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Cong. dividing people to regain power: PM NEWS » PAGE 11





SRI LANKAN FOREIGN MINISTER 'India didn't force us to ban research vessels'

**WORLD** » PAGE 13

There were more prisoners on death row in 2023 The number was the

highest in two decades

**OPINION** » PAGE 9



**Australia crushes** India, wins U-19 title **SPORT » PAGE 15** 



#### **CM dares Shah** for debate on guarantees

#### BENGALURU

Challenging Union Home Minister Amit Shah to a debate on guarantee schemes, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Sunday said if BJP leaders had any objection to guarantee schemes they should clearly state it. » Page 4

#### **Budget session** begins today

#### BENGALURU

The 10-day session of the State legislature will begin from Monday with Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot's address to both the Houses of the legislature. Chief Minister Siddaramaiah will present the Budget on February 16.

**EDUCATION PLUS** » PAGE 7

# Direct tax kitty picks up pace, up 20.25% by Feb. 10

Net direct tax collections increase from ₹14.7 lakh cr. on Jan. 10 to hit ₹15.6 lakh cr. by Saturday; the Finance Minister had pegged revised estimates for direct taxes for this year at ₹19.5 lakh cr.

#### **Vikas Dhoot** NEW DELHI

ndia's net direct tax collections picked up pace over the past month to rise 20.25% yearon-year by February 10, compared to a 19.4% uptick on the same date in January, show data released by the Finance Ministry on Sunday.

Growth in the Personal Income Tax (PIT) revenues continued to outstrip Corporate Income Tax (CIT), with a 26.91% uptick in net PIT collections vis-à-vis a 13.6% rise in CIT inflows so far this year.

From ₹14.7 lakh crore on January 10, net direct tax collections, that are calculated by deducting refunds from gross tax inflows, had hit ₹15.6 lakh crore by Saturday, making up 80.23%

#### Direct tax collections are at 80.23% of the Revised estimates for FY24 as of February 10 Gross direct tax collections amount to ₹18.38 lakh crore. showing a year-on-year growth of 17.30%

of refunds, stands at ₹15.60 lakh crore, indicating a year on-year growth of 20.25% The net corporate income

Direct tax collection, net

Tax mop-up

tax (CIT) has grown by 13.57%, and the net personal income tax (PIT) has grown

of the revised estimates for direct taxes for this year.

#### **Higher expectations**

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, in her interim Budget for 2024-25, had raised her hopes for the direct tax kitty for this year, pegging revised estimates

at ₹19.5 lakh crore, from the ₹18.23 lakh crore origiestimated nally 2023-24.

by 26.91% year-on-year

Refunds amounting to

and February 10, 2024

₹2.77 lakh crore have been

issued between April 1, 2023,

"We are quite hopeful of meeting the Revised Estimates for the current year, as the asking rate is 17% growth for the next two months. But we don't

know how Advance Tax will come through, so let us see how much we are able to achieve because it is the product of the collections which will be made in the month of February and March and refunds which will be issued," Central Board of Direct Taxes chairperson Nitin Gupta told The Hindu last week.

"The provisional figures of direct tax collections continue to register steady growth. Direct tax collections up to February 10, 2024 show that gross collections are at ₹18.38 lakh crore, which is 17.30% higher than the gross collections for the corresponding period of last year," the Ministry said in a statement.

**CONTINUED ON** » PAGE 10

### Farmers may start Delhi march today as talks collapse



Precautionary measure: Barricades being placed on the Delhi-U.P. boundary to stop the protesting farmers, on Sunday. R.V. MOORTHY

#### <u>A. M. Jigeesh</u> NEW DELHI

Approximately one lakh farmers belonging to the Samyukt Kisan Morcha-Non Political (SKM-NP), a splinter group of the original SKM, started preparations for a rally in Delhi on Tuesday seeking guaranteed minimum support prices (MSPs) for their pro-

The first round of talks with the Union govern-

ment on this demand had collapsed on Thursday, and farmers from neighbouring States have been gathering in preparation for a march to the national capital on Monday.

SKM-NP leader Shiv Kumar Kakka, who is also a former RSS functionary, was detained by the Madhya Pradesh Police on Sunday.

**CONTINUED ON** 

### BJP resolves to counter Congress campaign

#### The Hindu Bureau MYSURU

The State BJP's core committee meeting, chaired by Union Home Minister Amit Shah here on Sunday, resolved to counter the Congress' campaign against the Narendra Modi-led Union government over the alleged injustice to Karnataka by providing comprehensive information on the release of Central funds to the State.

#### Discussion

The Congress' campaign against the Union government over the alleged discrimination in release of funds to Karnataka came up for discussion at the core committee meeting, which discussed strategies for the coming Lok Sabha elections.

**CONTINUED ON** » PAGE 4

### Pak. parties step up efforts to form a coalition govt.

#### **Press Trust of India**

The three main political parties in Pakistan on Sunday intensified their efforts for the formation of a coalition government after it became clear that the countrv faced a hung parliament after the general elections.

The Election Commission of Pakistan has announced the results of 264 out of 265 contested seats in the 266-member National Assembly. Independent candidates, a vast majority of them backed by jailed former Prime Minister Imran Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), won 101 seats. They were followed by Nawaz Sharif's Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) with 75 seats.

The Pakistan Peoples



Imran Khan supporters block the Peshawar-Islamabad motorway on Sunday demanding free and fair results of the election. REUTERS

Party of Bilawal Zardari Bhutto got 54 seats, and the Muttahida Qaumi Movement Pakistan (MQM-P) got 17 seats.

The PML-N was leading the push to form the coalition government and its leaders on Sunday held a meeting with MQM-P leaders. In a statement later, the PML-N said both parties have reached a "principle agreement" to work together in the upcoming government.

Meanwhile, police fired tear gas to disperse supporters of Mr. Khan after his party urged protests outside election offices where they said rigging had taken place.

**POLICE, SUPPORTERS CLASH** 

#### Narayansa Bandage gets BJP ticket for RS election

#### The Hindu Bureau

This seat is now repre-Rajeev

Mr. Bandage is a founder-member of the ABVP in Bagalkot district. He is from an OBC

The former Minister V. Somanna too was one of the aspirants for the seat.

