss how best to take India-Bhutan cooperation forward on the Gelephu mega 'Mindfulness City' project, the site for which Mr. Kwatra had previewed in July 2023. Discussions on the progress expected between Bhutan and China on the border talks, after they signed a 'Cooperation Agreement' on the delimitation and demarcation of their boundary in October 2023, are on the agenda, and Mr. Kwatra is also expected to invite Mr. Tobgay to visit India in the next few weeks.

"The visit is in keeping with the tradition of regular high-level exchanges between Bhutan and India," the Ministry of External Affairs stated, announcing Mr. Kwatra's visit on Monday.

New Delhi is also expecting a visit from Bangladesh Foreign Minister Hasan Mahmud on February 7, the first high-level visit from Dhaka since the re-election of Sheikh Hasina's Awami League for a record fourth term. Senior Awami League leaders, including Minister of Road Transport Obaidul Quader, have "appreciated" India's support to Bangladesh during the elections. Both countries are also expected to dis-

cuss security issues along the Bangladesh-Mizoram border as well as the situation in Myanmar's Rakhine province and the future of Rohingya refugees taking shelter in Bangladesh.

After the visit, Dr. Jaishankar will fly to Perth, Australia for the Indian Ocean Conference, organised by the India Foundation and hosted by India, Sri Lanka, Singapore and other regional countries, where Sri Lankan President Ranil Wickremesinghe, Fiji Prime Minister S.L. Rabuka, and several Foreign Ministers are among the speakers.

Meanwhile, sources confirmed that India and Pakistan exchanged assignment visas for dozens of diplomats, diplomatic staff and family members to serve at each other's High Commissions in Islamabad and Delhi on Monday as well. India had sent its Charge D'Affaires (CDA) Geetika Srivastava to Pakistan in August 2023, and has now accepted the appointment of Saad Warraich as Pakistan's CDA, to replace Aizzaz Khan, who is currently officiating as Deputy High Commissioner.

**THE CROSSWORD + 14084** (set by Vidwan)

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

**Across**

- Fact: Hard to follow faith without slightest self-doubt (5)
- Tiny tiger represented completeness (9)
- Letter - English, sounds like a gun (7)
- Broadcast attack on King and feel nauseated (7)
- Conservative and smart, not bold (5)
- This lesson ban could be abnormal! (5)
- Like small donkey (3)
- Brews IPS drink (3)

**Down**

- Philosophers toss their curls (9)
- Foolishly suing Indian state can be exhausting (5,2)
- Hot sex is a rage (3)
- One light kind of structural element (1-4)
- Drink and eat liberally (3)
- Having circular movement during high-energy rallies (5)
- Ape a friend having sex (7)
- Expression of fear? Yes...of an ex-USA President (5)
- Try and sample to evaluate basically (5)
- Ancient German characters go with emphases on both sides (5)
- Almost complete place of calm (5)
- Malt and this game could be matchless (5)
- Patronise this derby perhaps for operations research (5,4)
- Staple batsman, mostly playing as opener for India (7)
- No principle backing the marriage ceremony (7)
- Appear suddenly, quietly with ordinary young dog (3-2)
- One with tact makes room at the top (5)
- Small fit for fur (5)
- Exceed limit (3)
- Title in some measure for evangelists (3)

**SUDOKU**

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

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★☆☆☆

**Solution to previous puzzle**

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

**Solution to yesterday's Sudoku**

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

**MADGALDEEP** Try Our New Sandal With Sandalwood Oil

**FAITH**

**Tyagaraja's Rama bhakti**

Internalising Rama, as shown by Saint Tyagaraja, by focusing one's faculties upon Him and chanting his nama, is guaranteed to help realise the Lord and attain moksham, said Suchithra Balasubramanian in a discourse. He lived his entire life exemplifying Rama bhakti. Born in Tiruvrur, not a day passed without his immersing himself in Rama's stellar qualities.

He had no other ambition but to serve the Lord, sing His praises and chant His name: he chanted Rama nama 96 crore times. For Tyagaraja, life on earth was not defined by material quest, but by the spiritual goal of total application to the highest power.

Throughout the ages, the average person is governed by basic wants, but Tyagaraja strongly believed that one's mission should be to conduct oneself in such a manner as to receive Rama anugraham. His musical compositions were a free flowing river of devotion, appealing to Him for His grace. In the famous kirtanai, *Patti viduva radhu*, he makes a fervent appeal, *Aputtina nade nija bhaktini meda katti guttu cederaka brociceyi*. (Having constrained me, like a knot in the neck, with true devotion to You from the day I was born, and having protected my honour from being compromised, it is not proper to leave the hand of this Tyagaraja, Your servant, having held it).



UKRAINE

Ukraine to build four nuclear reactors as war hits power supply



REUTERS

Ukraine's energy ministry said on Monday that it will begin building four new nuclear reactors this year. Energy Minister German Galushchenko said in televised comments that all four new reactors would be at the Khmelnytskyi nuclear power plant in western Ukraine, eventually making it the largest in Europe. AFP

DOHA

Qatar inks 15-year deal with Bangladesh for gas supply



REUTERS

Qatar has signed a deal with U.S.-based Excelerate Energy to supply Bangladesh with natural gas for 15 years, state-owned QatarEnergy said Monday. Doha will supply Excelerate with one million tonnes of liquefied natural gas a year to be delivered to floating storage units in Bangladesh over the 15-year period starting in January 2026. AFP

RUSSIA

Putin formally registered as presidential candidate



AFP

Russia on Monday officially registered incumbent Vladimir Putin as a candidate for the presidential election in March, a vote that he is all but certain to win. The Central Election Commission said it had registered Putin, who nominated himself, as well as right-wing firebrand Leonid Slutsky as candidates for the vote. AFP

SOUTH AFRICA

South Africa's ruling ANC suspends membership of ex-President Zuma



AFP

South Africa's ruling African National Congress (ANC) said on Monday it had suspended the membership of former President Jacob Zuma after he announced he would vote for another party in this year's general election. Mr. Zuma said last month he would campaign for the new uMkhonto we Sizwe (MK) party. REUTERS

Maldives main Opposition party mulls impeachment against President Muizzu

The Maldivian Democratic Party, which has 42 seats in the 80-member Majlis, appears to have joined forces with the Democrats, a breakaway faction with 13 seats, against the ruling People's National Congress; Opposition says Muizzu is 'alienating' the country's 'most long-standing ally' India

Meera Srinivasan  
COLOMBO

The Maldivian Democratic Party (MDP), the country's main Opposition party holding a parliamentary majority, is preparing to submit an impeachment motion against President Mohamed Muizzu in Parliament, stepping up its challenge to the Executive in the legislature. "We have the numbers," Andhun Hussein, deputy leader of the MDP parliamentary group, told *The Hindu* over the phone. The development coincides with a showdown between Male and New

Delhi, in the wake of controversial remarks made by Maldivian Ministers, and a shrill "Boycott Maldives" call on Indian social media, and President Muizzu issuing a March 15 deadline to New Delhi, for the removal of Indian troops. On what prompted the move for an impeachment motion, less than three months after President Muizzu was sworn in, the Opposition politician pointed to "two primary reasons". "The President is putting the Indian Ocean Region in danger with his policies, and he is not letting Parliament function properly, using money power



Bitter hostility: The development coincides with a showdown between Male and New Delhi. REUTERS

and with the backing of the military," Mr. Hussein said, a day after Parliament or People's Masjid witnessed violent clashes between legislators from the ruling camp and the Opposition. They sparred over parliamentary approval of President Muizzu's Cabinet. The MDP, which has 42 seats in the 80-member People's Majlis, appears to have joined forces with the Democrats - with 13 seats - formed by its breakaway faction, following former President Mohamed Nash-

eed's fallout with President Ibrahim Mohamed Solih last year. In an indication of the two sides finding common cause, the MDP and the Democrats recently issued a joint statement slamming President Muizzu for "alienating" the Maldives' "most long-standing ally". Meanwhile, at least 12 MPs from the MDP have crossed over to the ruling People's National Congress, boosting its presence in the legislature to 16 MPs, Maldivian news portal *Awaz* reported on Sunday. With parliamentary elections scheduled for March 17, President Muizzu has a crucial test ahead. Without adequate Parliament backing, he will not be able to pass legislation or implement policies. The MDP's parliamentary primaries are scheduled to be held on February 3. "We will decide the date of submission of the [impeachment] motion against the President once the primaries are over," Mr. Hussein said. "We cannot change our geography, we cannot bring China closer to us. India is our closest neighbour, friend, and family. Whether it's about sourcing food or medicines, we cannot do without India. We live in peace because of India's neighbourhood first policy."

