





**Timings**  
BENGALURU

**MONDAY, FEB. 12**  
RISE 06:43 SET 18:24  
RISE 08:37 SET 20:56

**TUESDAY, FEB. 13**  
RISE 06:43 SET 18:25  
RISE 09:21 SET 21:53

**WEDNESDAY, FEB. 14**  
RISE 06:43 SET 18:25  
RISE 10:03 SET 22:49

**Bengaluru Weather** max min  
Tumakuru 33 23  
Mysuru 33 22  
Bengaluru 31 18

**Bengaluru Today**  
32°C A dry weather to prevail. Morning will be cool with mist and haze. Day will be little warm. Night also will be cool and hazy.

**Bengaluru Tomorrow**  
33°C The weather will be dry. Morning will be cool with mist and haze. Day will be warm. Night will be slight cool and hazy.

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**THE HINDU**  
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## BJP workers booked for alleged cruelty to cows

**The Hindu Bureau**  
BENGALURU

The Upparpet police have booked nine Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) workers including the general secretary of the party in the State P. Rajeev, under Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960, for roping in cows at a recently-held protest against the State government and allegedly "subjecting them to harassment".

The BJP held a protest against the Congress-led State government over not releasing incentives due for dairy farmers at Freedom Park in the city on February 6.

Based on the report filed by a Police Sub Inspector, who was deployed for security duty, the Upparpet police charged Rajiv P., State General Secretary, Patil Nadahalli A.S., State Raitha Morcha President, Harish, president,



Police trying to clear BJP workers with cows during a demonstration in Bengaluru recently. K. MURALI KUMAR

BJP Bengaluru North District, Saptagiri Gowda, president, BJP Bengaluru Central District and five others.

The accused brought six cows and "harassed them for over four hours," the complaint said. "The cows were not given fodder or water and made to stand without any shade. In addition to harassing them with blaring sounds from loudspeakers, the protesters tried to push the cows into BMTC buses when the police were detaining the protesters," Prashanth, PSI, who filed a complaint, said.

## Second edition of Khel Khoj organised at REVA University

**The Hindu Bureau**  
BENGALURU

REVA University, on Saturday, hosted the second edition of Khel Khoj to revitalise traditional and indigenous games on its campus. The event witnessed hundreds of enthu-

siastic children and teenagers actively participating in the games.

Manjunath Prasad N., Additional Chief Secretary, Department of Youth Empowerment and Sports, who inaugurated the programme, said, "Our heritage, languages, sports and

games have a long history attached. They have lost their sheen due to the Western influence. Hence, it is

important to revive age-old and traditional games." Umesh S. Raju, Pro-Chancellor of REVA Univer-

sity, said over 35 traditional games from across the nation featured in this edition of Khel Khoj.

### APPOINTMENTS

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SJIM 28/1, Primrose Road (Off M.G. Road), Bangalore 560 025

Applications are invited for the position of  
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Ph D holders from reputed institutions with industry experience and publications in top-tier journals will be given preference.  
Interested candidates can email their CV to [director@sjim.edu.in](mailto:director@sjim.edu.in) before **25 February 2024.**

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**KASHMIRI**  
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तिरुवनंतपुरम/Thiruvananthapuram-695 022

**शुद्धिपत्र दिनांक 12.02.2024 / CORRIGENDUM DATED 12.02.2024**

दिनांक 01.07.2023 के विज्ञापन सं. 327 तथा दिनांक 16.01.2024 के शुद्धिपत्र द्वारा अधिसूचित रिक्तियों के अतिरिक्त, नीचे दिए गए व्यौरों के अनुसार, मानव अंतरिक्ष उड़ान केंद्र (एचएसएफसी), बंगलुरु के लिए 04 नई रिक्तियां अधिसूचित की जाती हैं: In addition to the vacancies notified vide Advertisement No. 327 dated 01.07.2023 and its Corrigendum dated 16.01.2024, 04 new vacancies are notified for Human Space Flight Centre (HSFC), Bengaluru as per the details given below:

क्रम सं./SI No.	पद का नाम / Name of the Post	पद संख्या / Post No.	पदों की संख्या / No. of posts
1	वैज्ञानिक/इंजीनियर-एससी	1506	02
2	Scientist/Engineer-SC	1515	01
3		1520	01

व्यौरों के लिए, कृपया दिनांक 12.02.2024 को 1000 बजे से दिनांक 21.02.2024 को 1700 बजे तक कृपया वीएसएससी वेबसाइट <http://www.vssc.gov.in> देखें। भविष्य में, आगे का कोई भी शुद्धिपत्र केवल वीएसएससी वेबसाइट में अपलोड किया जाएगा। सभी आवेदकों को सलाह दी जाती है कि वे नियमित रूप से वेबसाइट देखें।  
For details, please visit VSSC website <http://www.vssc.gov.in> from 1000 hours on 12.02.2024 to 1700 hours on 21.02.2024. In future, any further corrigendum will be uploaded in VSSC website only. All applicants are advised to check the website regularly.  
वरिष्ठ प्रशासन अधिकारी/Sr. Administrative Officer, आर एवं आर / R & R

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**Dr. N.V. Prasad** I.A.S. Government Secretary, Transport Department.

**Yogeesha A.M.** I.A.S. Commissioner, Transport & Road Safety Authority Bengaluru

**J. Gnanendra Kumar** Additional Transport Commissioner (Environment and e-governance)





















### MANILA

## Death toll from landslide near Philippines gold mine jumps to 54



REUTERS

The death toll from a Philippine landslide near a gold mine abruptly rose to 54 on Sunday. Nineteen bodies were recovered from beneath the rubble in the village of Masara on Sunday, with 63 still missing. The landslide buried a bus terminal for employees of a gold mining firm and 55 nearby houses on Tuesday night. AFP

### MANILA

## Philippines accuses Chinese vessels of 'dangerous' manoeuvres



REUTERS

The Philippine Coast Guard on Sunday accused Chinese vessels of "dangerous" manoeuvres during a nine-day patrol near the Scarborough Shoal in the South China Sea. Chinese Coast Guard vessels "performed dangerous and blocking manoeuvres at sea against BRP Teresa Magbanua four times," Manila said. AFP

### DAKAR

## Death of teenager takes casualties from Senegal protest to three



REUTERS

A 16-year-old died following clashes in Senegal's Ziguinchor, the third fatality in unrest after President Macky Sall postponed this month's election. Sall's decision to push back the February 25 presidential vote has plunged Senegal into one of its worst crises since independence from France in 1960. AFP

### HELSINKI

## Finland goes to the polls to elect President after entry to NATO



AP

Finns cast their ballots on Sunday in presidential elections in light of the country's NATO membership and rising tensions with Russia. Some 4.3 million voters are choosing between former conservative Prime Minister Alexander Stubb and ex-Foreign Minister Pekka Haavisto, a Green Party MP running as an independent. AFP

## Trump hints at backing Russian attack of NATO states

Agence France-Presse  
WASHINGTON

White House hopeful Donald Trump said on Saturday he would "encourage" Russia to attack members of NATO who had not met their financial obligations, his most extreme broadside against the military alliance he has long expressed skepticism about..

NATO chief Jens Stoltenberg responded by warning against talk that "undermines security". "Any suggestion that allies will not defend each other undermines all of our security, including that of the U.S.," Mr. Stoltenberg said in a statement.

European Council President Charles Michel also denounced his comments as "reckless".

## Pak. police seek to crush PTI protests against 'poll rigging'

Clashes reported in Rawalpindi and Lahore while dozens of other protests held across country without incident; police had warned earlier they would come down hard on illegal gatherings

Agence France-Presse  
ISLAMABAD

The police fired tear gas to disperse supporters of jailed former Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan Sunday after his party urged protests outside election offices where they said rigging had taken place in last week's national vote.

Clashes were reported in Rawalpindi city, south of the capital, and Lahore, in the east, while dozens of other protests were held across the country without incident.

The police warned earlier they would come down hard on illegal gatherings. There were no immediate



Chain reaction: Officials detain a supporter of Imran Khan during a protest in Lahore on Sunday. AP

reports of injuries from the protests.

Independent candidates - most linked to Mr. Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party - took the

most seats in the polls, scuppering the chances of the Army-backed Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) to win a ruling majority.

However, independents cannot form a government.

PTI leaders claim they would have won even more seats if not for vote rigging.

A nationwide election-day mobile telephone blackout and the slow counting of results led to suspicions the military establishment was influencing the process to ensure success for former premier Nawaz Sharif's PML-N.