**BJP FIRST LIST** 

#### BENGALURU

The BJP has chosen the former MLC and Hindutva veteran from North Karnataka Narayansa Bandage as its candidate for the Rajva Sabha election from Karnataka scheduled for February 27.

sented by Union Minister Chandrasekhar, who is likely to enter the Lok Sabha election fray.

community.

» PAGE 10

# 25 more held; Uttarakhand seeks extra forces

#### <u>Ishita Mishra</u> NEW DELHI

The Uttarakhand Police arrested 25 more people on Sunday for their alleged involvement in the violence that left five dead and many injured in Haldwani last week, after a 'madrasa and masjid' were demolished during an anti-encroachment drive. All those arrested were from the Muslim community.

The State has requested the Union government to send additional forces to Haldwani to maintain law and order there.

The police said that they had recovered seven country-made pistols and 54 live bullets from the accused, apart from ammu-



a road following incidents of violence in Haldwani, on Sunday. PTI

nition allegedly stolen from the police, including some that is suspected to have been taken from an attacked police station.

Addressing a media briefing, Haldwani's Senior Superintendent of Police Prahlad Narayan Meena said that at least one police weapon is missing from a

police vehicle set on fire at the spot of the demolition. "We have recovered 67

live bullets of 7.62 mm bore and 32 live bullets of 9 mm bore from the possession of the 25 arrested accused who were part of the violence," said Mr. Meena, adding that a total of 30 people have been arrested in connection with the violence so far.

In a letter to the Union government, Uttarakhand Chief Secretary Radha Raturi said that additional companies of Central paramilitary forces are needed in Haldwani in the wake of the violence following the demolition of an encroaching structure at Malik ka Bagicha on February 8.

With curfew being lifted in the district on Saturday, markets and shops reopened in many parts of the town on Sunday morning. However, the roads remained deserted around Banbhoolpura, the epicentre of the violence.

**CONTINUED ON** 

» PAGE 10



For more information, call: 85 85 85 85

\*T&C apply, as available on the platform.

### Bengaluru

#### **INBRIEF**

#### Woman killed, several others injured in serial accident

A 28-year-old woman was killed and several others injured when a speeding canter knocked down a pedestrian and hit several vehicles in a serial accident at Kote Circle in Hoskote on Sunday. The deceased, Sudha, a resident of Bannerghatta and a factory employee, was crossing the road. The canter knocked down a motorcycle before crashing into a KSRTC bus. A rider identified as Nazir Khan from Mulbagal was also injured. Some bus passengers escaped with minor injuries. The canter driver, Shafiullah, 30, from Kolkata, sustained multiple fractures.

#### Chain-snatcher tracked down after 26 years

The Jayanagar police on Saturday tracked down a man who was on the run after being booked for chain-snatching 26 years ago. The accused, Gulab Pasha, 50, allegedly committed the offence while he was 24-years-old. He had robbed a gold chain from a woman Vasantha in Jayanagar 5th block in January 1998. He was arrested and released on bail later. Since he did not have any previous cases, he jumped bail and settled in Ramanagara working as welder after changing his name.

# BMTC mulling reintroduction of 'Pink buses' amidst Shakti scheme's success

Launched in 2006-07 exclusively for women, these buses were discontinued because of poor patronage

Darshan Devaiah B.P. BENGALURU

s Karnataka's Shakti Scheme is seeing huge success and has led to an increased women ridership on buses, Bengaluru Metropolitan Transport Corporation (BMTC) is now considering the reintroduction of 'Pink buses' in Bengaluru.

Speaking to The Hindu, Transport Minister Ramalinga Reddy said that the idea of pink buses was initially given by Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar during a recent bus launch event. "Following the successful launch of

Shakti, women's ridership in Karnataka buses has increased. Now, we are in the process of adding more buses to the fleet. The pink bus idea is good and we are exploring the possibility of introducing new pink buses in the BMTC fleet, exclusively dedicated to women passengers," he said. Initially launched in

2006-07 exclusively for women, the pink buses were discontinued owing to poor patronage. Subsequently, BMTC considered reintroducing them multiple times, but the plans didn't materialize for various reasons. "BMTC will examine how pink buses



was introduced in Karnataka, RAVICHANDRAN N.

can benefit women passengers. We need to identify routes with higher women passengers and obtain approval from the State government to procure new

buses. Our officials will conduct a route rationalisation study," Mr. Reddy said.

Since the launch of the Shakti Scheme on June 11, 2023, till February 10, 2024, the RTCs have issued over 150 Crore "zero tickets" indicating the number of free bus rides women have taken utilising the scheme. The cumulative value of tickets so issued has been ₹3,599.63 crore.

#### Additional buses to reduce holiday rush

Meanwhile, Mr. Reddy, who is also Muzrai and Endowment Minister, said that he has directed all four road transport corporations (RTCs) to deploy additional buses during the upcoming summer holidays season. The initiative aims to accommodate the increased travel anticipated in coming months during summer holidays for schools and colleges as people head to temples and other tourist destinations across the State utilizing the Shakti scheme.

"After the introduction of the Shakti scheme in the state, we observed a significant increase in women passengers utilising the scheme to travel to temples and various tourist destinations. We anticipate that many women passengers will travel during the upcoming summer holidays too, and therefore, all the corporations will have additional buses to various destinations," he added.

### 'Fake forex and stock trading apps are the new way to cheat gullible investors'

The Hindu Bureau BENGALURU

Beware of the forex and stock trading mobile applications you download and invest in. As awareness is catching up about fake investment scams that promise huge returns and the FedEx courier scam, cyber fraudsters have innovated and floated several fake forex and stock trading apps to cheat gullible investors.

"There have been a bunch of cases reported recently, where people have lost money investing in fake stock and forex trading apps. Once a person invests through this app, it shows the investment growing with very good returns. But when they try to withdraw the money, the app operators never give it back. The money is siphoned off and not even invested anywhere," a police official said.

Lured by a woman he met online, a 45-year-old businessman lost a total of ₹1.6 crore to online investment fraud through a forex trading app and lodged a complaint with the South Division Cyber Police recently. Hours later, another 39-year-old businessman Shankarapuram walked into the station complaining he had lost over ₹70 lakh on the same day, again through a forex trading app.