Fierce battles in Gaza after Jordan attack kills three U.S. troops

Agence France-Presse  
GAZA CITY

Deadly fighting and air strikes rocked besieged Gaza on Monday, a day after an attack that killed three U.S. troops in Jordan heightened fears of a wider regional conflict. Israeli bombing of the Gaza Strip killed 140 people overnight, including 20 members of one family, said the Health Ministry in the Hamas-run Palestinian territory. The Israeli Army said its troops had "encountered and killed dozens of armed terrorists in battles in central Gaza". Ground forces backed by tanks have focused combat operations on the coastal strip's main southern city of Khan Yunis. In the latest efforts to broker a new ceasefire, CIA chief William Burns met top Israeli, Egyptian, and Qatari officials in Paris on Sunday, but no breakthrough was reported. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office said the talks were "constructive" but pointed to "significant gaps which the parties will continue to discuss this week". U.S. President Joe Biden sent Burns to try to negotiate the release of remaining hostages in exchange for a ceasefire, a security source has confirmed. On Sunday, a drone attack on a remote base in Jordan, near the borders with Iraq and Syria, killed three U.S. troops and wounded 25 others, the U.S. military said.

Is Biden's policy towards the Israel-Hamas war working?

NEWS ANALYSIS

Stanly Johny

The drone attack by Iran-backed Shia militias on a U.S. military logistics hub in Jordan, along the border with Syria, in which three American service persons were killed and dozens more injured, is the deadliest assault on U.S. forces in West Asia since the Hamas-Israel war broke out on October 7. When Israel launched an all-out attack on Gaza, after Hamas's cross-border raid killing at least 1,200 Israelis, mostly civilians, the Biden administration adopted a two-fold approach - to let Israel continue its war with America's military assistance and diplomatic protection while simultaneously working to prevent the crisis from escalating into a regional conflict. Three and a half months later, Israel's war is far from over, while the crisis has already spread across the region.



Joe Biden

last week ordered Israel to take measures to prevent genocidal acts by its forces in Gaza. Yet, the Biden administration hasn't even called for a ceasefire. On the other side, to prevent the crisis from escalating, Mr. Biden sent his top diplomat Antony Blinken several times to the region. Mr. Blinken held multiple rounds of talks with Arab leaders with whom the U.S. has substantial diplomatic leverage. However, the problem the U.S. faced was that it lacked a similar diplomatic leverage with Iran. And the main security challenge came from Iran-backed militias in West Asia. The U.S. faced two kinds of attacks. One, the Islamic Resistance Forces, the Shia militias based in Iraq and Syria, carried out at least 150 attacks against U.S. forces and bases in the region since October 7. Two, Houthis, the Shia rebels of Yemen, started attacking commercial vessels in the busy shipping lanes of Red Sea, directly challenging the U.S.'s ability to provide security to global shipping. America's response was typical - it carried out retaliatory airstrikes in Syria, Iraq and Yemen. The U.S. has conducted at least half a dozen strikes in Yemen, targeting Houthi positions. But the Houthis still attack ships in the Red

Sea. Airstrikes alone hardly deter home-grown militias. The Houthis have survived seven years of Saudi bombing and are controlling swathes of Yemen's territories, including its Red Sea coast. According to a report in the International Crisis Group, Houthis' attacks on the Red Sea in "solidarity with the Palestinians" are popular among their base in Yemen and help them recruit new fighters. Chances of escalation The U.S. strikes on Shia militias in Iraq and Syria were also not immediately effective as the drone attack in Jordan showed. America's airstrikes are spreading the fire instead of boosting its own deterrence. The U.S. has some 2,000 soldiers in Iraq, 3,000 in Jordan and up to 1,000 in Syria, who are close targets for the vast network of Shia militias, which Iran has built across the region, from Iraq to Syria to Lebanon and Yemen. Three and a half months since the Israel-Hamas war began, Israel is far from meeting its declared objectives - dismantling Hamas and freeing hostages. U.S. intelligence estimates that only 20-30% of Hamas fighters were killed in three months, while 80% of Hamas's vast tunnel networks in Gaza remain intact, according to American media. As long as the war continues, the chances of further regional escalation are high, with the U.S. being drawn deeper into the West Asian vortex at a time when it wants to pivot away from the region to focus on its more conventional challenges in the Indo-Pacific and Eastern Europe.

Pak. election won't end strife, warns rights activist

Agence France-Presse  
ISLAMABAD

Pakistan's pre-eminent rights activist describes the upcoming election as a messy melodrama staged by an emboldened military, unlikely to bring down the curtain on a cast of crises plaguing the country. Millions of people will vote in polls in less than two weeks, in a campaign marred by allegations of pre-vote rigging with the Opposition heavily suppressed. "I don't see Pakistan's problems going away after this election," said Munirza Jahangir, co-chair of the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan. "We're headed towards the next mess that nobody will know how to fix."

Pakistan, Iran to work jointly to improve security

Associated Press  
ISLAMABAD

Pakistan and Iran on Monday agreed to work together to improve security cooperation in the wake of deadly airstrikes by Tehran and Islamabad earlier this month that killed at least 11 people, marking an escalation in fraught relations between the neighbours. The development came after the top Iranian diplomat, Hossein Amirabdollahian, held talks with his Pakistani counterpart, Jalil Abbas Jilani.

TRANSMISSION CORPORATION OF TELANGANA LIMITED  
NOTIFICATION FOR APPOINTMENT OF DIRECTORS IN TSTRANSCO  
TSTRANSCO invites applications from eligible candidates for appointment of Director (Grid & Transmission Management), Director (Projects) & Director (Finance). The detailed notification is available at www.tstransco.in

GOVERNMENT OF TELANGANA  
PUBLIC HEALTH & MUNICIPAL ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT  
TENDER NOTICE  
NIT No. 27/SE/PH/WGL/AMRUT-2.0/WS&SP/2023-24/Recall/1173, Dt: 29-01-2024. Name of the work: MA & UD - PHMED - Water Supply Projects in 30 ULBs and Sewerage Projects in 03 ULBs under AMRUT 2.0 under the Jurisdiction of Adilabad, Karimnagar and Warangal PH Divisions in Package-I. Total Cost: Rs. 1745.08 Crore.

KARNATAKA GRAPE & WINE BOARD (KG&WB)  
(A GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA UNDERTAKING)  
TENDER FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF 4 TPH COLOUR SORTING, WASHING, GRADING AND PACKING MACHINES FOR THE RAISINS PROCESSING AND CONSTRUCTION OF 10000 MT CAPACITY COLD STORAGE UNIT, THORVI VILLAGE, TIKOTA TALUK, VIJAYAPURA DISTRICT

No: KWB/2023-24/BD/WORK\_INDENT2 Date : 24-01-2024  
KG&WB invites tenders (through e-portal) from eligible contractors registered in KPWD/CPWD/Railways/MES/NH or any State Government Organizations Class -1 contractor duly with Joint Venture with reputed, technically competent and experienced Firms/Company/Organization for the establishment of Cold Storage Facility at Wine Park, Thorvi Village, Tikota Taluk in Vijayapur District of Karnataka on item rate basis.