"Throughout Pakistan, elections were manipulated in a subtle way," PTI chairman Gohar Ali Khan told a news conference on Saturday, calling on supporters to "protest peacefully" on Sunday.

## Netanyahu promises 'safe passage' to Palestinians ahead of Rafah operation

Agence France-Presse  
GAZA STRIP

The threat of an Israeli incursion into Gaza's southernmost town of Rafah persisted on Sunday, but Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu promised "safe passage" to civilians displaced there.

In an interview airing on Sunday, Mr. Netanyahu reiterated his intention to extend Israel's military operation against Hamas into Rafah.

"We're going to do it while providing safe passage for the civilian population so they can leave," he said.

It remains unclear however, where the large number of people pressed



Dark future: A blind Palestinian sits in the sun near the rubble of buildings destroyed by Israeli bombing in Rafah on Sunday. AFP

up against the border with Egypt and sheltering in makeshift tents can go.

When asked, Mr. Netanyahu would only say they are "working out a detailed plan".

Hamas on Sunday warned that any Israeli offensive in Gaza's far-south-

ern city of Rafah would scupper talks about the release of hostages seized in the October 7 attacks.

"Any attack by the occupation army on the city of Rafah would torpedo the exchange negotiations," a leader in the Palestinian militant group said.

## 'Sri Lanka's ban on foreign ships was to build technical capacity'

Foreign Minister says there was no pressure from India or objections from China on the decision; island nation's economy is recovering, needs collaboration, investment, not more loans, he adds

INTERVIEW

M.U.M. Ali Sabry

Suhasini Haidar



There was no pressure from India, and no objections from China to Sri Lanka's decision to ban research vessels for one year, says Sri Lankan Foreign Minister M.U.M. Ali Sabry in an interview to *The Hindu* on the sidelines of the Indian Ocean Conference in Perth. The Minister said that as Sri Lanka turns the corner on its economy, it is seeking investment and collaborations rather than handouts.

The World Bank says Sri Lanka is now in an economic recovery period. But are there still challenges when it comes to getting funds?

Yes, the immediate challenge is to complete our debt restructure process and start repaying the debt that we have suspended payments on. We need to win the confidence of the international community. The challenges remain, but we are confident compared to what we were two years ago.

Are you seeking more help from India in addition to the \$4.5 billion in credit lines, loans, currency swaps and debt moratoriums?

No, rather than credit lines and loans, we are keen to

work with India in terms of investments, technical collaboration, and knowledge sharing.

It has been six years since India and Sri Lanka signed MoUs for oil storage and connectivity projects in Trincomalee. When do you expect to see some movement, and what is holding them up?

We discussed this [with S. Jaishankar] here in Perth too. We are in the process of establishing joint working committees, and there is a desire to kickstart a "Joint Regional Authority" to decide on regulations. Given the need for commercial viability, involvement of private sector in these projects, they may take longer than anticipated to get the right partners and to complete the feasibility studies.

Are great power rivalries in the Indian Ocean, especially U.S.-China tensions an increasing concern?

We want to avoid having their rivalry coming to our doorstep. Sovereignty

means that the countries should be able to make their own choices. That does not mean that we shut our doors to the world, but have a multi-aligned foreign policy on a case by case basis.

Is that why Sri Lanka placed a one year ban on all foreign research vessels coming in to Sri Lankan ports?

That is a technical decision - basically we felt that if ships are coming to conduct research in our waters, we should have the kind of capacity to understand their findings and to share the correct data. I don't think Sri Lanka has that right now. That is why we decided that we should take a pause, see, assess and improve our capacities.

Chinese media have said that the ban was due to Indian pressure, to stop Chinese dual purpose research vessels from coming in.....

No this was our decision, for the betterment of our country. Of course we continue to allow military

ships which come for port calls, replenishment, and for joint exercises which is part of our commitment in UNCLOS.

Did China object to the decision, given it had a vessel in the area at the time?

We communicated our decision to whoever who has sent research vessels to Sri Lanka during the last 10 years or so, so probably most countries expected it. We have a good relationship with China for a long time.

When it comes to regional groupings, there seems to be more emphasis now on BIMSTEC than SAARC - given Indian tensions with Pakistan, Afghanistan and now Maldives, do you see the concept of SAARC going away?

For Sri Lanka, we hope there will be a time that India and Pakistan sit and negotiate and resolve their differences. But we cannot wait for that and need to look at the alternatives, and IOA and BIMSTEC are taking shape.

We have had very interesting BIMSTEC ministerial retreat at Bangkok last year, where we decided how we can expand and make the grouping more viable, and we hope to have a summit this year in Thailand, which was put off last year.

(The Hindu correspondent was an invitee to the Indian Ocean Conference)

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## MONEYWISE



## Can free will be used in making a nomination

### COVERNOTE

Restrictions on nominations only to either spouse or children must be reviewed in view of changing times and also following large swathes of the society changing vastly and at different paces

**K. Nitya Kalyani**

Much as the government and regulators like to protect investors, the final say on their money matters and decisions about them rest with the investors themselves.

#### Inadequate awareness

However, levels of investment literacy and awareness of rights and responsibilities are terribly inadequate. Investors, even those who are literate, can be unaware and negligent.

We have been speaking of nominations in the last few instalments of CoverNote. Let us look briefly at a recent announcement that women government employees and pensioners are now permitted to nominate the family pension from their Employee Provident Fund (EPF) Account to their children overlooking their spouse.

Earlier, the family pension could go only to the surviving spouse and the children, with other family members becoming eligible only after the death of the spouse. This is pretty much micro-management.

Having said that, the current 'liberalisation' is not far from micro-management either. This amendment applies only where there are pending divorce proceedings or cases filed under laws such as the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, Dowry Prohibition Act or the Indian Penal Code.

And procedures exist to avail of the facility. A written request must be sent by the employee or pensioner concerned to the head of office stating that "family pension should be granted to her eligible child/ children in precedence to her spouse, in the event of her death during the ongoing proceedings."

One can appreciate the historical reasons for prescriptive and restrictive rules on nominations among other things. It indeed has cemented social security for families who lose the bread earner and who could have become indigent without this protective rule.

#### Changing times

Yet, sections of the society are changing vastly and at different paces. It is high time we undertake a meaningful and realistic review taking all this into account.

There are more questions, not so outlying as we may think.

Here is one such query, from a friend who finds EPF nomination rules falling short of her requirement.

Working in the private sector, she is a single woman with no children. She can nominate only her mother or brother under the rules, but her mother is much older and her brother is well off. "Why should I not be free to nominate somebody else, why not to a charitable organisation?" she asks.

And, why not?

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



**Eye for returns:** Non-Resident Indian parents with young kids also actively explore investment options in India to secure the financial future of their children. GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCK

## Options NRIs must explore for investing in India

Diversifying investment portfolio is crucial for NRIs to build a substantial corpus; these options, facilitate navigating the intricate world of investments while achieving long-term financial goals

### INVESTMENT RADAR

**Vivek Jain**

Many NRIs still harbour aspirations to be a part of the India growth story. This inclination is strengthened by the country's resilient growth amid a global economic slowdown.

India also fosters a conducive environment for industrial development with robust FDI attraction to its credit. As a result, NRIs are increasingly considering India as a prime destination for investing, aiming at accruing profits from an early age and subsequently retiring in comfort.

Also, NRI parents with young kids actively explore investment options in India to secure the financial future of their children.

#### Dilemma for NRIs

However, investing in India comes with a bit of a dilemma for NRIs. Navigating the investment landscape requires careful consideration. Nevertheless, the substantial growth prospects outweigh the complexities.

India offers NRIs a diverse array of investment opportunities, allowing them to tailor their portfolios to their risk tolerance.

Creating a robust portfolio necessitates a balanced ratio of risk and returns which is offered by insurance-cum-investment products. The products, combining life cover and investment elements, safeguard dependents while



India fosters a conducive environment for robust FDI attraction as a result of which NRIs are increasingly considering the country as a prime investment destination

generating wealth through returns. The flexibility and customisation options enable NRIs to construct a personalised investment strategy. Here are the unique features of the plans:

#### Investing in ULIPs

Unit Linked Insurance Plans (ULIPs) provide wealth accumulation with the protection of insurance, proving to be a versatile investment option. Investors can diversify funds between debt and equity, benefitting from market-linked returns that have historically reaped as high as 12-15%.

ULIPs also offer flexibility of fund selection for capital which eases financial planning. NRIs enjoy tax benefits on premium up to ₹2.5 lakh and tax-free maturity proceeds, making them more tax-efficient than avenues such as mutual funds.