The South Division Cyber Crime Police registered separate cases under the IT Act, 2000, and also for impersonation and cheating.

#### Two cases

The first victim, Chetan M., 45, a resident of Banashankari 2nd Stage, told the police that he met a girl named Hasini Ravichandran on a dating website a few days ago. Hasini claiming to be

employed in an architecture firm and chatted with Chetan on his social media accounts a few times, before introducing him to forex trading platforms. She even volunteered to teach him some tricks of the trade and created telegram customer service ID before introducing him to two investment firms online.

Trusting her, Chetan

transferred a total of ₹1.63 crore through different accounts by RTGS payment mode in December. In a few days he noticed that there was a growth in his investment and excited, he tried to withdraw the money, but it was blocked. When he approached the firms, they advised him to pay taxes and other service charges in lakhs to get back his investment and profit. Chetan shared his experience with friends to realise that he had been cheated.

Similarly, Rajendra Kumar, 39, a businessman from Shankarapuram was introduced to online trading and invested in Blackrock Investment worth ₹36.5 lakh in December. Within a month, he noticed that the total amount was ₹4.5 crore in his account. Excited, he tried to withdraw it, but failed. When he approached the firm, representatives told him to invest another ₹40 lakh to get access to his account. He did so and lost this amount

#### 'Be careful'

"These are just two cases of the many being filed by victims of the same modus operandi these days. We appeal to investors to be careful with their money and invest it only through genuine and well known stock/forex trading apps," a senior official said.

### UAS-B to make 'Walk with nature @GKVK' a regular feature



**The Hindu Bureau** 

The University of Agricultural Sciences-Bengaluru, which organised 'Walk with nature @GKVK', a guided walk on its sprawling campus to introduce various aspects of agriculture to urbanites on Sunday, has decided to make it a regular feature, enthused by the good response of

The first edition of the walk saw the participation of about 150 people from

various walks of life. The university had allowed the general public to register for a fee of ₹300. Looking at the response, Vice-Chancellor Suresha said measures would be taken to make the walk a regular feature. It is learnt that academicians of the university believe it should be held once a month.

#### **Biggest lung space**

The GKVK campus is the biggest lung space of the Garden City as it is spread over 1,200 acres - bigger

Participants taking a walk on the GKVK campus in Bengaluru on Sunday, SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT, SUDHAKARA JAIN than both the Cubbon Park

and Lal Bagh put together. During the walk from 6.45 a.m. to 2.15 p.m., the participants were taken to 11 different facilities of the university including the Agricultural Museum, Bakery Training Unit, Bee Park, Botanical Garden and Animal Husbandry

Over 50 academicians and researchers from the university briefed participants about the activities at these centres. They also introduced them to rich tree

cover on campus by creating awareness about both common and botanical names of prominent tree species. The participants were allowed to handle honey bee boxes, ride bullock carts and participate in winnowing besides feeding cattle. They were also introduced to some of the bird species on campus.

#### Health breakfast

The participants were given breakfast and lunch made from millets on the occasion.

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C.K.V.K. LAW ASSOCIATES

Mr. VENKATESH CHANDRAN M.A., L.L.B

### Pilot on satellite-based toll collection on Bengaluru Mysuru Expressway

The Hindu Bureau BENGALURU

The Union government has decided to implement as a pilot project of the Global Navigation Satellite System (GNSS) based barrier less free flow tolling on access-Controlled 10-lane Mysuru-Expressway Bengaluru (Highway).

In a reply to a question by Rajya Sabha member Lahar Singh Siroya recently, Nitin Gadkari, Transport Minister, stated that it has been decided to conduct pilots of satellite-based toll collection on roads includ-Bengaluru-Mysuru NH-275 in Karnataka.

"The government has

**The Hindu Bureau** 

BENGALURU



A toll booth on Bengaluru Mysuru Expressway, BHAGYA PRAKASH K.

Learning through a barter party

appointed a consultant to provide advisory services on the implementation of new technologies like GNSS based barrier-less free-flow tolling. GNSS has the capacity to retrieve the positioning of the vehicle on the Na-

on to the wall at the Cub-

bon Park Metro Station and nearby places, in an tional Highway calculate the user fee based on the distance travelled," Mr. Gadkari said.

On February 7, Mr. Gadkari told the Rajya Sabha that the technology, which has been under the govern-

ment's consideration for over three years, will allow barrier-free movement of cars, which will not be required to stop for toll payments.

He said the photo of the registration plate of the vehicle will be captured and the toll amount will be debited based on the actual length of the highway traversed by the vehicle. This will replace the radio frequency identificationbased Fastags that were rolled out in 2016 and made mandatory from January 2021. A total of 8.13 crore Fastags have since been issued, and a penetration of 98% has been achieved, according to the Minister.

### Residents protest against proposed 10-storey building in Cubbon Park

<u>The Hindu Bureau</u>

Hundreds of people on Sunday gathered at Cubbon Park and held a protest against a proposed 10storeyed building to come up as an annex to the High Court within the park premises.

This move comes after the Department of Public Works (PWD) proposed reviving an earlier project to build an annex to the High Court in Cubbon Park. S. Umesh Kumar, the president of the Cubbon Park Walkers' Association, opposed to the government's reported proposal for a 10storey building within Cubbon Park. He said the building would take up park space and would increase pedestrian and veh-



Cubbon Park Walkers' Association members and concerned citizens staging a protest on Sunday. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

icular traffic. Mr Kumar urged the government to drop the proposal.

Mr. Umesh stated that the proposal to construct a 10-storey annex had been on hold for the last five vears due to the concerns and opposition raised by activists and environmentalists against building within Cubbon Park. "The government's proposal to build a 10-storeyed building in the city's prime lung space is condemna-

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Order opposed The Association also opposed a Government Order passed on February 8 by the Horticulture Department that permitted the movement of vehicles inside Cubbon Park on the second and fourth Saturdays for three months.