Bharat Coking Coal Limited  
'A Mini Ratna Company'  
(A Subsidiary of Coal India Limited)  
NOTICE  
All the tenders issued by Bharat Coking Coal Limited (BCLL) for procurement of Goods, Works and Services are available on website of BCLL www.bcllweb.in, Coal India Limited (CIL) e-procurement portal https://coalindiatenders.nic.in and Central Public Procurement Portal https://eprocure.gov.in

KMML The Kerala Minerals & Metals Ltd  
(A Govt. of Kerala Undertaking), Sankaramangalam, Kollam 691583  
TENDER NOTICE  
For more details please visit E-Tendering Portal, https://tenders.kerala.gov.in or www.kmml.com

HLL Lifecare Limited  
(A Government of India Enterprise)  
CIN: U25193 KL 1966 GOI 002621  
HLL Bhavan, Pooppappura, Thiruvananthapuram- 695 012, Kerala, India. Tel: +91 471 2354949  
NOTICE INVITING e-TENDER  
HLL Lifecare Ltd as Implementation Agency (IA) of Disaster Management, Relief & Rehabilitation Department, Govt. of Maharashtra invites online Bids through e-tendering from eligible contractors/firms in two bid system for Conversion of Existing Overhead Power Distribution Network with Underground Power Cable Network under 'Konkan Disaster Mitigation Project in Raigad and Sindhudurg district, Maharashtra' on 'Turnkey' basis in following locations:

NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR EMPLOYMENT OF PERSONS WITH MULTIPLE DISABILITIES (NIEMPD)  
(Dept. of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan))  
Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment, Govt. of India  
Muttukadu, East Coast Road, Kovilam (P.O), Chennai - 603 112  
Phone: 044 - 27472113, 27472423. Mobile: 9444314716  
Toll Free No: 18004250345. Kiran Mental Health Helpline No: 1800-599-0019  
www.niempd.in.nic.in Email: niempd@gmail.com, asponiempd@gmail.com  
Notice Inviting Tender for Disposal of Obsolete/Scrap Materials  
NIEMPD invites E-tender through NIC e-procurement portal URL: http://eprocure.gov.in/eprocure/approvedeligiblebiddersfordisposaloftheobsolete/scrap items "as is where is basis" as per the details and terms & conditions given in the tender. The Tender document can be downloaded from NIEMPD website www.niempd.in.nic.in or CPPP e-publish portal: http://eprocure.gov.in/eprocure/app.

## INBRIEF



## GAIL net profit jumps 10-fold in Q3 as all engines fire

State-owned gas utility GAIL (India) Ltd. on Monday reported a 10-fold jump in third-quarter net profit as all engines of its business – from gas transportation to marketing and petrochemicals – fired on all cylinders. Standalone net profit of the nation's largest gas transmission and marketing firm came at ₹2,842.62 crore in October-December, the third quarter of the current fiscal year, as compared with ₹245.73 crore a year earlier, the company said.

## Wabag inks MoU with PEAK to set up 100 bio-CNG plants

VA Tech Wabag Ltd. (Wabag) has entered into an MoU with Peak Sustainability Ventures (PEAK) to establish 100 bio-CNG plants at sewage treatment facilities across India and other mutually agreed upon locations in the GCC, Africa and European countries. The firms aim to harness the unutilised potential of sewage treatment plants and generate bio-CNG, which can be used for mobility application in heavy duty vehicles, and for industrial applications, Wabag said.

## LatentView Analytics' Q3 net dips 11% to ₹46.5 crore

LatentView Analytics' consolidated third quarter net profit contracted 11% to ₹46.5 crore from the year earlier. Revenue from operations increased 14% to ₹166 crore, the global data analytics firm said. "We continue to see robust momentum for our value-led offerings across geographies. We remain committed to proactively delivering strategic business outcomes through our value-proposition led and domain-focused approach," said CEO Rajan Sethuraman.

## BPCL Q3 net soars 73% on sales, throughput

The Hindu Bureau  
HYDERABAD

Bharat Petroleum Corporation (BPCL) reported a more than 73% YoY jump in third-quarter standalone net profit to ₹3,397.27 crore, even as revenue from operations at the state-owned firm slid marginally to ₹1,29,975.6 crore, from ₹1,33,331.46 crore.

BPCL attributed the higher profit to better market sales and refinery throughput. While the throughput was 9.86 million tonne (mt) (9.39 mt), market sales rose 0.86% to 12.92 mt (12.81 mt).

"BPCL has delivered another quarter of resilient performance with strong operating fundamentals amid a challenging operating environment," said



Chairman and Managing Director G. Krishnakumar. "Our focus remains on driving competitive volume growth and achieving operational excellence, whilst stepping up investment towards our long-term strategic priorities." Gross refining margin for April-December was \$14.72/barrel (\$20.08) before factoring in special additional excise duty, road and infrastructure cess.

## ITC Q3 net profit rises 6.5% to ₹5,400 crore

Press Trust of India  
NEW DELHI

Diversified entity ITC Ltd. on Monday reported a 6.51% increase in Q3 consolidated net profit to ₹5,400.51 crore.

The company had posted a consolidated net profit of ₹5,070.09 crore in the year-earlier period, ITC said in a regulatory filing.

Gross revenue from sale of products inched up 2.3% to ₹19,337.84 crore from ₹18,901.76 crore a year earlier. Revenue from operations rose 2.43% to ₹19,484.5 crore, up from ₹19,020.65 crore in the year-earlier period.

## Goa attempts to woo industries, aspires to be a 'logistics hub'

Lalendu Mishra  
DONA PAULA, GOA

Goa, known for its pristine beaches and fun-loving culture is attempting to change gear from being a tourism revenue-led State to an industry destination.

Assuring political stability to investors, the State government led by Chief Minister Pramod Sawant unveiled a new industrial policy that includes easing land allotment procedures for potential investors.

Considering that it lacks vast stretches of land and given the State's ecologically sensitive regions, the administration said it was only inviting investments from 'green industries',

## FinMin says economy likely to grow closer to 7% in 2024-25

Ministry adds growth could outpace 7% by 2030 and the economy will hit \$5 trillion in three years, making India the third largest in the world

The Hindu Bureau  
NEW DELHI

Ahead of the Interim Union Budget, the Finance Ministry in a report on Monday pegged India's real GDP growth at closer to 7% in 2024-25 with 'considerable scope' to outpace 7% by 2030, adding that the economy will hit \$5 trillion in the next three years, making it the third largest in the world.

Prefacing a picture-perfect review of the economy's "journey in the last ten years", Chief Economic Advisor V. Anantha Nageswaran stressed "not all growth is equal" and the marginal utility of 7% growth when the world is struggling to grow 2% is "much higher" than 8-9% growth achieved with the global economy rising 4%.

"One unit of growth in the latter circumstance is qualitatively superior to the former," the CEA wrote in a report titled "The Indian Economy: A Review" released by the Department of Economic Affairs, which also offered a "brief sketch of the outlook for the economy in the coming years".

The prognosis of 7% growth in the coming year, if actualised, would mean 7% or higher growth for four years in a row. Mr. Nageswaran emphasised that

## Bullish report

FinMin contends the state of the Indian economy today is far better than when Narendra Modi assumed power in 2014

CEA says 7% growth when the world struggles to grow 2% is better than 8-9% growth when the world grows at 4%

Structural reforms since 2014 have strengthened macroeconomic fundamentals, the Finance Ministry argues

FinMin outlines reforms such as the GST and IBC but only makes passing mention of demonetisation in 2016



this review was not 'the Economic Survey of India which will come before the full Budget and after the general elections'.

## Two phases

The review split India's growth story into two phases—1950 to 2014 and '2014-2024: Decade of transformative growth'—and noted that despite some positive developments, the state of the Indian economy was far from encouraging when Prime Minister Narendra Modi 'assumed power in his first term in office'.

The economy had clocked lower than 5% growth of GDP at factor cost at constant prices for two consecutive years, 2012-13 and 2013-14, food inflation was high, and structural constraints such as difficulties in quick decisions on projects, ill-targeted subsidies cramping fiscal space for public

investment, and a large informal sector, were denting growth, the Finance Ministry said.

"Since then, the Indian economy has undergone many structural reforms that have strengthened its macroeconomic fundamentals. These reforms have led to India emerging as the fastest-growing economy among G20 economies," the ministry said, noting that the economy is generating jobs and an impressive post-pandemic recovery has seen urban unemployment rate decline to 6.6%.