#### Guaranteed plans

Guaranteed plans ensure policyholders absolute security through fixed and stable returns, even in volatile market conditions. With fixed return rates reaching up to 7.5% in new-age plans, the policies offer



India offers NRIs a diverse array of investment opportunities, allowing them to tailor their portfolios to their risk tolerance behaviour

a steady income stream even in a fluctuating market. Tailored for those averse to risk, these plans also serve as an ideal safety net for retirement planning. Choosing payout frequency aligns with your individual financial needs.

Investing in the plans is crucial considering the diminishing returns across asset classes.

As India's pursuit of becoming a developed nation gets closer to reality, return rates are likely to slide further. So, timing is important

#### Security, growth

After considering guaranteed and market-linked plans, you might be looking to strike a balance between the two.

Capital Guarantee Plans help you find this balance by combining guaranteed returns with a potential market-driven growth.

Allocating a portion to guaranteed return products ensures 100% capital protection, while the remainder is allocated towards market-related gains.

This guarantees security and returns, preserving the initial capital. Tax be-

nefits and exemptions enhance the appeal of the plans for NRIs.

#### Retirement planning

Annuity Plans offer a dependable solution for NRIs nearing retirement, providing a fixed monthly income for life. This ensures financial security with flexibility in choosing pay-out frequencies. Predictability in these plans eliminates concerns about outliving savings. Joint annuity plans extend financial support to spouses.

#### Child plans

Considering you can invest for your child as early as 90 days from birth, child plans ensure long-term benefits with higher returns.

A key feature is the waiver of premium optional add-on, which provides financial security even in policyholder's absence. In the unfortunate event of the policyholder's death, the policy continues, and the child receives maturity amount to fulfil their goals.

The plans also offer tax benefits under Section 80C which makes them a strategic choice for prudent financial planning.

Diversifying the investment portfolio is crucial for NRIs to build a substantial corpus.

These options, offering security, stability, and growth potential, facilitate navigating the intricate world of investments while achieving long-term financial goals.

(The writer is Head, Investments, Policybazaar.com)

### Personal Loans

Rates and Charges	Loan amount 5 lakh Tenure 5 years	Loan amount 1 lakh Tenure 5 years	(% of loan amount)	
Name of Lender	Interest Rate (%)	EMI (Rs)	Processing fee	
HDFC Bank	10.50 onwards	10,747 onwards	2,149 onwards	Up to Rs 4,999
Tata Capital	10.99 onwards	10,869 onwards	2,174 onwards	Up to 5.5%
State Bank of India	11.15-15.30	10,909-11,974	2,182-2,395	1.5% (Rs 1,000-Rs 15,000)
ICICI Bank	10.65 onwards	10,784 onwards	2,157 onwards	Up to 2.50%
Bank of Baroda	11.40-18.75	10,971-12,902	2,194-2,580	Up to 2% (min Rs 1,000, max Rs 10,000)
Axis Bank	10.49 onwards	10,744 onwards	2,149 onwards	Up to 2%
Kotak Mahindra Bank	10.99 onwards	10,869 onwards	2,174 onwards	Up to 3%
Bank of India	10.75-14.75	10,809-11,829	2,162-2,366	Up to 1% (Maximum Rs 5,000)
Canara Bank	10.95-15.95	10,859-12,146	2,172-2,429	NIL
Punjab National Bank*	10.40-17.95	10,772-12,683	2,144-2,537	Up to 1%
HSBC Bank	9.99-16.00	10,621-12,159	2,124-2,432	Up to 2%
Federal Bank	11.49 onwards	10,994 onwards	2,199 onwards	Up to 3%
Union Bank of India	11.35-15.45	10,959-12,013	2,192-2,403	Up to 1% (Maximum Rs 7,500)
Bajaj Finserv	11.00 onwards	10,871 onwards	2,174 onwards	Up to 3.93%
Punjab & Sind Bank	10.15-12.80	10,660-11,325	2,132-2,265	Up to 1%
South Indian Bank	12.85-20.60	11,338-13,414	2,268-2,683	Up to 2%
UCO Bank	12.45-12.85	11,236-11,338	2,247-2,268	Up to 1% (Minimum Rs 750)
IDFC First Bank	10.75 onwards	10,809 onwards	2,162 onwards	Up to 3.50%
Bank of Maharashtra	10.00-12.80	10,624-11,325	2,125-2,265	1% (Rs 1,000-Rs 10,000)
Karnataka Bank	13.43	11,487	2,297	Up to 2% of loan amount (Minimum Rs 2,500, Maximum Rs 8,500)
IndusInd Bank	10.49 onwards	10,744 onwards	2,149 onwards	Up to 3%

### Car Loans

Rates and Charges	Loan amount 5 lakh Tenure 5 years	(% of loan amount)	
Name of Lender	Interest Rate (%)	EMI (Rs)	Processing fee
Union Bank of India	8.70 - 10.45	10,307 - 10,735	Rs 1,000
Punjab National Bank	8.75 - 10.60	10,319 - 10,772	0.25% (Rs. 1,000 - Rs. 1,500)
Bank of Baroda	8.80 - 12.70	10,331 - 11,300	Up to Rs 10,000
Canara Bank	8.70 - 11.95	10,307 - 11,110	Waived off till 31st January 2024
Bank of India	8.75 - 10.75	10,319 - 10,809	Nil
UCO Bank	8.45 - 10.55	10,246 - 10,759	Nil
State Bank of India	8.75 - 9.80	10,319 - 10,554	Up to Rs 1,500
Bank of Maharashtra*	8.70 - 13.00	10,307 - 11,377	Nil
Indian Overseas Bank**	8.85 onwards	10,343 onwards	0.50% (Rs 500 - Rs 5,000)
ICICI Bank	9.10 onwards	10,403 onwards	Rs 999 - Rs 8,500
HDFC Bank	8.75 onwards	10,319 onwards	0.50% (Rs 3,500 - Rs 8,000)
Karnataka Bank	8.88 - 11.36	10,350 - 10,961	0.60% (Rs 3,000 - Rs 11,000)
Federal Bank	8.85 onwards	10,343 onwards	Rs 2,000 - Rs 4,500
Punjab and Sind Bank***	8.85 - 10.25	10,343 - 10,685	0.25% (Rs. 1,000 - Rs. 15,000)
South Indian Bank	8.75 onwards	10,319 onwards	1% (Max: Rs 10,000)
City Union Bank	14.35 - 14.85	11,725 - 11,586	1.25% (Min: Rs 1,000)

\*0.25% interest rate concession for existing housing loan borrowers and corporate salary account holders.  
\*\*0.50% interest rate concession to borrowers with credit scores of 750 and above. Interest rate concession of 0.20% to borrowers for financing Electric 4 Wheelers. 0.20% concession to existing Housing Loan Borrowers.  
\*\*\*Concession of up to 50% on processing fee for PSB Apna Vahan Sugam

Rates and charges as on February 6

Source: Paisabazaar.com

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# It was about changing Umran's mindset: J&K bowling coach Krishnakumar

The coach helped the fast bowler by sending videos to bring about the shift; it has yielded the desired results and given the pacer renewed confidence

S. Prasanna Venkatesan  
PUDUCHERRY

**J**ammu & Kashmir (J&K) bowling coach P. Krishnakumar on Sunday said that he had to change India pacer Umran Malik's mindset to make him feel confident of pitching the ball up and swinging it both ways at his natural speed.

"Earlier, he was pitching it a little short and was not able to swing the ball regularly. But now, he's swinging the ball regularly, and his pitching has gone between 6 and 7 metres which is fantastic.

"He also feels like, 'I'm confident that I can pitch it there.' If you want to play at the International level, I feel you have to go to that channel between 6 and 7 metres, then only you can get the edges," he said after Jammu & Kashmir's 19-run win over Pondicherry at the Cricket Association of Pondicherry (CAP) Siechem ground here.

The coach said he had a long chat with the pacer on his absence from the National squad. "Obviously, we had a long chat. He has played for India, he knows everything. It was more about changing his mindset. That was very important. Because, he had the mindset, 'I will bowl quick.' At the end of the day, the right-hand column (wickets column in the bowling analysis) is very important in Indian cricket. We go by quantity. You have to have wickets if you want to get selected. There's no doubt he has been given a lot of chances to play for India on the basis of the talent he has. But at the end of the day, I feel the right-hand column is very important."

The 50-year-old said he kept sending Umran video clips of great pacers to force the change in mindset. "What I did was, I sent him almost 100 videos - of (James) Anderson, of (Andrew) Flintoff, and all the great bowlers. I forced him to think." You have to pitch it up there if you want to take wickets in international cricket.