### Advocates & Legal Consultants Bangalore-43. M: 9845846428, 080-48658774

**PUBLIC NOTICE** our client Sri.V.A.Murthy urf V.Achutha Murth

nereunder from the present owner Bri.M.Mallaiah S/o Late Muniyappa & his famil embers residing at Ichanguru Village. Th wners represented that they are an absolute wners of the schedule property and they have not entered into any agreement of sale or any so f arrangement with any persons and apart fro e are no other person/s having any so of right, title, interest or claim over the schedul

ny person or persons asserting any charge, lie right, title, agreement, interest or claim on the chedule Property or any part thereof in an anner or having any claim against the Schedul operty or against the owners or any objection to ich sale in favour of our client should lodg 15 days of the issuance of this public notice, after at our client shall proceed with the purchase of e schedule property on the basis that there a o claims of whatsoever nature with regards to t

SCHEDULE PROPERTY that piece and parcel of land bearing \$ lo.23/1. measuring 26 guntas situated

aluk, Bangalore District and bounded on the ast by : Land belongs to Ramachandra Reddy Nest by: Land belongs to Anandreddy

: Land belongs to Thimmai : Muchandra gadi

The barter party programme was been organised as part of Srishti

C.K.V.K. LAW ASSOCIATES Advocates & Legal Consultants Nore-43. M: 9845846428, 080-486

The general public are hereby notified that my client Mr.C.Irudayaraj S/o.Sri.J.Chowriappan, has lost Original GPA dated 16.03.1992, executed by Shantaraj S/o. Arogyaswamy in favour of Neen rudayaraj W/o.C.Irudayaraj attested by Advocate Notary Public S.Sangameshwar pertaining to Site No.29, formed in Sy No.226, of Kittiganoor Village, Bidarahalli Hobli, Bangalore East Taluk, measuring East to West 40 Feet and North to South 30 Feet, in all measuring 1200 Square feet . In this regard a police complaint was lodged on 11.02.2024 before the Bangalore city Police vide Lost Repor No.0926575/2024. If any person/s finds the said ocuments please inform the above stated per nisuses the said document, the same is no binding on my client and they sha**ll** do so at the

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Namma Metro.

collected "Drawings from commuters are going

part of the "Art in Transit"

project in association with

Commuters using the Cubattempt to create a story bon Park Metro Station out of the same," said Siddhad a pleasant surprise ovhi Gupta, a facilitator of er the weekend. They were the event. asked to contribute art and Several commuters congot works of art in return at tributed sketches. Iman the 'barter party' organ-Chatterjee said that the ised by students of Srishti event helped art students Manipal Institute of Arts, interact with and under-Design and Technology as stand people's tastes.

> Barkha Avinash, a student, said that the party was a great experience interacting with people and their likes and dislikes.



Manipal Institute of Arts, Design and Technology's course 'Art in Transit' at Cubbon Park. ROHIT D.S.

### Bengaluru

THE HINDU

#### 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 Bengaluru

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

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#### THEMAHINDU

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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 (BIP) 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 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,

### 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 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-

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

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शुद्धिपत्र दिनांक 12.02.2024 / CORRIGENDUM DATED 12.02.2024

**दिनांक 01.07.2023 के विज्ञापन सं. 327 तथा दिनांक 16.01.2024 के शब्दिपत्र** द्वारा अधिसूचित रिक्तियों के अतिरिक्त, नीचे दिए गए ब्यौरों के अनुसार, मानव अंतरिक्ष उड़ान केंद्र (एचएसएफसी), बेंगलुरु 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

क्रम सं./Sl 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	l ' ' ' ' '	1515	01
3	Scientist/Engineer-SC	1520	01

ब्यौरों के लिए, कृपया दिनांक 12.02.2024 को 1000 बजे से दिनांक 21.02.2024 को 1700 बजे तक कृपया वीएसएससी वेबसाइट <u>http://www.vssc.gov.in</u> 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 <a href="http://www.vssc.gov.in">http://www.vssc.gov.in</a> 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 वरिष्ट प्रशासन अधिकारी/Sr. Administrative Officer, आर एवं आर / R & R



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Shri. Siddaramaiah

Hon'ble Chief Minister

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

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### Karnataka

#### From Page One

#### **BJP** resolves to counter **Congress campaign**

Speaking to reporters after the meeting, party State unit president B.Y. Vijayendra said the BJP, in the coming days, would expose the Congress government's "malicious" campaign against the Centre by providing comprehensive information on the funds released during Mr. Modi's regime.

Former national general secretary of BJP, C.T. Ravi said the party would release all data on release of Central funds to Railways, construction of roads and for other welfare programmes of the State during Mr. Modi's tenure.

Seeking to counter the Congress campaign on the issue, Mr. Ravi claimed that Karnataka had received a total of ₹1.42 lakh crore from the Centre in the form of tax devolution and grant-in-aid during the 10 years of the Manmohan Singh government. However, during Mr. Modi's rule, it received a total of ₹4.91 lakh crore, which is about ₹3.49 lakh crore more.

Yet, the Congress government in the State was making an effort to create a misunderstanding among the people over the issue, he lamented.

"The State's treasury may be empty. So, they have come up with such a campaign to cover up their failures," Mr. Ravi alleged while accusing Chief Minister Siddaramaiah of designing such a "toolkit" to stir up "regional chauvinism" to counter "nationalistic feelings".

Mr. Vijayendra claimed that all development works in the State had come to a standstill and the Congress government was pointing a finger towards the BJP government at the Centre to "hide

The meeting focussed on the strategies needed for the BJP and its NDA partner --- JD (S) --- to win all the 28 Lok Sabha seats in the State. While the BJP and its allies presently hold 27 out of the 28 seats in the State, the party needed to focus on adding only one seat to the tally for a clean sweep of the State, Mr. Ravi said.

The issue of seat-sharing between BJP and JD (S), however, did not figure in the meeting. Mr. Ravi clarified that the issues relating to it would come up for discussion only during a meeting of the BJP with its NDA partners.

The core committee meeting was also attended BJP's Karnataka's election in-charge Radhamohan Das Agarwal, Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Assembly R. Ashok, former Chief Ministers Basavaraj Bommai and D.V. Sadananda Gowda, besides former Deputy Chief Minister K.S. Eshwarappa and former Minister B. Sriramulu.

The core committee meeting was followed by a meeting of Mysuru cluster, comprising leaders from five districts of Mysuru, Kodagu, Chamarajanagar, Mandya, and Hassan.