While the 64-page report outlined key reforms such as the introduction of the Goods and Services Tax and the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, along with the push to build infrastructure, it only refers to Demonetisation in passing, noting that it led to a surge in the use of non-cash forms of payment.

## Sensex rebounds 1.8% as Reliance soars almost 7% to a record

The Hindu Bureau  
MUMBAI

The benchmark S&P BSE Sensex rebounded 1.8% on Monday, lifted by an almost 7% surge in heavy-weight Reliance Industries Ltd. (RIL) that lifted the diversified company's stock to an all-time high.

The Sensex gained 1,240.9 points to 71,941.57 led by RIL and other blue chips including HDFC Bank, which rose 1.4%.

RIL climbed 6.86% to a record ₹2,896.15 amid talk of a possible demerger of units. "There was a rumour of demerger of diffe-

"There was a rumour of demerger of different businesses of Reliance and that jacked up the price"

rent businesses of Reliance (Jio and Reliance Retail) and that jacked up the price," said Ambareesh Baliga, an independent stock market analyst.

Other gainers included Tata Motors (3.62%), Power Grid (3.4%), L&T (3.25%), Kotak Bank (3.18%) and NTPC (3.11%). The NSE Nifty-50 index too surged 1.80%, to 21,737.6.

## China's He urges more support for listed firms amid stock rout

Reuters  
BEIJING

Chinese Vice Premier He Lifeng on Monday called for greater support for listed firms in an effort to help stabilise capital markets, the Xinhua News Agency reported, amid a protracted stock market rout.

"Listed companies are an important micro foundation for high-quality economic development," He said at a video conference on promoting the development of listed companies.

"Promoting high-quality development of listed companies helps to achieve

high-level technological self-reliance, accelerate the construction of a modern industrial system and enhance market confidence."

'Boost confidence' Government departments should step up support for high-quality listed firms to lift confidence and stabilise capital markets, the vice premier said.

He also addressed property financing at the conference, noting that localities should seize the opportunity to establish and efficiently operate urban real estate financing coordination mechanisms.

## Delhi HC upholds anti-profiteering clause of GST laws

Shishir Sinha  
NEW DELHI

In a setback for some 50 companies such as Hindustan Unilever and Nestle the Delhi High Court on Monday upheld the anti-profiteering provisions of the GST laws.

With this, orders pronounced by the erstwhile National Anti-Profiteering Authority (NAA) have been upheld by the High Court. Complaints, which were earlier filed with the NAA, are now handled by the Competition Commission of India.

Section 171 of the CGST Act deals with anti-profiteering measures and prescribes that any reduction in the rate of tax

on supply of goods or services or the benefit of input tax credit should be passed on to the recipient by way of a commensurate reduction in prices.

## Dismissed

107 petitions were filed against the NAA's order in the Delhi High Court. In its judgement, a two-judge bench led by acting Chief Justice Manmohan and Justice Dinesh Kumar Sharma disposed of all the petitions.

According to Abhishek A. Rastogi, founder of Rastogi Chamber, the Bench also said no fixed formula can be laid down to determine profiteering.

(The writer is with The Hindu businessline)

# VOTE FOR YOUR SPORTSTAR OF THE YEAR (MALE)

**Neeraj Chopra**  
Javelin

**R Praggnanandhaa**  
Chess

**Satwiksairaj Rankireddy-Chirag Shetty**  
Badminton

**Sumit Antil**  
Javelin

**Virat Kohli**  
Cricket

## SPORTSTAR ACES

—2024—  
INDIA TRIUMPHS  
#SSaces2024

Powered by  
**IDFC FIRST Bank**

Scan the code or visit  
<https://sstar.news/Aces2024>  
Voting lines close on January 31, 2024.

Powered by  
**IDFC FIRST Bank**

Associate Partners  
**greybn** **NTPC**

Realty Partner  
**CASAGRAN**

Online Grocery Partner  
**bigbasket** **PRATINOCIA DARPAN**

Co-sponsors  
**SSVM INSTITUTIONS** **PSG**

**BIG CUSHION**

**Gill should capitalise on his chances, says Kumble**



K.V.S. GIRI

Anil Kumble feels that Shubman Gill has been given the kind of "cushion" that Cheteshwar Pujara never got and he needs to make it count in the second Test against England. Kumble said the youngster needs to adjust his technique slightly for the second Test starting on February 2.

**NOT DONE**

**Bumrah reprimanded for Code of Conduct breach in Hyderabad Test**



K.V.S. GIRI

India pacer Jasprit Bumrah has been reprimanded and handed a demerit point for deliberately stepping in England player Ollie Pope's way as he went for a run which led to "inappropriate physical contact" during the first Test at Hyderabad. Bumrah's offence is a Level 1 offence under the ICC code of conduct.

**PASSION REIGNITED**

**Shamar a saviour in the purest form of the game: Steve Waugh**



GETTY IMAGES

Legendary Steve Waugh heaped rich praise on young sensation Shamar Joseph, calling him a 'saviour in the purest form of the game'. "Cinderella stories are rare in sport but this was truly epic from a young man who has single-handedly reignited the passion of followers in the Caribbean and all over the world," Waugh said.

**CRUCIAL WIN**

**Steelers get the better of Warriors, boost their qualification chances**



SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Haryana Steelers boosted its chances of qualifying for the playoffs with a 41-36 win over Bengal Warriors in the Pro Kabaddi League at Patna on Monday. Shivam Patare (12 points) and Siddharth Desai (11 raid points) shone for Steelers. Patna Pirates put on a defensive masterclass to beat Gujarat Giants 32-20 in another match.

**Bazball has not only travelled, but transcended boundaries too**

Though their tenure began only a year-and-a-half ago, McCullum and Stokes have been able to produce quite a few great Test victories, the most recent one coming against India in Hyderabad in a dramatic finish on Sunday

**ENGLAND IN INDIA**

**P.K. Ajith Kumar**  
HYDERABAD

Clive Lloyd changed Test cricket back in the 1970s with his decision to play four fast bowlers in the West Indies team. That was a significant moment in the game's history.

The West Indies emerged as the world's most entertaining, and feared, cricket team. Imagine the plight of the batters facing Malcolm Marshall, Michael Holding, Andy Roberts and Joel Garner one after another.

The West Indies' domination was complete. It won successive World Cups, and triumphed in most of its Test series; the odd ones were drawn.

Few decisions, since Lloyd's, have impacted Test cricket as the one that Rob Key took a couple of years ago as the managing director of England men's cricket. He made Brendon McCullum coach of England's Test team.

Though he had coached white-ball teams, including Kolkata Knight Riders, McCullum had never trained a Test team. And it



Verve and vigour: England's enterprising brand of cricket has come as a whiff of fresh air. K.V.S. GIRI

was at a very difficult time for England that he assumed charge: England was beaten in its last four series, among them a 4-0 thrashing by Australia. Captain Joe Root and coach Chris Silverwood had resigned.

Ben Stokes took over from Root and the all-rounder would form with McCullum one of cricket's greatest captain-coach partnerships.

What McCullum con-

ceives, Stokes executes. Their latest success came here on Sunday, as England defeated India in the first Test after conceding a lead of 190. Remember, beating India in India has, for years, been arguably the hardest thing to do in Test cricket.

Stokes termed it England's best win since he became the skipper. That is a bit like saying *Vertigo* is Alfred Hitchcock's best film, *Hamlet* is William

Shakespeare's best play, or *Roja* is A.R. Rahman's best album. Those three geniuses have several other great works to their credit.

The victory against India may be the best - given the conditions and the situation of the match (England trailing by 27 runs with only five wickets in hand in the second innings at one stage) - but McCullum and Stokes have been able to produce quite a few great Test wins, though

their tenure began only a year-and-a-half ago.

In the English summer of 2022, England won four Tests - three against New Zealand and the one against India - all by chasing targets in excess of 270. The team attacked with bat and ball.

Bazball created a buzz. Test cricket had never been played like that before, though there have been batters like Virender Sehwag and Adam Gilchrist who have displayed similar spirit and fearlessness, but that was more of an individual thing.

England, however, lost to South Africa later that summer in the first match of a three-Test series.

The host still took the series 2-1.