"Almost everyday, he was getting a video. So, then, it changes the mindset. Now, he's bowling fantastically well and I think he should get a nod in the Indian team."

## Myth busted

Former Rajasthan pacer, Krishnakumar had to bust the myth that it's hard to control the ball when bowling at great speed. "Dale Steyn, Brett Lee, (Jasprit) Bumrah." There are a lot of examples. There are a lot of myths going around. Because he's a young boy, he listens to all those myths, and it goes into the mind. So, I forced him by sending the videos to think like that (differently). Like, 'No, I can swing it.'

"When I joined (the J&K team), he was not sure. He said: 'Sir, I don't think I'll swing that much at 150 kph.' So, I told him and he did it himself. Then, he was like, 'Sir, it's happening!' The ball is moving and he's swinging the ball both ways now!"

He referred to Umran's bowling against Delhi and Odisha in the ongoing Ranji Trophy to highlight that his ward has imbibed the guidance to bowl better.

"You should have seen his bowling against Delhi and Odisha! You should see



All in the mind: Umran looks hungry for more success after switching to a new process. EMMANUAL YOGINI

the videos. He bowled brilliantly. It was unlucky that he couldn't get wickets, but he bowled fantastically well." Now, he's saying, 'Sir, I'm very, very confident that I can pitch it (up) there.'"

On his first season with the Jammu & Kashmir team now, Krishnakumar says

that he had to earn the pacer's trust in him. "The best part about Umran is that he listens to things properly and he applies it. But as a coach, that trust, I had to develop with him since it's my first year. Now, the trust is there since things have been happening. I was telling, 'See

this will happen,' and that happened."

Asked for the standout quality in Umran, he said: "I think he's very down to earth, even after playing for India. He's always eager to learn. That eagerness is there and that I think is the standout quality of Umran."

## THE GIST

Umran was pitching it a little short and not able to swing the ball regularly. But now he's swinging the ball regularly: Krishnakumar

The coach says he sent him almost 100 videos of all the great bowlers and forced him to think

About the standout quality in Umran, Krishnakumar says the speedster is down to earth even after representing the country

# Svrcina continues to fight far from home, both on and off the court

Nihit Sachdeva  
CHENNAI

Staying true to his name, which means 'fighting far away', Dalibor Svrcina battled hard before bowing out with a creditable semifinal finish at the Chennai Open, an ATP Challenger Tour event, roughly 7000 kilometres away from his hometown in Czechia.

Svrcina played three three-setters before losing to Sumit Nagal in straight sets in the semifinal. The last of those deciding set battles, against Mukund Sasikumar in the quarterfinals, was the longest at two hours 54 minutes and in some of the most difficult conditions despite the match beginning around 5pm local time. "It was one of the toughest matches because I was sweating like crazy. It's very humid here. I was sweating throughout the first set. I had to go and change after the first set which lasted one-and-a-half hours, which maybe was the longest set that I ever played," said Svrcina, moments after a cool down run around the outside courts at the SDAT Stadium in Nungambakkam.

In tennis terms, at 5'10", Svrcina is not one of the tallest guys and neither does he have a big serve to gain free points. However, what he lacks in reach, he makes up for with his quick court coverage and ability to counter-punch, reminiscent of former World No. 8 Diego Schwartzman. The Argentine is three inches shorter though!

## The journey so far

Svrcina's parents are doctors. He has two older siblings - a sister and a brother - who are in their mid 30s. "I was always very active as a child. My parents wanted me to do some sport. My siblings and my parents did sports but never professionally. So, they put me to play football first, and then I started playing tennis at the age of 6," he said.

"I chose tennis. I was very happy playing tennis when I was 9-11 years old. I spent a lot of time on the court playing and I started doing well. So, I stayed with it."

At 14, Svrcina was a member of the squad that led Czechia to its first Junior Davis Cup title after 20 years in 2017. A year later, he was ranked



R. RAVINDRAN

amongst the world's Top 10 boys. In 2019, partnering compatriot Jonas Forejtsek, he won the boys' doubles crown at the Junior Australian Open. He shifted to the senior circuit

soon, but had to wait for his major breakthrough which came in 2021 when he clinched his maiden title on the Challenger Tour as a wildcard in Prague. That propelled him into the



I try to have my coach with me and it's already quite difficult to pay for all the flights and all the meals at the hotel

Top 400 in the ATP Rankings. A runner-up finish at the same event next year helped him make his Top 200 debut.

In 2023, Svrcina qualified for the main draw of a Grand Slam for the first time at the Australian Open and defeated the then World No. 64 Jaume Munar of Spain in the opening round.

Being ranked high enough to make the cut for the qualifying rounds of the Majors since 2022 Roland Garros has somewhat helped Svrcina take care of the finances, something which a sponsor covered till the age of 18. "I'm paying for everything myself. When you make it at least to the qualifying grand Slams, it's a big help. Of course, I cannot travel with three-four people but I try to have my coach with me and it's already quite

difficult to pay for all the flights and all the meals at the hotel," said the 21-year-old.

Svrcina mentioned that he admires Rafael Nadal but with time, has started to look up to Novak Djokovic. "As I'm growing older, I have started to appreciate Djokovic much more. All the players and the people in the world can learn from him because he's very open minded. In the interviews, he talks very openly even about his private life and what he is doing off the court. I resonate with him very well," said World No. 186 about the top-ranked player in men's tennis.

## Avid reader

When he is not playing tennis, Svrcina likes to spend his time reading. His brother, who is studying philosophy in Prague, advised him to develop this habit when he was 18. "I read a lot of books from Hinduism and Buddhism. I also started thinking a little bit differently and I'm very glad about that. I have a different view on life. I know that even though I am very much into tennis, it's not the most important thing in life," he said.

# The patterns of global warming are more important than its levels

No one has been able to fully explain the patterns of warming associated with the earth's surface exceeding the 1.5 degrees C warming threshold. This is important because warming patterns matter the most for our ability to manage the disasters associated with global warming

Raghu Murtugudde

Many warming records were broken in 2023 along with climate disasters such as wildfires, cyclones, droughts, and floods. In this time, the focus of the public narrative – often with the participation of scientists – has often been on whether we crossed the 'magical' warming threshold of 1.5 degrees C. The best estimates, derived from data recorded by instruments, say the planet is just under this threshold.

But did we really cross the 1.5 degrees C threshold in 2023?

Before we discuss the answer, let's remember that 1.5 degrees C is not a scientific threshold. It became enshrined in the Paris Agreement after intense negotiations by member-countries of the U.N. Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). But it's not a round number by accident: it comes from a figure – 2 degrees C – European politicians found easier to aim at in the 1990s.

## Measuring the crossing

Now a new study, published on February 5 in *Nature*, has added fuel to the fire of the threshold-crossing controversy. Based on estimates of warming from palaeo-thermometry, scientists from Australia and the U.S. have said that the earth's surface has already warmed by more than 1.5 degrees C on average over pre-industrial levels. A major caveat of the study is that the scientists have collected warming data from only one location and have extrapolated it to be indicative of the global mean temperature trend.

This said, these so-called 'palaeo proxies' constitute an amazing technique that uses chemical evidence stored in various organic matter, such as corals, stalactites, and stalagmites, to approximate the temperature at some point in the past. But just as insightful as this chemical evidence can be, we should remember that it is still only indirect evidence of temperature changes with respect to a baseline temperature. The evidence can't measure the actual overall temperatures.

Since palaeo proxies don't directly measure the temperature, we call them proxies of past temperature deviations (the 'palaeo' denotes the past).

Researchers carefully calibrate the various chemical compounds assimilated by some species into their biogenic materials – such as calcium carbonate or chalk – in modernity to establish the relationships between those chemicals



Global warming is moderated or amplified by local conditions. GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

and the prevailing local temperature.

When such a biogenic material from the past is found, scientists can piece together when the biogenic material was deposited (using the quantity of certain isotopes that decay at a steady rate over time). They then study the assimilated chemicals to deduce the temperature deviations during that time period. The results are very local temperature anomaly estimates from the past, so they can't be the basis for any scientifically robust claims about tiny deviations of past temperatures from instrumental records.

## No explanation for patterns

Next, let's examine the significance of crossing the 1.5 degrees C threshold. The expositions that made this claim – articles, headlines, etc. – do not really offer any clear explanation of why such exceptional warming occurred or how it can explain some location-specific disasters.