# Modi brought respect to India's cultural heritage on the global stage: Shah

Apart from making the country safe and prosperous, the Prime Minister has also worked towards conserving yoga and ayurveda as well as Indian languages, he says

The Hindu Bureau

ome Minister Amit Shah has claimed that Prime Minister Narendra Modi had brought respect to India's cultural heritage on the global stage by reviving the centres of cultural consciousness in the country.

Speaking after inaugurating the Smt. Parvathamma and Sri Shamanur Shivashankarappa Guest House at Suttur Srikshethra near here on Sunday, Mr. Shah described the recent consecration of Ram Temple in Ayodhya, the construction of Kashi Vishwanath corridor in Varanasi, Mahakal corridor in Ujjain, and the development of Kedarnath and Badrinath as a process of reviving the country's centres of cultural consciousness.

Apart from making the country safe and prosperous, Mr. Modi had also worked towards conserving yoga and ayurveda as well as Indian languages, he said.

Mr. Shah, who complimented seer of the Suttur Mutt Shivarathri Deshikendra Swami for the decision to open a branch of the mutt in Ayodhya, assured to extend the BJP's support to the mutt's social service and contribution to socie-

Earlier, he paid glowing



Home Minister Amit Shah with seer of Suttur Mutt Shivarathri Deshikendra Swami after the inauguration of a guest house at Suttur Srikshetra, near Mysuru, on Sunday. M.A. SRIRAM

tributes to the 12th century social reformer Basavanna and said his teachings were not only helpful to his followers, but also enlightened crores of other people and showed them the way of life.

**Suttur Mutt's service** He acknowledged the selfless service to society by

the Suttur Mutt and the 24 seers, who had headed the religious institution so far. While pointing out that the mutt ran 350 educational institutions having more than 20,000 staff members and more than one lakh students, Mr. Shah made a special mention of the JSS Polytechnic for the disabled, which provided education to more than 900 students.

Earlier, the seer said Congress MLA Davangere Shamanur Shivashankarappa had offered to construct the guest house for the convenience of the visitors to Suttur Srikshetra. The guest house, which was inaugurated by Mr. Shah on Sunday, can accommodate more 700 people at a time,

Though the guest house was scheduled to be inaugurated during the Suttur Jathra Mahotsava held last year, Mr. Shah was unable to make a visit them. However, it was destined to be inaugurated by him this year, the seer said.

he said.

State BJP president B.Y. Vijayendra, who also spoke on the occasion, said Suttur mutt had done yeomen service not only in the field of education, but also in the area of providing healthcare and other sectors such as culture and literature.

Mr. Vijayendra also acknowledged the guidance his father and former Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa received from the seers of the Siddaganga Mutt and Suttur Mutt.

Union Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Pralhad Joshi, the former Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai, Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Assembly R. Ashok, Mysuru MP Pratap Simha, the former MP Prabhakar Kore, and the former national general secretary of BJP C.T. Ravi were also present on the

# CM dares Shah for debate on guarantees

<u>The Hindu Bureau</u> BENGALURU

Challenging Union Home Minister Amit Shah to a deon guarantee schemes, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Sunday said that if BJP leaders had any objection to guarantee schemes they should clearly state it and announce discontinuation of all guarantee schemes in BJPruled States. He also accused Prime Minister Narendra Modi of "stealing" guarantee schemes that he had opposed earlier.

"Why are BJP leaders trying to destabilise guarantee schemes in Karnataka? Do they harbour hatred for the people of Karnataka? If Mr. Shah believes that the treasury is empty because of the guarantee schemes, he should participate in a public debate with me. I can prove that our treasury is not empty because of the guarantee schemes. Instead. there is an unfair distribution of taxes from the Centre to the State," the Chief Minister said in a statement.

#### 'Anti-poor' stance

He said that while BJP leaders oppose the guarantee schemes in Karnataka, they are promising to implement the same guarantee schemes in BJP-ruled States. "Mr. Modi, who opposed our guarantee schemes, has now stolen not only our guarantee schemes but also the name 'guarantee' and is advertising under the same name. schemes, shows disdain

Mr. Shah, who speaks against our guarantee

for Kannadigas. Opposition to the Kannada flag, attempts at Hindi imposition, and the conspiracy to favour Amul over Nandini are all achievements of

SIDDARAMAIAH,

Mr. Shah.

This shows the anti-poor stance and intellectual bankruptcy of that party."

The real opposition is not to the guarantee schemes, but beneficiaries of the schemes, he said, adding that historically the BJP and the Sangh Parivar opposed any social justice programmes for the poor. "The Central government, which had refused to provide the rice required for the Anna Bhagya scheme, is now selling the same rice under the brand 'Bharat'," he said. "Mr. Shah, who speaks against our guarantee schemes, shows disdain for Kannadigas. Opposition to the Kannada flag, attempts at Hindi imposition, and the conspiracy to favour Amul over Nandini are all achievements of Mr. Shah. Disaster relief is provided by the Centre after a high-level committee meeting chaired by the Home Minister decides. Mr. Shah does not even call for such a meeting but comes to our State and lectures us," Mr. Siddaramaiah said.

### Protest against Union Home Minister's visit

The Hindu Bureau

Members of the Mysuru District Congress took to the streets on Sunday opposing the visit of Union Home Minister Amit Shah.

The protest was against the "apathy" of the Union government in releasing relief funds though Karnataka was reeling under unprecedented drought and the farmers had suffered crop loss.

Congress leaders put up

posters near Field Marshal K.M. Cariappa Circle in the city, questioning Mr. Shah for the delay in the release of funds and the "stepmotherly" treatment towards the State.

District Congress leaders, led by Mysuru City Congress president R. Murthy, said the total loss due to the drought had been pegged at ₹35,162 crore while the natural disaster had affected 223 taluks. Though the Karnataka government led by Chief Minister Siddaramaiah had sought ₹18,171 crore, the Union government had not released a single paisa so far, the Congress leaders said.

Mr. Shah was also questioned as to why the Union government had remained silent and not intervened when Karnataka was being asked to release water to Tamil Nadu despite the drought situation.

They also raised questions on the disparity in tax devolution to the State.

creating traffic hassles, Mr.



protest in Mysuru on Sunday. M.A. SRIRAM

### CM holds pre-Budget talks with farmers

The Hindu Bureau

maiah on Sunday met leaders from farmers' organisations part pre-budgetary consultation exercise.