The bigger test was always going to be the overseas tours, especially in the sub-continent. And Bazball succeeded spectacularly in Pakistan, whitewashing the host 3-0.

The highlight was the 74-run victory in the first Test at Rawalpindi. England won on the flat track by making 657 in just 101 overs.

Still, the question remained: Will Bazball work in India? It has.

**Injured Rahul and Jadeja ruled out of second Test**



Getting his due: Sarfaraz has broken through on the back of prolific scores. FILE PHOTO: K. MURALI KUMAR

**P.K. Ajith Kumar**  
HYDERABAD

Virat Kohli's absence was felt in India's 28-run defeat to England in the first Test. Now, the team has to cope with the unavailability of two other stars in the second Test starting at Visakhapatnam on Feb. 2.

K.L. Rahul and Ravindra Jadeja have been ruled out because of injuries. According to a statement from the BCCI, Jadeja sustained a hamstring injury on the fourth day of the first Test, while Rahul complained of a right quadriceps pain.

Kohli, it may be recalled, had withdrawn from the first two Tests citing personal reasons. Rajat Patidar joined the team as

his replacement.

The selection committee has added three others to the squad: Sarfaraz Khan, Sourabh Kumar and Washington Sundar.

Saransh Jain will replace Washington in the India-A squad for the third 'Test' against England Lions, which begins at Ahmedabad on Feb. 1. Avesh Khan, who had been released from the Test squad, will continue to travel with Madhya Pradesh for the Ranji Trophy tournament; he could return to the Test squad if required.

Saurabh, a left-arm spinning all-rounder from Uttar Pradesh, and Sarfaraz, a prolific run-getter from Mumbai, are uncapped. They both are in form: Sarfaraz scored 161 off 160

balls for India-A against England Lions in the second Test at Ahmedabad, while Saurabh made 77 and took five wickets in the second innings.

Washington has played four Tests, but the last of them came in 2021. Interestingly, it was against England, in the fourth Test at Ahmedabad. He made 96 not out in India's only innings. He had also taken the wicket of Ben Stokes, the current England captain.

**India squad (for second Test):** Rohit Sharma (Capt.), Shubman Gill, Yashasvi Jaiswal, Shreyas Iyer, K.S. Bharat, Dhruv Jurel, R. Ashwin, Axar Patel, Kuldeep Yadav, Mohammed Siraj, Mukesh Kumar, Jasprit Bumrah, Avesh Khan, Rajat Patidar, Sarfaraz Khan, Washington Sundar and Sourabh Kumar.

**Nominations for the Club/State team of the year honours**



**Sports Bureau**

Indian sports had many moments to cherish in 2023. It is time to celebrate these landmark moments and achievements at the Sportstar ACES Awards.

Here are the nominees for the Club/State team of the year award: **It was an incredible season for Saurashtra** as it won two titles, first the Vijay Hazare Trophy, followed by the Ranji Trophy.

Under the leadership of Jaydev Unadkat and Arpit Vasavada, the side dominated the others despite the absence of its star batter Cheteshwar Pujara. This was Saurashtra's second Ranji Trophy title win in three years. **The M.S. Dhoni-led Chennai Super Kings**

won the Indian Premier League for the fifth time, becoming the joint-most successful team in the league.

CSK players impressed for the national teams as well, with Rituraj Gaikwad leading India to a gold medal at the Asian Games and Ravindra Jadeja playing a crucial role with bat and ball in India's inspiring journey in the ICC ODI World Cup 2023. **Mohun Bagan Super Giant, then ATK Mohun Bagan**, held its nerve in a tightly contested Indian Super League final to beat Bengaluru FC 4-3 on penalties and lift its maiden title.

It then won its 17th Durand Cup trophy after a 1-0 win over arch-rival East Bengal in the final of the 2023 edition. The team's success extended beyond national competitions as it overcame formidable opponents, including ISL 2021-22 champion Hyderabad FC and Abahani Dhaka from Bangladesh, to qualify for the AFC Cup.

**Gokulam Kerala Women's football team** has firmly established itself as the most successful women's side, exemplified by securing a hat-trick of Indian Women's League titles, including the 2023 season.

Gokulam Kerala also displayed resilience, finishing as runner-up in the fiercely competitive 2022-23 Kerala Women's League. **Ahmedabad Defenders emerged as champion** in the Prime Volleyball League 2023. This impressive turnaround solidified its status as the joint-most successful team in the league.

Notably, the team's influence extended beyond the league as three of its players, including captain Muthusamy Appavu, made a significant impact representing Team India at the Asian Games. The voting lines for the 2034 Aces Awards will close on January 31.



**Gallant Gukesh loses the title in tie-break**

**Sports Bureau**

After Leon Mendonca won the Challengers title, D. Gukesh battled brilliantly to tie Tata Steel Masters crown before losing the title-deciding tie-break blitz game to eventual champion China's Wei Yi at Wijk aan Zee on Sunday.

The teenaged Indian won his final round against Iranian Parham Maghsoodloo to be part of a four-way tie for the top spot at 8.5 points, with Wei Yi, Anish Giri and Nodirbek Abdusattorov. Wei prevailed over Vidit Gujrathi in the final round.

However, to decide the champion, as per tournament regulations, blitz semifinals were played involving all four toppers. Two blitz games, where each player received three minutes plus two-second increment for each move, followed. In case the tie persisted, the players were to play 'sudden-death' games till the winner was found.

As it turned out, Wei defeated Abdusattorov in the second blitz game after the first ended in a draw, to reach the final. Gukesh lost the opening



Gukesh... narrow miss. FILE PHOTO: B. VELANKANNI RAJ

game with white to Anish but bounced right back to win the second with black. In the first sudden-death game, Gukesh prevailed with white pieces. In the final, the first game ended in a draw but in the second, Gukesh came under time-pressure while playing from the black side, eventually blundered a rook and resigned in 59 moves.

**Final standing (after 13 rounds):**

**Masters:** 1-4. Wie Yie (Chn, 8.5), D. Gukesh (8.5), Anish Giri (8.5), Nodirbek Abdusattorov (Uzb, 8.5), 5-7. Alireza Firouzja (Fra, 7.5), Vidit Gujrathi (7.5), R. Praggnanandhaa (7.5), 8. Ian Nepomniachtchi (FIDE, 6.5), 9. Ding Liren (6), 10-13. Ju Wenjun (Chn, 4.5), Alexander Donchenko (Ger, 4.5), Jorden van Foreest (Ned, 4.5), 14. Max Warmerdam (Ned, 4).

**Sanjana rewrites her record; TN second in medals table**

**KHELO GAMES**

**Sports Bureau**  
CHENNAI

Weightlifter A. Sanjana of Haryana was the toast of the sixth Khelo India Youth Games here on Monday as she broke her own National record in snatch, clean and jerk and total in the girls' 76kg category. She had created the record at the Asian Youth and junior championships in Greater Noida in August last year.

Maharashtra continues to lead the medals tally with 37 gold, 32 silver and 40 bronze medals, while Tamil Nadu is in second position with 29 gold, 18 silver and 30 bronze.

**The results: Swimming: Boys: 4x100m medley:** 1. Maharashtra 3:56.99; 2. Karnataka; 3. TN; **100m freestyle:** 1. Yug Chelani (Raj) 4:05.23; 2. Gotti Sampath Kumar Yadav (AP); 3. Ronak Nitin Sawant (Mah); **50m backstroke:** 1. Rishabh Anupam Das (Mah) 26.49s; 2. Akash Mani (Kar); 3. Nithik Nathela (TN). **Girls: 100m freestyle:** 1. S.