Even worse, no one has been able to fully explain the patterns of warming associated with this threshold exceedance or, in fact, the pattern of any level of global warming. This is important because warming patterns matter the most for our ability to manage the disasters associated with global warming.

Even the amount and the distribution of the 2023 monsoons have not been explained yet, and it is unclear how the combination of the El Niño, its unusual pattern, and global warming conspired together to produce the monsoons India



1.5 degrees C is not a scientific threshold. It became enshrined in the Paris Agreement after intense negotiations by member-countries

experienced. Note also that the Indian subcontinent experienced significant cooling during 2023.

We will be ignoring the lessons we have learned from various El Niños and their impacts on global warming and on the monsoon if we continue to focus on the extent of global warming rather than its spatial variations and how they evolve.

## El Niño as a warming paradigm

The tropical Pacific Ocean keeps soaking up heat during normal and La Niña years and belches it out in an El Niño year. This causes a mini global warming, with consequences at distant locations – the so-called teleconnections; the latter is what tells us that the pattern of warming really matters.

Depending on whether warming due to an El Niño is in the eastern Pacific Ocean or closer to the international dateline, the impacts on the monsoon and the other parts of the world can be very different.

An added difficulty is that the El Niño teleconnections themselves also modify the warming pattern. As a result, droughts can have a stronger feedback

that affects temperature than floods in many instances. The massive deluges that California is experiencing this winter are driven by the El Niño but likely amplified by global warming. The amounts of rain and snow will subsequently feedback to local and global temperatures.

These same processes work in the global warming regime as well. As human-made greenhouse gases initiate the warming, the warming pattern is amplified in the Arctic and over the desert regions of the Middle East but damped over the eastern Pacific and the northern Atlantic oceans. These local warmings and coolings and their magnitudes determine the net effect of natural variability and global warming in a particular locality.

## Need for accurate predictions

It is hardly possible to over-emphasise our need for accurate predictions of warming patterns to manage the climate change impacts that have already landed. We need such predictions not only on an event-to-event basis but also in order to adapt to the changing seasons and the unavoidable harm they are rendering to lives, livelihoods, and economies.

In sum, we will be better served by keeping the global warming patterns in mind when arbitrary thresholds lacking in any real scientific basis threaten to sweep us away.

(Raghu Murtugudde is a visiting professor at IIT Bombay and an emeritus professor at the University of Maryland.)

## THE GIST

Palaeo proxies use chemical evidence stored in various organic matter, such as corals, stalactites, and stalagmites, to approximate the temperature at some point in the past

Even the amount and distribution of the monsoon of 2023 has defied explanation, and it is unclear how the combination of the El Niño, its unusual pattern, and global warming conspired together to produce the monsoons India experienced

Accurate predictions of warming patterns are essential to manage climate change impacts. Predictions are needed to adapt to changing seasons and the harm they cause to lives, livelihoods, and economies

## BIG SHOT



Workers repair a pipeline that carries hot water from the Svartsengi geothermal power plant to the Reykjanes peninsula, in Grindavik, Iceland, February 9, 2024. Repairs on the pipes went on overnight in temperatures as low as minus 14 degrees C, utility company H.S. Orka said, after they were damaged by a volcanic eruption in southwestern Iceland.

AP

## WHAT IS IT?

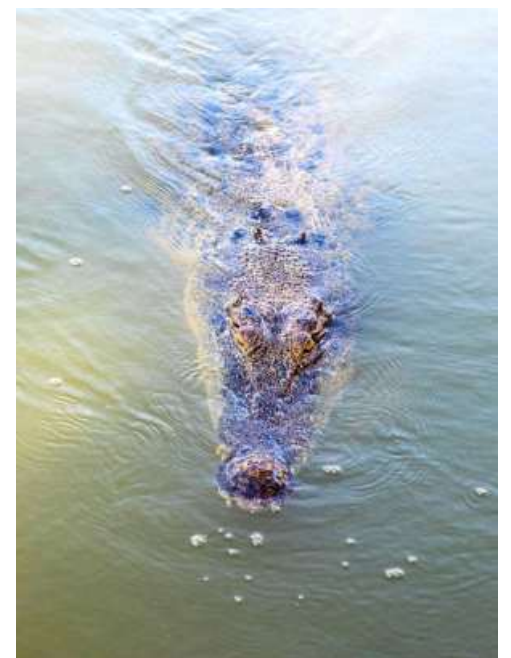
# Brumation: winter is coming for reptiles

Arkatapa Basu

Is an alligator lying still underwater, with its snout alone sticking out, alive or dead? If this is the situation, there's a third possibility: brumation. This is the name to describe a period of dormancy or slowed activity in reptiles, much like hibernation in mammals. It typically occurs during colder months, when temperatures drop and food becomes scarce. Reptiles enter a state of brumation to conserve energy and survive these adverse environmental conditions.

During brumation, reptiles may retreat to underground burrows, rock crevices or other sheltered areas where temperatures are relatively more stable. Their metabolism slows significantly, allowing them to go weeks or even months without eating. This period of reduced activity allows reptiles to conserve energy and minimise their resource requirements.

Researchers have observed instances of brumation in various reptilian species across habitats. Such species include box turtles and painted turtles, which burrow into the mud at the bottom of ponds or lakes. Snakes may seek refuge in underground dens or caves while lizards may hide under rocks or within vegetation. Brumation is crucial for reptiles



During brumation reptiles can slow metabolism significantly, allowing them to go weeks or even months without eating. GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

to survive cold climes and endure challenging environmental conditions, until they can reemerge to feed and reproduce in more favourable climes.

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# Text & Context

THE HINDU

## NEWS IN NUMBERS

**Amount disbursed by Saudi to Yemen government**

**250** in \$ million. Saudi Arabia said on Sunday it had disbursed this amount in aid to recognised government in Yemen, which the Gulf kingdom has backed in a war against Houthi rebels. AFP

**Sumit Nagal's ATP ranking after winning Chennai Open**

**98** India's top singles player Sumit Nagal on Sunday won his fifth Challenger-level singles title — an achievement which will propel him into the top-100 for the first time in his career. PTI

**Number of T20 100s scored by Glenn Maxwell**

**5** Following Glenn Maxwell's unbeaten 120-run knock against West Indies in the second T20 International match in Adelaide, the star Australia batting allrounder equalled Rohit Sharma's record of the most Men's T20 hundreds. PTI

**Number of Indian tourists who visited Türkiye in 2023**

**2.7** in lakh. There is an increasing popularity of Türkiye among Indian tourists with arrivals growing by 17% in 2023 compared to last year. Türkiye offers e-visa, and in 2023, 75 per cent of Indian tourists visited. PTI

**Drones launched by Russia over Ukraine on Sunday**

**45** Russia launched a five-and-a-half-hour drone attack targeted at Ukraine's agricultural facilities and coastal infrastructure on Sunday. AP

COMPILED BY THE HINDU DATA TEAM

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# Decoding India's economic realities

Is the GDP growth rate an accurate reflection of India's economic health, considering the IMF's concerns? Has there been an economic turnaround as claimed by the Finance Ministry in the 'White Paper' in the past ten years compared to the situation under the NDA's predecessor? What were the contrasts in the economy between the NDA and the UPA regimes?

## ECONOMIC NOTES

Prasenjit Bose  
Indranil Chowdhury  
Soumyadeep Biswas  
Samiran Sengupta

**W**ith the BJP-led government exuding over-confidence on the state of the economy, the interim Budget presented earlier this month has shifted focus to fiscal consolidation. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has projected that the fiscal deficit, which was expanded to 9.2% of GDP in 2020-21 to deal with the pandemic-induced recession; would be brought down to 5.8% by the end of the current financial year and 5.1% by next year to reach the targeted 4.5% of GDP by 2025-26.

The interim Budget signals significant cutbacks in public expenditures, slashing effective capital expenditure by ₹1 lakh crore and reducing welfare and subsidy allocations. Despite a nominal GDP growth of 9%, down from the previous year's 10.5%, the government faces challenges with a slowdown in economic activity. Real GDP growth stands at 7.3%, above last year's 7.2%, while the IMF questions the accuracy of official growth estimates, recommending statistical upgrades. The fiscal situation is complicated by rising debt liabilities, marking a formal withdrawal of post-pandemic stimulus in the interim Budget.

Added to this is the prospect of a slowdown in economic activity, regarding which the government seems to be in denial. Despite the nominal GDP growth rate falling to 9% in the current year from 16% last year, real GDP growth (at constant prices) has been estimated at 7.3% (advanced estimates), slightly above the 7.2% registered last year, implying that the value of the GDP deflator — which should correspond with the retail inflation rate — has fallen below 2% in 2023-24. Official data, on the other hand, shows the monthly average of consumer price inflation (Consumer price index-CPI-combined) at 5.5% for 2023-24.