Leaders who attended the meeting expressed happiness at the guarantee schemes being implemented in the State. Among about a hundred demands that came from farmers during the meeting were to



Chief Minister Siddaramaiah with leaders of farmers' organisations during the pre-Budget consultation meeting in Bengaluru on Sunday.

increase nutrition among the farming community, lake development, upgrading of skills of agriculture officers to meet current needs, and programmes in

the Budget to raise hope among youth from the farming community.

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#### **CORRIDORS OF POWER**

#### **Waiver of education** loan sought

To attract youth voters towards the Congress in the upcoming Lok Sabha elections, KPCC general secretary and Ram Manohar Lohia Thinkers Forum chairman B.S. Shivanna has demanded that Chief Minister Siddaramaiah announce a waiver of education loans borrowed by rural students for pursuing graduation and postgraduation studies. A large number of youth voters are seen as supporters of the BIP in the parliamentary elections. To check this. Mr. Shivanna has written to Mr. Siddaramaiah, who will present the State Budget on February 16, to announce a one-time waiver of education loans borrowed by rural students. With rising unemployment, the Congress leader, who had filed a PIL petition in the High Court of Karnataka seeking waiver of educational loans two years ago, said in the letter that a large number of

rural graduates had

payment of monthly of loan instalments to banks had caused financial distress in rural areas.

become unemployed and

Fight over street fest Dakshina Kannada MP Nalin Kumar Kateel and Mangaluru City South MLA D. Vedavyasa Kamath, both from the BJP, are patrons of Kudla Samskritika Prathisthana which has been hosting a street food festival and a tiger dance competition in Mangaluru for the last two years. The Opposition Congress in the Mangaluru City Corporation council raised an issue pertaining to the festival, the second edition of which was organised in January 2024, in the meeting of the council last month. Leader of the Opposition in the council T. Praveenchandra Alva, quoting from a newspaper report, began to criticise the corporation council, led by the BJP, for permitting the festival as it caused inconvenience to many vehicle users. One

entire side of M.G. Road

was used for the festival,

Alva and other Opposition members said. And pat came Mayor Sudheer Shetty Kannur's reply, that the Speaker and Manglauru MLA U.T. Khader from the Congress had attended the inaugural session of the festival and praised it. The Speaker even suggested that the festival should be bigger and better from next year, the Mayor said. With this, the issue came to an end abruptly and the council took up other

matters for discussion. Time and tide A recent event to felicitate the former Congress Minister and senior Socialist leader Kagodu Thimmappa (in picture) in Sagar had his longtime associate B.R. Jayanth, also a Congress leader, recalling an incident from the Emergency days. Those days Mr. Thimmappa was in the Opposition. Many opposing the Emergency were behind bars. The police were looking for Mr. Thimmappa and his companions. They hid in a

village on the banks of the Varada. Somehow, the police learnt about their hideout and were making efforts to reach them. Mr. Thimmappa decided to move out, crossing the river. His associates suggested



getting caught by the police was better than the risk of crossing

Thimmappa, being an expert swimmer and someone who knew the ways of the river well, not only crossed the Varada safely but also helped the other two non-swimmers reach the other end. "Because of Thimmappa, we escaped from the police and stayed in the forest for three days," recalled Mr. Jayanth. However, for him, the tides of politics were far less easy to predict. He lost in the election held soon after the Emergency.

the river. However, Mr.

Nagesh Prabhu Raviprasad Kamila Sathish G.T.

### I'm not an aspirant for Mandya Lok Sabha seat, says Nikhil

The Hindu Bureau BENGALURU

Amid speculation over his possible candidature from the Mandya Lok Sabha constituency, Janata Dal (Secular) Youth Wing president Nikhil Kumaraswamy on Sunday said rumours over his contesting as a National Democratic Alliance (NDA) candidate were far from the truth.

"I am not a person who takes a U-turn. I am not a ticket aspirant for the Mandya Lok Sabha constituency. I have told this in the past too. I had lost the 2019 elections from Mandya and, naturally, local leaders and workers want me to contest," he told reporters here on Sunday after meeting the party's "digital warriors". He said he had also heard the rumours of his candidature over the last four days, and that he was very sure about the decision.

Acknowledging that there is pressure from party leaders and workers, Mr.



reporters in Bengaluru on Sunday. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Nikhil said he had travelled around Mandya for party work. "I want to strengthen the ID(S) and BIP alliance in the State and en-Prime Minister sure Narendra Modi is elected for the third term. My focus will be on all the 28 seats in the State."

Responding to questions about BJP leader and former MLA Preetham Gowda's opposition to seat-sharing in Mandya and Hassan, he said the BJP's central leaders and JD(S) top leadership would soon bring an end to such confusion.

"Only time will answer. You should have patience till then," he said.



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# How a slip in the lake turned Anand Malligavad into a conservationist

Anand Malligavad, who was recently recognised as 'Earth Champion' by Sony BBC Earth, speaks on how he got interested in lake rejuvenation and what drives him to do what he does

Preeti Zachariah BENGALURU

t began with a newspaper article claiming 21 cities, including Bengaluru, would run dry by 2025. "That really stuck with me," says Anand Malligavad, who was recently named "Earth Champion" by Sony BBC Earth. It got him thinking about why a city which once had surplus water was at risk of running out of it, and he began reading and reextensively searching about it.

"Bengaluru does not have big rivers," he says, pointing out that even the smaller ones, Vrishabhavathi, Kumudvathi, Arkavathy and Dakshina Pinakini, which generate from Nandi Hills, are now so polluted that they resembled septic tanks.

He also began investigating the city's lakes, once Bengaluru's primary source of potable water, many built by the Chola kings some 800-900 years ago. "They had built it systematically as interconnected, cascading lakes," he says, claiming that the city once boasted of nearly 1850 lakes. Around 465 remain, of which only a tiny percentage still contain clean water, the abysmal situation a function of the unprecedented growth over the last few decades. "Bangalore was not a metro city," says Anand. It was a small city surrounded by villages, each containing a lake or two built by our ancestors, which merged over the years. "Lakes were once the lungs of this area," he

In 2017, after spending a year or so on research, he decided to take matters into his own hands, a decision galvanised by an incident at the mostly dry Kyalasanahalli lake he drove past every day on his



A file photo of Varthur lake in poor condition. SUDHAKARA JAIN



A view of Hebbal lake. SUDHAKARA JAIN

way to his office; he worked in Sansera Engineering, an automotive components manufacturer, back then. Wanting to look closer, he began walking around the 36-acre lake, filled with debris, industrial effluents and sewage. Then, disaster struck. "I slipped and fell," he says, with a laugh, recalling how the stench of the lake clung onto him for days af-"That is when I thought of creating a model of lake rejuvenating, working in parallel with the government to resuscitate the water body."