Scaling a new peak: Sanjana created a National record in the girls' 76kg category. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Rujula (Kar) 59.27s; 2. Saleh Dhansura (Mah); 3. Jahnnabi Kashyap (Asm); **50m backstroke:** 1. Rujuta Prasad Rajadnya (Mah) 31.04s; 2. Aarushi Agarwal (Kar); 3. Deeksha Sivakumar (TN); **400m medley:** 1. Thanya Shadakshari (Kar) 5:10.24s; 2. Sreenithi Natesan (TN); 3. Raghvi Ramamujam (Mah). **Weightlifting: Girls: 76kg:** 1. A. Sanjana (Har) snatch (90) (OR: 86kg); clean & jerk (116) (OR: 113kg); 206kg (OR: 198kg); 2. Greshna Thorat (Mah); 3. M.A. Hasinashrin (TN); 71kg: 1. Chelsi (Del); 2. Manju (Har); 3. J. Devsiri (AP). **Men: 96kg:** 1. Parv Chudhary (UP) 160kg; 2. A. Arunesh Babu (AP); 3. Aditya (Har). **Tennis: Girls: Singles:** 1. Wani Sayali (Mah); 2. Soha Nandini (WB); 3. Vartikar Pritha (Mah). **Doubles:** 1. Vartikar Pritha & Wani Sayali (Mah); 2. Kotecha Tan & Mirchandani Subhankrita (WB); 3. Syndreela Das & Subhankrita (WB). **Shooting: Skeet: Boys:** 1. Gurfateh Singh Sandhu (Pun); 2. Zorawar Singh Bedi (Pun); 3. Harazeez Singh Atwal (Pun). **Girls:** Devyani Rathore (Raj); 2. Yashasvi Rathore (Raj); 3. Venkat Lakshmi Lakku (Tri). **Wrestling: Boys: Freestyle:** **51kg:** 1. Soham Sunil Kumbhar (Mah); 2. Anuj Yadav (UP); 3. Abhishek (Har) & Chirag Dahiya (Del); **65kg:** 1. Sagar (Del); 2. Tanishq Pravin Kadam (Mah); 3. Harsh (UP) & Mohit Kumar (Del); **Greco Roman: 71kg:** 1. Sahil (Chd); 2. Sohamraj Jagannath More (Mah); 3. Sunil Kumar (Del) & Mahesh Rathore (MP); **80kg:** 1. Abhay (Har); 2. Anuj Dahiya (Har); 3. Sunny Baista (UP) & Akarsh Mishra (Utt). **Girls: 49kg:** 1. Naina (Har); 2. Kanak (Del); 3. Ritika (Har) & Nandani Verma (MP); **69kg:** 1. Tanu Sharma (Har); 2. Manisha (Chd); 3. Palak Yadav (Raj) & Trupti Narayan Bhavar (Mah). **Football: Boys: Semifinal:** Punjab 1 (Dharamvir Singh) bt Odisha 0.



# Her roots in Puducherry, Prithika is France's top hope in Paris 2024

I want medals in the singles, doubles, and mixed doubles at the Worlds and Olympics and want to do something great; I want to be one of the best players in history; I love this sport, and I think I can do something good, says the 19-year-old paddler

**Jonathan Selvaraj**

**W**ith some of the world's top players featuring, there are no easy matches at the WTT Star

Contender in Goa. Playing her first match in the women's singles category, Prithika Pavade looked to be making an early exit. Prithika was down two games before she held her nerve and fought back with a 9-11, 9-11, 10-12, 11-7, 11-3 win. It's a result that set Prithika out for a clash against South Korea's Nayeong Kim with a place in the quarterfinals up for grabs. Prithika eventually lost 6-11, 11-9, 9-11, 9-11.

The win is an important one for Prithika. It's her first at the WTT Star Contender in Mapusa. She had competed at the 2023 edition of the tournament but had lost out in the qualification first round.

It's not just Prithika who hopes she does well in India. It's all of France's table tennis fraternity. With the Paris Olympics just a few months away, much is expected of Prithika, born and raised in the Parisian suburb of St. Dennis, who at World No. 33, is France's top-ranked women's singles player. Still only 19 years old, Prithika has had a solid start to the year. She made the round of 32 at the WTT Star Contender in Doha and is coming off a quarterfinal win at the Europe Top 16 – a knockout competition for Europe's top players.

But while she has wins elsewhere, there's more reason for Prithika to value the victory in Goa. Although she was born and raised in Paris, Prithika has Indian roots. "I'm very happy to be in India. It is a special place for me," she says.

It's not uncommon to have players of Chinese origin rise to the top ranks in their adopted countries. At the European Top 16 tournament, for instance, six of the 16 entrants are of Chinese descent. The tournament incidentally was won by Prithika's compatriot Jia Nan Yuan, who learnt her sport in China before migrating to France. As a player of Indian descent, Prithika is a bit of an oddity.

Prithika's parents are from Puducherry, an erstwhile territory of France in India. "They moved to France in 2003, and I was born in 2004," she says.

Prithika picked up the sport of table tennis when she was about six years old. And it was almost inevitable that she did. Although her father Vijayan Pavade worked at the George V Hotel in Paris, he had been a table tennis player in his youth in Puducherry. "My father wasn't a national-level player, but he still had good skills. When I was six, he took me to a gymnasium that was about two minutes from our apartment. There was a table there. My dad was the one who first chose table tennis for me. But he never forced me to stick to it, and later on, it became my choice because I just fell in love with the sport," she says.

She was a precocious talent. "I think within a year, I was starting to beat my dad. Of course, he wasn't a serious player



at that time because he had to do his job and work to provide for his children, at that time. But I got my foundation from him. He never told me, but I think he was happy. He always tried to push me to be a better player. At first, I was playing for fun, but I realised I was good at it when I was about 11 years old, and I first won the (Under 14) French Championships. Then it slowly became clear that it is what I wanted to do," she says.

## Olympic dreams

According to local news reports around that time, there were over 70 journalists who were crammed in Prithika's apartment looking to interview the young Indian-origin girl who had just won a national title. But Prithika's graph has only risen steadily ever since. At 16 years old, she won the European U-21 title and the same year, became one of the youngest-ever French Olympians when she qualified for the Tokyo Olympics.

"That was probably the greatest moment of my life," she says. A close second, she says, was when she became the senior French national champion in 2022.

With a lot more experience now,



I'm super excited. It's the biggest event in almost every sport. I think our generation is very lucky because it's crazy to have the Olympics at home

Prithika has high hopes for the Paris 2024 Games. "I'm super excited. It's the biggest event in almost every sport. I think our generation is very lucky because it's crazy to have the Olympics at home. My first school and my first club in the same city. I will be a little nervous, but the most important thing is to enjoy the moment," she says.

While Prithika, as her nation's top women's singles player and with France guaranteed a team quota, will almost certainly be a part of the singles tournament in Paris, perhaps her best chance of a medal is in the mixed doubles. She is paired alongside fellow teenager Felix Lebrun, who at 17 and world-ranked eight, is considered one of the most promising prospects in the game.

## French allegiance, so-so Tamil

While her future is fairly determined at this point, with her Indian origins and the fact that she is higher ranked than any player from India (India's top-ranked women's singles player Manika Batra is ranked 38th in the world), Prithika admits she's been asked about switching allegiances to the land of her father's birth.

The thought never crossed her mind though. "I was born in France. I've lived there all my life. Of course, India will always have a special place in my heart, but I've spent all my life in France," says

Prithika, who's currently studying Chemistry and environmental science at university.

That doesn't mean she doesn't stay in touch with her Indian heritage. "I've been to India twice for holidays with my family. My grandma and grandfather are still in Pondicherry (Puducherry). I went last summer to Pondicherry, and I even trained in the club my father played at. And of course, I played a tournament in Goa last year," she says. She thinks she could do more though.

"I can understand a little Tamil. My parents still speak to me in Tamil, but I answer in French. I'd like to think I'm fluent in French. I can speak English, and my Tamil is so-so. I can probably learn some more," she says.

While language can be hard, the one thing she's completely at home in India is the food. "The thing I loved the most in India is the food. My mom is a great cook. In France, she cooked a lot of Indian food. I've even started to learn how to cook Indian food. My favourite food to cook is mutton biriyani," she says.

There are other characteristics about her that Prithika feels are Indian. "I'm a bit introverted and calm. I've always felt that was the Indian part of me," she says. Where her personality comes through though is on the table. There, Prithika doesn't want to be seen as a great 'Indian-origin' player but just as someone exceptional.