This anomaly has once again revived the debate over the accuracy of official growth estimates. The International Monetary Fund (IMF), in its latest staff report on India (November 2023) has pointed out several defects and deficiencies in real sector data, particularly that of national accounts, employment, and prices, recommending an upgradation and expansion of official statistics. It is noteworthy that in its January 2024 Update of World Economic Outlook, the IMF has projected India's real GDP growth as 6.7% for 2023-24 and 6.5% for 2024-25, reflecting a deceleration of economic activity.

## Budget and Public Finance

The Finance Minister has sought to divert attention from this debate over the present direction of change in economic activity, by presenting a "White Paper" in Parliament on the past twenty years. The white paper alleges that the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) had left behind a "deeply damaged economy" marred by "governance, economic and fiscal crises" in 2014, which is claimed to have "turned around" and "rebuilt" from its foundations in the past 10 years by the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) regime. The evidence presented in support of this macroeconomic narrative, however, is a concoction of cherry-picked data, half-truths, evasions, and counter-factual assertions.

Over the past 20 years, fiscal trends show no clear pattern between UPA and NDA regimes (See Table 1). NDA-I reduced expenditures as a percentage of GDP,

## NDA vs UPA: Budget priorities and indicators

The tables here provide a comprehensive overview of India's fiscal landscape, detailing major heads of expenditures, revenues, deficits, and debt during the last two regimes

TABLE 1: Union Budgets - Major Heads of Expenditures, Revenues, Deficits & Debt

	UPA-I 2004-05 to 2008-09 (Annual Average)	UPA-II 2009-10 to 2013-14 (Annual Average)	NDA-I 2014-15 to 2018-19 (Annual Average)	NDA-II 2019-20 to 2023-24* (Annual Average)	Interim Budget 2024-25 Budget Estimates
<b>Expenditures (% of GDP)</b>					
Total Expenditure	14.8	15	12.8	15.5	14.5
Revenue Expenditure	12.6	13.2	11.1	13.1	11.1
Capital Expenditure	2.2	1.8	1.7	2.4	3.4
Food Subsidy	0.7	0.9	0.8	1.2	0.6
Fertiliser Subsidy	0.7	0.8	0.5	0.6	0.5
Petroleum Subsidy	0.1	0.7	0.2	0.1	0.0
Defence	2.1	2.0	1.6	1.6	1.4
Agriculture	0.2	0.3	0.3	0.6	0.4
Education	0.5	0.7	0.5	0.4	0.4
Health	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3
Rural Development	0.8	0.8	0.7	0.9	0.8
Urban Development	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.3	0.2
<b>Revenues (% of GDP)</b>					
Centre's Revenue Receipts	10.0	9.2	8.6	8.7	9.2
Centre's Tax Revenue (Net of States' Share)	7.7	7.3	7.1	7.4	7.9
Non-Tax Revenue	2.1	1.8	1.5	1.3	1.2
Gross Tax Revenue	10.8	10.2	10.8	10.9	11.7
Corporation Tax	3.3	3.7	3.3	2.8	3.2
Taxes on Income	1.8	2	2.3	2.9	3.5
Union Excise	2.7	1.7	1.8	1.4	1.0
GST	n.a.	n.a.	1.1	3.0	3.3
Customs	1.9	1.6	1.2	0.7	0.7
<b>Deficits &amp; Debt Indicators (% of GDP)</b>					
Fiscal Deficit	4.0	5.4	3.7	6.6	5.1
Revenue Deficit	2.5	4	2.5	4.3	2.0
Interest Expenditure	3.6	3.2	3.1	3.4	3.6
Central Government Liabilities (end of period) #	58.6	52.2	49.6	58.1	57.2
<b>States' Finances (% of GDP)</b>					
States' Share in Central Tax Revenues	2.8	2.8	3.7	3.4	3.7
Net Resources Transferred to States & UTs	4.7	4.8	6.1	6.7	6.9
State Governments' Liabilities (end of period) #	13.6	14.9	20.9	25.7	26.9

Source: Union Budget Documents, Various Years & DBIE, Reserve Bank of India  
\* Revised Estimates for 2023-24, Budget Estimates for 2024-25;  
# Central & State Government's Liabilities in 2024-25 are projections from Union Budget & IMF; Actuals for all other years

TABLE 2: Macroeconomic Indicators

	UPA-I 2004-05 to 2008-09	UPA-II 2009-10 to 2013-14	NDA-I 2014-15 to 2018-19	NDA-II 2019-20 to 2023-24
<b>Growth &amp; Inflation</b>				
Nominal GDP Growth Rate (Annual Average)	14.6	15.3	11.0	9.7
Real GDP Growth Rate (Annual Average)	6.9	6.7	7.4	4.4
Annual CPI Inflation - Average of Months (End of Period)*	9.1	9.4	3.4	5.9
Annual Food Inflation - Average of Months (End of Period)*	12.3	11.9	0.7	7.1
<b>Sectoral Shares in GVA</b>				
Gross Value Added (Basic Prices) Growth Rate (Annual Average)	7.0	6.3	7.0	4.5
Share of Agriculture in GVA (%) (End of Period)	19.6	17.8	14.8	14.4
Share of Services in GVA (%) (End of Period)	47.9	51.1	54.0	54.6
Share of Industry in GVA (%) (End of Period)	32.4	31.2	31.2	31.0
Share of Manufacturing in GVA (%) (End of Period)	17.1	17.2	18.3	17.7
<b>Domestic Consumption &amp; Investment</b>				
Private Consumption (PFCE) as % of GDP (Annual Average)	56.9	56.2	58.9	60.9
Real Private Consumption Expenditure (PFCE) Growth % (Annual Average)	5.9	6.4	7.2	4.7
Investment (GFCF) as % of GDP (Annual Average)	33.5	33.2	28.9	28.6
Public Investment (GFCF) as % of GDP (Annual Average)	8.0	7.6	7.0	7.5
Private Investment (GFCF) as % of GDP (Annual Average)	25.5	25.6	21.9	21.1
Real Investment (GFCF) Growth Rate % (Annual Average)	12.3	7.5	7.3	6.2

Source: Union Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation & Reserve Bank of India  
\*CPI-IW till 2008-09, CPI-Combined for Subsequent Periods

while NDA-II increased spending significantly post-pandemic. NDA-II's expenditure record is mixed compared to UPA, with improvements in certain areas but declines in others. The NDA-I government had reduced expenditures relative to GDP on most major heads compared to the UPA regime, including

capex, subsidies, defence, education and rural development. NDA-II increased the outlays on those heads significantly vis-a-vis NDA-I. However, the expenditure record of the NDA-II government vis-a-vis the UPA era remains mixed; outlays on capex, food subsidy, agriculture, and urban and rural development improved,

while outlays on education, defence and subsidies on fuel and fertilizer fell, as per cent of GDP. Health expenditure as a share of GDP saw no change at all between the UPA and NDA rule, despite the pandemic.

On the revenue front, gross tax revenues in GDP showed minor improvement during the NDA rule compared to UPA's, but non-tax revenues deteriorated. Overall there was a decline in the Centre's revenue receipts as a share of GDP, partly due to the increase in the State's share in Central taxes following the implementation of the 14th Finance Commission recommendations.

NDA's revenue mobilisation strategy revolved around increasing indirect tax collections on one hand, through GST rollout and levying high excise duties on petro-products and expanding the income tax base on the other. Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) data show that the number of individual income taxpayers with positive tax payments increased from 1.25 crore in 2012-13 (assessment year) to 2.08 crore in 2021-22 (assessment year). The average tax paid per individual income taxpayer more than doubled from ₹91,200 to ₹2.03 lakh in 2021-22. This raised income tax revenues from the UPA years' annual average of around 2% of GDP to 2.3% under NDA-I and 2.9% during NDA-II.

In sharp contrast, however, corporate tax collections fell as a share of GDP, from the UPA era average of 3.5% of GDP to 3.3% under NDA-I and further to 2.8% under NDA-II. Aggregate income tax collections are projected to surpass corporate tax collections by over ₹1.13 lakh crore in 2024-25.

CBDT data show the number of companies paying positive taxes rising from 3.45 lakh in 2012-13 (assessment year) to 4.57 lakh in 2021-22 (assessment year). Yet, data from the "Statement on Revenue Impact of Tax Incentives under the Central Tax System", annexed with the Receipt Budgets, show that the effective corporate tax rate, which inclusive of the dividend distribution tax had risen from 24.2% in 2012-13 to 30.4% in 2018-19, had fallen sharply to 22.2% in 2020-21.