Anand Malligavad grew up in the village of Karamudi, a small hamlet located in Karnataka's Koppal district, an hour or so away from Hampi, the erstwhile capital of the Vijayanagara kingdom. He says it was a dry, arid landscape, constantly prone to drought, comparing it to the state of Rajasthan in which the Thar Desert is located. The village lake, therefore, became the fulcrum around which life revolved, says Anand, who considers himself lucky because his school was near this lake. "I used to spend a lot of time there," he says, recalling how he frolicked in the water, making models of check dams and lagoons with mud. "That was my life. I learnt about ecosystems from that lake, something that helps me today," he believes.

In 1996, he moved to

Bengaluru to study mechanical engineering, getting a job at Sansera Engineering, where he would spend the next 15-odd years of his life before quitting in 2019 to pursue lake conservation full-time. He has fond memories of the city back then.

**Changing Bengaluru** 

"Bengaluru used to receive the best rains...had a great climate...rich soil...lots of greenery," he says, pointing out that this dense vegetation ensured moderate microclimates, plenty of rain and the fragrance of flowers constantly lingering in the air. He offers an adage, which was true about the city before it became the messy metro it is today. "Whenever a Bengalurian sweats, the city would receive rain."

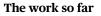
Not anymore, however. The former garden city, now constantly clogged with traffic, smog and construction dust, filled with high-rises, malls and IT Parks, is among the most water-starved cities in the world, with a crisis looming large almost every other summer, including this one. It is also vulnerable to frequent flooding, a function of poor infrastructure, concretisation and destruction of its lakes and green spaces, among other things. "Economy and infrastructure here are going up like a highrise building. But the environment is going down like water," he quips.

chunk of their earnings try-ference," he says. ing to source clean water. Rejuvenating lakes the **Dipping into the past** 

Water, like air, should be water but the entire ecoa free commodity, he be- system, including soil, walieves. And yet, most peoter, flora and fauna. "This ple in this city end up way, it will maintain itself spending a considerable and not need human inter-

right way could play a huge The first lake Anand decidpart in solving the city's ed to rejuvenate was the water shortage problem. lake he had fallen into -According to him, when Kyalasanahalli. He took a authorities rejuvenate the couple of months to design lakes, they don't always do a plan to rejuvenate it, so in an eco-sensitive and looking to the past for self-sustaining way. "They answers. "I used the con-

2017, he began working on the lake, dredging the filthy mud, creating islands for birds and planting many saplings with the help of volunteers over the next 45 days before finally stepping back to wait for the monsoons. Within six months, the lake, which had been parched for decades, was filled with water, so much that Anand could even boat across it.



Since then, Anand says he has rejuvenated over 35 lakes in the city, almost all paid for using CSR funds, and over 80 across the country, including U.P., Orissa, Telangana and Maharashtra, quitting his day job in 2019 to focus completely on lakes. He also conducts training programmes on lake rejuvenation all across the country, advising many states in India about better water management. Currently, he says, he is working on rejuvenating Billapura near Sarjapur Lake, Sira Lake in Tumkuru and Kolar's Kolaramma Lake. "We are planning for another 5 lakes; it is yet to start," he says.

While things have come a long way since 2015, there are still many challenges in lake conservation.

"People are more aware and know we need to do something, but they don't always come forward (to help), "he says. Encroachment is also a big issue, with the government often being lethargic about clearing it. "People fight with me," says Anand, who actively engages with local leaders and the community to sort out encroachment issues.

Yet, he remains hopeful that things will improve especially considering that the younger generation appears to be more concerned about the planet.



File photo of Haralur lake where hundreds of dead fish were found

focus on beautification, re- cept of the Chola and tech-

lying a lot on architects," nique of the current era," he says, pointing out that he says, pointing out that their water quality conti- the ancient kingdom has nued to be questionable used a "ridge to river" even after crores of rupees methodology, creating a were spent on these lakes. complex network of chan-Beautification, he firmly nels and bunds that both believes, is not the answer. conserved water and pre-Instead, water bodies vented flooding. should be rejuvenated in a way that is as natural as technology available," he sible, not says. Unlike the regular just fo- lake beautification pro-

cess, which often runs into on the crores, he believed he needed only around 95 lakhs to revive the 36-acrelarge lake. "I was looking for funds. Where to go? Whom to get it from?" remembers Anand, who turned to his own company's CSR wing to obtain these, taking almost three months to con-

Anand Malligavad

vince leadership of

project's

On April 20,

"It was the cheapest

## When climate action starts with children

The Parikrma Innovations conclave focused on how children could help mitigate the effects of climate change

Rohith D.S.

akshitha T. talks about how managing her waste effectively around six years ago, going on to share a practical suggestion.

"When you buy chips or any other (packaged) foods, make sure that when you tear it, the tip of it gets attached to the package itself," she says, pointing out that failure to do so may see that bit of plastic going into the compost bin, finally ending up in the ocean, and then, our food.

"It not only affects us, but it also affects the animals, birds and the environment, "says Rakshitha, who believes that taking these small steps can help mitigate climate change.

#### Climate change

Rakshitha, a student representing Parikrma Centre for Learning and a conservative enthusiast, was part of a panel titled, 'How can India prioritise climate change and what can children do to help?' at the Parikrma



Students exhibiting their models.

Innovations conclave. The event, a collaboration between Parikrma **Humanity Foundation and** NetApp, was held recently.

#### **Deforestation**

Talking about the innovation programme, which is now in its third year, Shukla Bose, the founder and CEO of the Parikrma Humanity Foundation, says climate change was chosen as this year's theme because it is so crucial.