"This Olympics is special, but I am still quite young. I have a long career, and I want to win medals in the European championships. I want medals in the singles, doubles, and mixed doubles at the Worlds and Olympics. I want to do something great. I want to be one of the best players in history. I love this sport, and I think I can do something good. It's in my hands," she says.

## THE GIST

With the Paris Olympics just a few months away, much is expected of Prithika, born and raised in the Parisian suburb of St. Dennis, who at World No. 33, is France's top-ranked women's singles player

Prithika has had a solid start to the year, making the round of 32 at the WTT Star Contender in Doha after coming off a quarterfinal win at the Europe Top 16 – a knockout competition for Europe's top players

While Prithika, as her nation's top women's singles player and with France guaranteed a team quota, will almost certainly be a part of the singles tournament in Paris, perhaps her best chance of a medal is in the mixed doubles

# Meghalaya in the process of building a vibrant sports ecosystem

**M.R. Praveen Chandran**

**A** medalless campaign in the 37th National Games in Goa last year was a reality check for Meghalaya. The poor show ruthlessly exposed the limitations of the North Eastern State where sports always took a backseat. As neighbouring States like Manipur, Assam and Sikkim became visible entities on the sporting map of the country, Meghalaya was not even a tiny speck.

Other than football, the State didn't have much of a sporting pedigree and failure to win a single medal in the multi-discipline event in Goa wasn't surprising.

Sports in Meghalaya was centred around Shillong where facilities were pretty much basic. The Sports Authority of India (SAI) doesn't run any of its elite training schemes in the State. The



lack of resources, combined with shortage of coaches and non-existent grassroots-level development, saw the State lag far behind the neighbouring Manipur where SAI runs many of its successful schemes.

The Meghalaya government, under Chief

Minister Conrad Sangma, has finally woken up to the need to build a solid sports ecosystem in the State. The government, as a first step, decided to give priority to sports and increased the budgetary allocation for it. The State government, along with Meghalaya State Olympic

Association (MSOA), has tied up with Edge 10, a sports firm run by former Australian Olympians Ian Campbell and Robert Kabbas, to identify and nurture talent. The government also realised the need to develop infrastructure in other districts.



The fifth Meghalaya Games which was held in Tura recently was an important milestone in the history of the State. It was for the first time that a multi-discipline games was held away from the capital Shillong, Tura, which is the district headquarters of West Garo Hills, became only the second district in the State to have a synthetic track. The P.A. Sangma Sports Complex, built at a cost of ₹127.7 crore, houses a State-of-the-art football stadium where the opening and closing

ceremony of the Meghalaya Games were held. The complex will also have two indoor stadiums, a gymnasium, a swimming pool besides facilities for conducting table tennis, squash and badminton events.

"Meghalaya will be hosting the 40th National Games which we were supposed to hold this year. But States who have been allotted the 38th and 39 Games haven't hosted it, so we have time to get the infrastructure in place. We have used Meghalaya Games to test our

capability and to improve infrastructure in the Tura district which will also host a big number of events in the National Games. We are working closely with the State government to improve the standard of sports. The government has agreed to most of our proposals. The government has raised the cash incentives for sportspersons winning medals in nationals and international events. It has also increased the budget allocation for sports. We have tied up with Edge 10 to nurture talent and it will be a game-changer for us," said John F. Kharshiing, the Working President of MSAO.

The elite pathway programme to nurture talent was devised by the former Olympians from Australia. Around 15,000 children between the ages of 10 to 18 from 12 districts underwent a test battery. A dozen kids who passed

the eligibility test were inducted into the programme.

Schooling, boarding and lodging of the children were taken care of by the government. SAI and the government provided coaches and, with backup of the analytic team, the children will receive year-round training in Shillong. Campbell will oversee the progress of trainees for three years. Weightlifting, boxing, taekwondo, judo, football and athletics are identified as some of the core sports where Meghalaya can excel. Already a couple of athletes from the programme showed promise by winning medals in the North East Olympic Games held recently in Manipur.

"We are trying to build quantity and only through it quality will come. It is a long-term process and we may see results in 10 years," said Kharshiing.

# What is Humboldt's enigma and what does it mean for India?

While we expect diversity to decrease away from the tropics, mountains are an exception. This is the essence of Humboldt's enigma. But scientific evidence has been hard to acquire, requiring the use of complex analytical methods and large datasets, but is still incomplete

V.V. Robin  
Naman Goyal

Where is biodiversity concentrated? Explorers and naturalists have been asking this question for centuries. Many have also been curious why some areas are more biodiverse than others.

One of them was Alexander von Humboldt (1769-1859) - a polymath who recorded observations on various natural phenomena across the fields known today as geography, geology, meteorology, and biology.

Once, when exploring South America, he recorded the distribution of plants on a mountain. He also noted how climates were similar across various mountains in different parts of the world - but where specific features occurred on a mountain varied with elevation.

From his various studies, Humboldt suggested there was a relationship between temperature, altitude, and humidity on one hand and the occurrence patterns of species - or their biodiversity - on the other. His example of choice was the Chimborazo mountain in Ecuador, which has today become an important illustration of mountain diversity.

Two centuries later, a group of biogeographers - scientists who explore the relationship of diversity with geography - used modern tools to take another look at the drivers of biodiversity.

Based on their findings, they proposed their own version of the link between biodiversity and mountains and called it Humboldt's enigma.

## What is Humboldt's enigma?

The world's tropical areas receive more energy from the Sun because of the earth's angle of inclination. So the tropics have greater primary productivity, which then facilitates greater diversity: more ecological niches become available, creating more complex ecosystems and greater biological diversity.

The proponents of Humboldt's enigma have held that the earth's tropical areas by themselves don't contain all the biodiverse regions, that many areas outside the tropics are highly biodiverse. These places are mountains.

Indeed, while we expect diversity to decrease away from the tropics, mountains have been an important exception. This is the essence of Humboldt's enigma. But scientific evidence has been hard to acquire, requiring the use of complex analytical methods and large datasets of various taxonomic groups - and even then remains an incomplete exercise.

A simple way to think of Humboldt's enigma in India is to consider the biodiversity in our tropical areas, south of the Tropic of Cancer passing through Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh. These areas are supposed to be the most diverse in the country. The Western Ghats plus Sri Lanka biodiversity hotspot lies in this zone.

However, the eastern Himalaya are much more diverse. Some scientists have even suggested this part of the mountain range is the second-most diverse area of perching birds in the world. For river birds, the eastern Himalaya may be the most diverse.



A view from one of the Shola Sky Islands. PRASENJEET YADAV/WWW.SKYSISLAND.IN (SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT)

To understand how this might be possible, let's turn to the modern understanding of Humboldt's enigma.

## What drives biodiversity?

The history of the earth, its geography, and the climate are the main drivers of mountain diversity. And different biodiversity at different locations is the result of changes in how these factors have intermingled over time and space.

We know mountains host two processes that generate biodiversity. First: geological processes, like uplifts, result in new habitats where new species arise, so the habitats are 'cradles'. Second: species on some climatologically stable mountains persist there for a long time, so these spots are 'museums' that accumulate many such species over time.

Coastal tropical sky islands (mountains surrounded by lowlands), like the Shola Sky Islands in the Western Ghats, are a good example. Here, old lineages have persisted on the mountain tops as climates and habitats fluctuated around them in the lower elevations. This is the reason some of the oldest bird species in the Western Ghats, such as the *Sholicola* and the *Montecincla*, are housed on the Shola Sky Islands.

Sometimes, the same mountain can be both cradle for some species and museum for others, depending on the species' ecologies.

The northern Andes range - including Chimborazo - is considered the most biodiverse place in the world. If we start from the foothills of the Andes and climb, we're going to encounter different temperatures and rainfall levels that support everything from tropical evergreen biomes in the lower elevation to the alpine and tundra biomes near the top. Such a large variation over short distances supports the immense



The more heterogeneous the geological composition of mountains is, the more biodiverse they are.

biodiversity found in mountain regions - and worldwide.

Another critical factor in biodiversity formation is geology. The foundations on which mountains are erected often differ from those on which low-elevation regions rest.