The withdrawal of the dividend distribution tax and sharp reduction in the corporate tax rate through the new tax regime introduced in 2019-20, have led to massive revenue losses under the NDA-II government, whose estimates the government has suppressed till date. Such a revenue mobilisation strategy, while transferring income from the poor (through enhanced indirect taxes) and middle classes (through income taxes) to the profit-making corporate sector, besides exacerbating income inequality, has also failed to generate adequate revenues at a time when public expenditure was being enhanced under NDA-II, following the onset of the pandemic and recession.

As a result, the revenue deficit has eventually bloated to an average of 4.3% of GDP under NDA-II and the fiscal deficit averaging at 6.6%, raising the central government's debt from 52% of GDP at the end of UPA rule and around 50% under NDA-I to the current level of 58%. Annual interest expenditure has also risen from the low of 3.0% earlier to 3.6% of GDP in the current period, which the government is now trying to reckon with, by slashing capex, subsidies and welfare expenditure in the interim Budget.

It is also noteworthy, that despite the enhanced level of resources transferred to the States in the past 10 years, combined debt of the State governments have grown faster than that of the Centre under the NDA rule than the UPA era. This underlines the inadequacy of current level of fiscal transfers to the States, given their expanding expenditure commitments.

## Growth and inflation

Official data on the real economy under the NDA regime has been criticised from several quarters for overestimating its own macroeconomic performance and undervaluing that of the UPA regime. Even then, the simple truth which is evident from the official data is that on average, real GDP growth was at least one percentage point higher during the UPA decade than that of the NDA (See Table 2). Not only did the deep slump following the pandemic and lockdown cause major disruption during NDA-II, but slowdown in the economy was already evident under NDA-I after the successive policy shocks of demonetisation and GST rollout. The UPA era had also witnessed the global financial crisis and consequent worldwide recession in 2008-09, which was also a major external shock.

Gross value added (GVA) growth in basic prices also reflect the same trend as real GDP, with the average growth rate first rising during UPA I, then falling during UPA II, rising again in the NDA I period and then falling sharply during NDA II. Most importantly, the ten years of NDA rule could not provide any break with the sectoral pattern of growth witnessed during the UPA era.

Agricultural growth remained way below the overall GVA growth rate, with its share in overall GVA falling continuously. With the share of manufacturing and industrial sectors remaining largely the same under UPA and NDA periods, the services sector's share in GVA increased from below 48% in 2008-09 to over 54% in GDP. The Make in India initiative launched by the NDA, to transform India into a "global manufacturing hub", could not succeed in altering the services-led growth trajectory.

Real investment and export growth was significantly higher during the UPA decade than the NDA's, which explains the cause of higher real GDP growth during the former regime, despite being interrupted by a global recession. Private investment (GFCF) as a share of nominal GDP during the UPA decade remained significantly higher than the later period. In contrast, growth during NDA-I was private consumption led. During NDA-II's tenure, even real private consumption growth fell significantly, making economic growth largely dependent on the fiscal stimulus. This is clearly borne out by the rising fiscal deficit and debt-GDP ratio under NDA-II.

UPA's growth record, although higher than NDA's in magnitude, had three major problem areas, which the Finance Ministry's "White Paper" has highlighted. What is missing though is an honest appraisal of how far the NDA regime has been able to address and resolve them.

The most problematic aspect of UPA era's growth process was the high inflation that accompanied it, particularly the double digit food inflation (Table 2). The new series of CPI data reflect a sharp decline in the overall consumer inflation rate by the end of NDA-I's tenure to 3.4%, but a resumption of the inflationary trend under NDA-II, averaging around 6% annually. As was the case with the UPA regime, NDA too has relied upon the Reserve Bank of India to try and control inflation by raising its policy interest rate and managing liquidity.

Despite the repo rate being hiked from 4% in mid-2020 to 6.5% in February last year, where it has been held till date, the headline inflation rate has stubbornly ranged between 5-7% in the past two years, with average food inflation crossing 7% in 2023-24. This demonstrates, as it did during the UPA era, that RBI's repo rate adjustments have very little influence on food price movements in India.

This is the first of a two-part series on the Union Budgets under UPA & NDA regimes

# Behind the numbers: Delhi's youth ahead of 2024 elections

This Lokniti-CSDS survey among first-time voters in Delhi explores their political engagement and opinions on critical issues; the BJP leads with 70% support for national governance with 48% expressing strong liking for PM Modi, while AAP gains preference at 49% in Delhi's State-level governance

## Lokniti team

As India prepares for the next general elections, a lot of discussions revolve around the participation of first-time voters in what is referred to as the 'festival of democracy'. The Election Commission of India (ECI) is actively promoting voter registration, with the introduction of four registration windows in a year. Several States have already signaled an increased number of first-time voters compared to the 2019 Lok Sabha elections, reflecting a growing engagement of the youth in the democratic process.

Recognising the crucial role these voters play, political parties are actively making efforts to connect with first time voters. On National Voters' Day, observed on January 25th, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, during the 'Nav Matdata Sannam', urged first-time voters to ensure their registration in the voters list. He also asked them to suggest inputs for the party's 2024 manifesto. Similarly, during his Bharat Jodo Yatra, Rahul Gandhi engaged in exclusive interviews with YouTubers as a move to reach out to the youth. With the elections just around the corner, political parties are reaching out to millions of first-time voters, recognising the importance of their support and participation.

A recent study by Lokniti-CSDS interviewed 1,290 first-time voters (47% young men and 53% young women) in Delhi, hoping to understand their perspectives on politics, their voting intentions, and their opinions on pressing issues.

## Apathy or Enthusiasm

When it comes to the level of interest in politics among first-time voters, we asked them whether young individuals like themselves should be concerned about the country's affairs, or if it's a matter primarily for the older generations. Nine of every ten (91%) first-time voters expressed the view that they should indeed stay informed about these matters. Six per cent indicated a strong inclination to follow but admitted difficulty in understanding, while a mere 2% believed that such concerns were better left to the seniors.

When directly asked about their level of interest in politics, one-third (36%) of the first-time voters expressed a substantial interest, while four of every ten (43%) indicated a moderate level of interest. Only two in ten first-time voters conveyed either minimal interest or no interest at all in politics. This indicated a visible inclination towards political engagement among this demographic (Table 1). When it comes to engaging in political discussions, over six of every ten (60%) of the youngsters expressed that they actively participate in conversations about politics with friends and family. This indicated a substantive level of engagement about politics among the youth, demonstrating their heightened interest and connection to political developments. However, do young people's interest in politics translate into action, such as registering to vote and voting in the upcoming Lok Sabha elections?

More than half (51%) of first-time voters in Delhi are yet to register themselves. Upon closer examination, a notable trend surfaces. Among the 18-year-olds, a striking three-quarters are yet to register



**Time to choose:** More than half (51%) of first-time voters in Delhi are yet to register themselves. FILE PHOTO

**Table 1:** Youths' interest in politics

Interest in politics	(%)
Very interested	36
Somewhat interested	43
Not much interested	12
Not at all interested	9

**Table 2:** Have first-time voters registered?

	Registered as voters	
	Yes	No
Overall first-time voters	45	51
18 Years	22	74
19 Years	40	56
20 Years	61	37
21 Years	67	29
22 Years	62	29

**Note:** Rest did not know whether they were registered or not

**Table 3:** Reasons for not registering in voter list

Reasons cited by first-time voters	(%)
Would register this time	51
Did not get time	19
Applied but not sure if name has been included	11
Not in possession of required documents	6
Not interested in voting	5
Not sure when or how to register	3
Applied but application was rejected	2
No response	1

**Note:** Rest gave other responses

(Table 2). The trend persists as we look at those aged 19 years, with over half (56%) failing to register. However, there's a gradual decrease in this proportion of those non-registered for subsequent age groups.

While half the unregistered individuals (51%) plan to register for the upcoming elections, the rest cite various reasons for not doing so. Among these, two of every ten (19%) cite the lack of time and one of

**Table 4:** Narendra Modi's popularity among first-time voters

How much do you like Narendra Modi as the Prime Minister of the country	(%)
A lot	48
Somewhat	33
Not much	10
Not at all	8

**Note:** Rest did not respond

**Table 5:** Reasons for liking Modi

(If like Modi) What is the one thing about Prime Minister Narendra Modi that you like the most	(%)
Oratory skill	20
India's image at international level	19
Charismatic leader	17
Decisiveness	11
Hardworking/dedication	8
His policies	7
Development	5
Political vision/administration	4
Nationalism/national security	3

**Note:** Rest gave other reasons or did not respond

**Table 6:** Who from the Opposition can challenge Narendra Modi?

Who can challenge PM Narendra Modi in the upcoming Lok Sabha elections	(%)
No one	40
Rahul Gandhi	17
Arvind Kejriwal	16
Difficult to say	18

**Note:** Rest gave other responses or did not respond

every ten (11%) were unsure of whether their registration had been accepted. One-sixth (16%) gave a range of other reasons – facing registration obstacles due to a lack of required documents, lack of interest in voting, lack of knowledge about the registration process, and applications were rejected (Table 3).

When questioned about their inclination to participate in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, nearly seven in 10 voters

expressed a high likelihood of voting, stating they are either very likely or somewhat likely to do so. Conversely, about one in 10 voters indicated a lower likelihood or complete unwillingness to vote. Additionally, two in 10 respondents mentioned that they would vote if they managed to register themselves by the time of the elections.

## Narendra Modi's appeal

PM Modi appears to have considerable support among first-time voters. When a question tapped their sentiments towards Mr. Modi, nearly half of the first-time voters (48%) expressed a strong liking for him, with one-third indicating a moderate level of liking (33%). A little over one in ten had limited liking, and 8% expressed a strong negative rating (Table 4).

Digging deeper into the reasons behind their liking, his oratory skills and India's international image under his leadership stood out – mentioned by two in every 10 youths. For close to two of every 10 (17%), it was his charisma, and one in every 10 (11%) identified his decisiveness as the most likable trait. Additionally, close to one in every 10 (8%) youth appreciated his hard work, while another one in every 10 (7%) highlighted his policies (Table 5). Beyond mere liking, a significant four in 10 young voters believe that no one from the Opposition parties can pose a challenge to Mr. Modi in the upcoming Lok Sabha elections (Table 6). Roughly an equal proportion mentioned Mr. Rahul Gandhi and Arvind Kejriwal (17% and 16%, respectively). All other leaders received minimal mentions. Fifteen percent found it difficult to give a name.

This sentiment not only strengthens Mr. Modi's political standing but also highlights the formidable task facing Opposition parties in presenting convincing alternatives capable of resonating with a significant portion of first-time voters.

*A Study by Lokniti: CSDS Research Team which includes – Vibha Attri, Sanjay Kumar, Suhas Palshikar, Sandeep Shastri, Jyoti Mishra and Abhinav Pankaj Borbora*  
This is the first of a two-part series on the first time Voters' in Delhi



## KNOW YOUR ENGLISH

# Sparrows have all but disappeared

It can be used to mean almost or almost completely

## S. Upendran

Why do we say 'buttonhole someone'? (K Vaidyanathan, Chennai)

This is an expression frequently used in informal contexts. When you 'buttonhole someone', what you are doing is preventing the person from leaving; you catch hold of the individual and carry on a conversation with the very reluctant listener. He is unable to escape from your clutches.

*The students buttonholed the Vice-Chancellor after the meeting.*

*I was late getting home because Sneha buttonholed me about the project.*

The expression seems to suggest that the speaker is preventing the listener from leaving by holding on to his garment – perhaps, he has put a finger into the listener's shirt/coat buttonhole, thus preventing him from escaping. According to some scholars, the original expression was 'to buttonhold someone'. The speaker prevented the person from departing by holding on to the shirt/coat button. When 'buttonhold' is said quickly, the final 'd' is seldom heard – as a result, over a period of time, 'buttonhold' became 'buttonhole'.

How is the word 'insouciant' pronounced? (N Krishna, Bengaluru)

This rather formal word consists of four syllables. The first is pronounced like the word 'in', and the 'ou' in the second, sounds like the 'oo' in 'cool', 'pool' and 'fool'. The 'ci' is like the 'si' in 'sit', 'sip' and 'sin', and the following 'a' sounds like the 'a' in 'china'. The word is pronounced 'in-SUU-si-ent' with the stress on the second syllable. This French word literally means 'not caring': 'in' (not), 'souciant' (caring). If a person has a reputation of being 'insouciant', what it suggests is that the individual is rather carefree; he remains unperturbed by the things happening around him – he stays calm.

*When Jai was informed that he was likely to be fired, he gave an insouciant shrug.*

What is the difference between 'underemployed' and 'unemployed'? (Mangalam, Trichy)

'Unemployed' is the opposite of 'employed'; a person who is 'unemployed' has no job, and is in search of one. There are many unemployed people in our country. 'Underemployed' suggests that the individual has a job, but it is not very demanding or challenging – it is one that does not use the skillset of the individual to the fullest.

*Vignesh prefers to be unemployed rather than underemployed.*

*Anuradha was underemployed and was very unhappy with her job.*

What is the meaning of 'all but'? (B Vikram, Hissar)

The expression has several different meanings. It can be used to mean 'almost' or 'almost completely'.

*In many cities in our country, sparrows have all but disappeared.*

According to the media, the result of the upcoming election is all but certain.

The expression can also be used to mean 'except for'.

*My manager rejected all but one of my suggestions.*  
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## THE DAILY QUIZ

# With five awardees in this year, here is a quiz on India's highest civilian award, the Bharat Ratna

## V. V. Ramanan

### QUESTION 1

Name the three recipients of the Bharat Ratna when it was first awarded in 1954.

### QUESTION 2

What is the Bharat Ratna shaped like and what are the two images on the obverse and reverse of the medallion?

### QUESTION 3

Who are the only two non-Indian citizens to have been honoured with the award?

### QUESTION 4

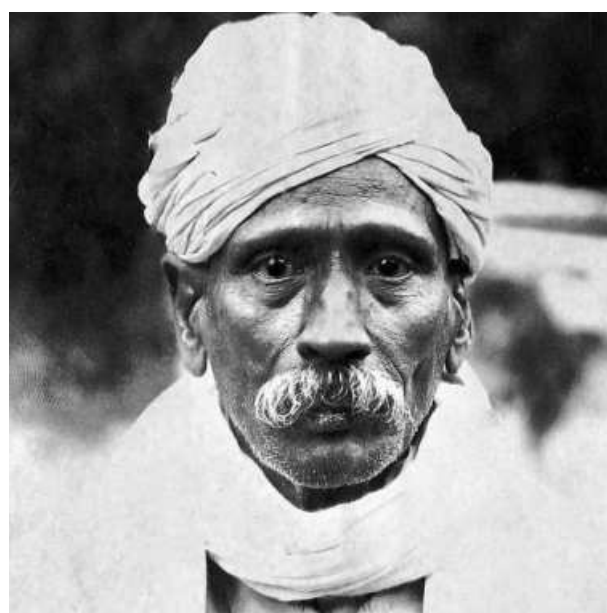
Who was the third woman, after Indira Gandhi and Mother Teresa, to be given the Bharat Ratna albeit posthumously?

### QUESTION 5

Who are the two awardees who went on to become the President of India?

### QUESTION 6

As of February 11, 2024, who are the three living recipients of the award?



**Visual Question:** Name this oldest (non-posthumous) recipient of the award. THE HINDU ARCHIVES

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

- On February 9, 1959, the world's first intercontinental ballistic missile entered service for the Soviet Union. The missile part of it was called R-7. What was its launcher called? **Ans: Semyorka**
- Identify the three countries that don't have operational ICBMs and name two countries not on the list that do have them. **Ans: Don't have: Australia, Japan, Saudi Arabia; have: Israel, the U.K.**
- Name the military doctrine that is the foundation of nuclear peace – the idea that if two nuclear powers are armed with nuclear weapons and have both first- and second-strike capabilities, they don't have an incentive to attack each other nor to disarm. **Ans: Mutually assured destruction (MAD)**
- Name the 1972 treaty under which the U.S. and the Soviet Union agreed to not develop anymore new ICBMs after the treaty date. **Ans: SALT I**
- What does MIRV stand for? **Ans: Multiple independently targetable reentry vehicle**  
Visual: Name this ICBM developed by North Korea, first successfully tested in March or November 2022. **Ans: Hwasong-17**

**Early Birds:** Parthi J. S | Masum Reja

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

## Word of the day

### Faze:

disturb or disconcert someone

**Synonyms:** embarrass, confuse, rattle

**Usage:** *She's so calm, nothing seems to faze her.*

**Pronunciation:** bit.ly/fazeporo

**International Phonetic Alphabet:** /feɪz/

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