Scientists have found that the more heterogeneous the geological composition of mountains is, the more biodiverse they are. Around the world, all mountains with high biodiversity have high geological heterogeneity as well, especially in the tropics. Even in tropical regions, where we expect higher biodiversity, some mountains with a lower variety of rocks are relatively less biodiverse. We also know plants are influenced by the type of soil, which depends on the type of rocks in that area. So high geological heterogeneity often produces unique habitat patches on mountains within similar climate regimes, and promotes diversification.

Against this backdrop, what drives biodiversity in the eastern Himalaya? Climate dissimilarity is still one crucial factor, something Humboldt also indicated based on his observations of the Chimborazo and understood to be a paradigm. Researchers have also found some groups of birds to have evolved elsewhere and dispersed to the Himalaya, resulting in higher diversity there.

## What do we still not know?

Multiple factors drive diversification and the Humboldt's enigma in different

parts of the world. Then again, scientists have also advanced more than a hundred different hypotheses on how diversity varies in different parts of the world, and they contend with the enigma in different ways. This article simply presents the big picture.

An important limitation of scientists' attempts to explain biodiversity patterns is the lack of fine data on where species occur. For now, birds are the best-described group around the world, and their diversity patterns suggest mountains play a defining role.

We need more research. In India in particular, several areas are under-studied. We can't expect to understand a place's true biodiversity unless we also use modern tools like genetics. For example, why don't the Eastern Ghats have any endemic passerine birds? The most likely answer is that scientists haven't studied them for more than a century, especially with modern tools.

Some national programmes are trying to address these gaps, including the National Mission on Himalayan Studies, the National Mission for Sustaining the Himalayan Ecosystem, and the National Mission on Biodiversity and Human Wellbeing. They need to be strengthened, bolstered by the will to support basic research on diversity.

Humboldt's enigma is perhaps one of many puzzles of mountain biodiversity - and our backyards are excellent places to study them, to find answers to global problems of climate and landscape change.

(V.V. Robin is an associate professor studying bird ecology using genetics and bioacoustics, and Naman Goyal is a PhD student working on the diversification patterns of birds - both at IISER Tirupati.)



Image manipulation had been used to enhance results. GETTY IMAGES

## Research fakery is uncovered at cancer centre

Associated Press

Allegations of research fakery at a leading cancer centre have turned a spotlight on scientific integrity and the amateur sleuths uncovering image manipulation in published research.

Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, a Harvard Medical School affiliate, announced January 22 it's requesting retractions and corrections of scientific papers after a British blogger flagged problems in early January.

The blogger, 32-year-old Sholto David, of Pontypridd, Wales, is a scientist-sleuth who detects cut-and-paste image manipulation in published scientific papers.

He and other champions of scientific integrity are keeping researchers and science journals on their toes. They use special software, oversize computer monitors, and their eagle eyes to find flipped, duplicated and stretched images, along with potential plagiarism.

In a January 2 blog post, Mr. David presented suspicious images from more than 30 published papers by four Dana-Farber scientists, including CEO

**When a journal retracts an article, that usually means the research is so severely flawed that the findings are no longer reliable**

Laurie Glimcher and COO William Hahn.

Many images appeared to have duplicated segments that would make the scientists' results look stronger. The papers under scrutiny involve lab research on the workings of cells. One involved samples from bone marrow from human volunteers.

The blog post included problems spotted by Mr. David and others previously exposed by sleuths on PubPeer, a site that allows anonymous comments on scientific papers.

Dana-Farber said it already had been looking into some of the problems before the blog post. By January 22, the institution said it was in the process of requesting six retractions of published research and that another 31 papers warranted corrections.

Retractions are serious. When a journal retracts an article that usually means the research is so severely flawed that the findings are no longer reliable.

Barrett Rollins, research integrity officer at Dana-Farber, said in a statement: "Following the usual practice at Dana-Farber to review any potential data error and make corrections when warranted, the institution and its scientists already have taken prompt and decisive action in 97% of the cases that had been flagged by Sholto David."

Microbiologist Elisabeth Bik has been sleuthing for a decade. Based on her work, scientific journals have retracted 1,133 articles, corrected 1,017 others, and printed 153 expressions of concern, according to a spreadsheet where she tracks responses to her reports.

Technology has made it easier to root out image manipulation and plagiarism, said Ivan Oransky, who teaches medical journalism at New York University and co-founded the *Retraction Watch* blog.

Others doing the investigative work remain anonymous. Together, they have "changed the equation" in scientific publication, Mr. Oransky said.

"They want science to be and do better," Mr. Oransky said. "And they are frustrated by how uninterested most people in academia - and certainly in publishing - are in correcting the record."

For feedback and suggestions for 'Science', please write to [science@thehindu.co.in](mailto:science@thehindu.co.in) with the subject 'Daily page'

## THE SCIENCE QUIZ

### COVID-19 pandemic brought out the best in scientists

Vasudevan Mukunth

#### QUESTION 1

On January 30, 2020, the World Health Organisation declared the COVID-19 outbreak to be a 'public health emergency of international concern'. Name the rules, first adopted in 1969, that require the WHO's member states to respond swiftly in response to such a declaration.

#### QUESTION 2

The virus that causes COVID-19, SARS-CoV-2, is a positive-sense single-stranded RNA virus. The 'positive-sense' refers to a genome that functions as a \_\_\_\_\_ molecule. The virus uses this molecule as a template based on which a cell, like in the human body, can 'manufacture' more copies of the virus. Fill in the blank.

#### QUESTION 3

Name the two scientists who won the Nobel Prize for medicine/physiology in 2023 for the work that laid the foundations for the fastest vaccine development programme in history to mitigate the effects of the pandemic.

#### QUESTION 4

Name the Chinese pulmonologist who recorded a cluster of pneumonia cases on December 26 and reported it to the Chinese Centres for Disease Control (CCDC) the next day. Based on her report, one company sequenced genomes from these patients and reported a "novel coronavirus" to the CCDC.

#### QUESTION 5

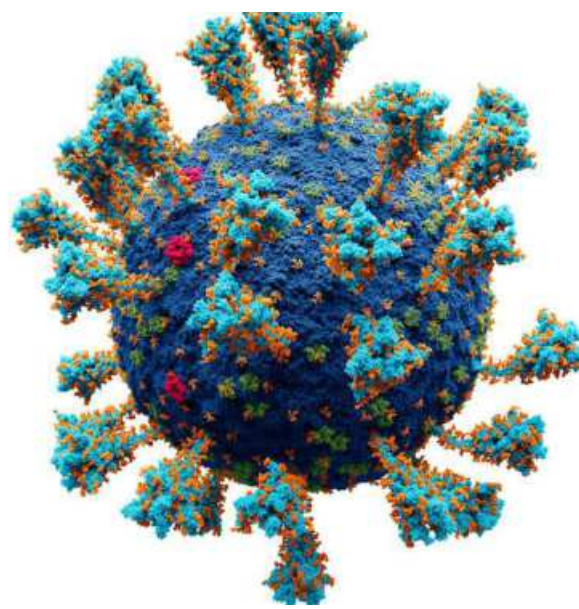
As COVID-19 spread in waves worldwide, researchers considered repurposing existing drugs to treat infections. Of these, four popular ones were

hydroxychloroquine, ivermectin, \_\_\_\_\_, and ritonavir. None of them have a proven ability to treat COVID-19. Fill in the blank with the name of a drug whose primary purpose is treating hepatitis C.

Answers to January 25 quiz:

- Collective name for chains of carbon atoms - **Ans: Polymers**
- India's national adhering organisation for chemistry - **Ans: Indian National Science Academy**
- Famous example of a aromatic hydrocarbon first synthesised by August Kekulé - **Ans: Benzene**
- Organic compound with the IUPAC name pyridine-3-carboxylic acid - **Ans: Vitamin B3 (nicotinic acid)**
- Name for the moiety of a molecule that influences its behaviour in a chemical reaction - **Ans: Functional group**

Visual: **Technetium sestamibi**  
First contact: K.N. Viswanathan | Tadar Sahi | Priyamvada Verma | Shiva Nigam



Visual: This is a model of SARS-CoV-2. What are the turquoise 'blossoms' rooted in the virus's envelope (blue) called? PUBLIC DOMAIN

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