"Children are very interested in it. But if you were to look at the curriculum, there is very little constructive application of climate



Participants explaining their models to visitors.

change in it," she says, adding he hoped that the programme would give them that exposure. "Our political leaders are going all over the world talking about how we are going to be zero emission and all that. But it needs to begin from the level of the young."

Model depicting climate change

Also present at the event was Dr. Nishant Srinivasaiah, a wildlife biologist specialising in elephant conservation who expressed concern that elephants have lost nearly half their homes due to deforestation and are struggling against the effects of various anthropomorphic activities.

**Innovative ideas** In a similar vein, Dr. Jeannet Kessels, the co-founder of Vets for Climate Action and a climate change advocate, talks about the animals massacred by the floods and fires that have engulfed Australia in recent years, courtesy of climate change.

The programme also ended up bringing up many innovative ideas from the students from different schools. Inventure Academy's 'We the Local' app ended up bagging the first prize at a contest aimed at rewarding those bringing in an innovative approach to climate change.

"We believe that such events play a pivotal role in the holistic development of our youth and provide them with the tools and inspiration needed to envision a brighter, more sustainable future," says Ravi Chhabria, the managing director of NetApp.

#### FROM THE ARCHIVES



FIFTY YEARS AGO FEBRUARY 12, 1974

#### Wage Agreement in HMT and HAL

Bangalore, Feb 11. The lowest unskilled worker in the two major Bangalore based public sector undertakings - the Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd (HAL) and the Hindustan Machine Tools Ltd (HMT) will get a minimum wage of Rs. 325 under a wage settlement reached here to-day, spokesmen of the managements and the unions

The agreement effective from October 1, 1973, was reached after a three-day meeting between the unions and managements. It covers thousands of workers in the units of these two industries in different States.

#### **Enough Foodgrains Moved** into Bangalore to Supply **More Rations**

Bangalore, Feb. 11: The State Government has taken action to build adequate stocks to facilitate enhancement of the quantum of ration to card holders In Bangalore City, the Food and Forest Minister. Mr. K. H. Patil, told newsmen here to-day.

The Government has already decided to enhance the ration In the Informal rationing areas In the State to seven kilograms per head per month. Mr. Patil said that foodgrains required to meet one month's demand of Bangalore had already been moved Into the city. In Mangalore, where the Government has decided to introduce Informal rationing, rice was being sold at Rs. 2 a kilogram by merchants.

### Bengaluru

#### **CITYBEATS**



#### Circus in town

#### FEBRUARY 10 TO 25

Step into a world of wonder as the Olympian Circus blends nostalgic charm with contemporary flair. Watch international acrobats, gymnasts, and artists defy gravity with their feats as well as mind-bending contortion, and more, all animal-free. The show at Exhibition Ground in Ramamurthy Nagar is for all age groups. Tickets on bookmyshow.com.



#### Lucky tunes

#### **FEBRUARY 17**

The soulful melodies of Lucky Ali are set to fill the city once again. Presented by OSN Innovations and Farmhouse Music, Ali, in the live concert, will serenade fans with his iconic classics. From 'O Sanam' to 'Sunoh' prepare to be swept away by a wave of nostalgia. At Bhartiya Mall of Bengaluru. Tickets, from ₹499 onwards, available on bookmyshow.com.



### Spirituality and artistry

Witness a performance combining Carnatic music and Bharatanatya, inspired by the sacred Sri Chakra symbol. Accomplished artistes Sumitra Nitin, Rekha Krishnan, B K Raghu Adamya Ramanand, and the Natyasruti Music Ensemble will take the stage. At Bangalore International Centre, from 7 pm to 8.45 pm. Free entry.

This no-contact sport, which gained popularity during the pandemic, could be on the list of Olympic games in the future



#### Kalyan Ashok

ootball, basketball and volleyball are old hat – pickleball is now a rage the world over. Started in 1965 in the United States, the sport now has 4.8 million players in nearly 80 countries, including India.

Pickleball combines elements of tennis, table tennis and badminton, and since it requires a fairly small court, it can be played both indoors and outdoors. As a contact-free sport, its popularity blossomed during the pandemic. An international federation and world body govern the rules and format of the game which is played on 11, 15 and 21 points. Much like the main sports it is derived from, players can serve either with an overhead or underhand move. If the ball hits the net or goes out of play, the serve changes hands and the opposite side gains a point. It can be played as singles, doubles and mixed doubles.

Pickleball was introduced to India by Sunil Valavalkar who first came across the game in 1999 while in Canada. In 2006, having learnt a lot more about the game, he decided to bring it to India. He demonstrated the game in neighbourhood in Mumbai and over a period of time he got college and school students involved in

Pickleball picked up pace in Mumbai and in 2008, Sunil founded the All India Pickleball Association of India (AIPA). His persistent efforts have seen the game travel to other states as well. Together with sports enthusiast and administrator Arvind Prabhoo, the duo have extensively promoted the game and the AIPA has conducted several state, national and international tournaments following its inception.

Rajat Kankar who is the general secretary for the state pickleball association in Karnataka, sees huge potential for the game and is working towards boosting its popularity, especially in Bengaluru. There is a pickleball court in Sadashivanagar, but the state needs a quite a few more courts in order to foster public interest in the game.

To this end, the role of CG Krishna Bhupathi has been



Anybody in the age group of eight to 80 can learn the game; it provides aerobic exercise and helps in promoting fitness.



rather crucial. Father of tennis ace Mahesh Bhupathi, with a coaching experience of over two decades, Krishna has been responsible for building several international standard tennis courts both in India and abroad. "With my team of

experts, we have built hundreds of tennis courts in India and abroad, including 28 in the Melbourne area and Margaret Court Arena in Australia. I am excited about the prospect of pickleball picking up in a big way in state and country," says Krish-

Vivek MV

name.

Suni's Ondu Sarala Prema Kathe comes a decade after blockbuster debut, Simple Agi Ondh Love Story (2014), starring Rakshit Shetty. As someone pointed out on social media, the new film's title reads exactly like another version of his first film's

This cheeky creative de-

cision defines Suni's jour-

ney in the Kannada film in-

dustry; the filmmaker has

found excitement in such

simple gimmicks, believing

there is a strong demand

for it. However, the results

of his recent movies tell

Ondu Sarala Prema

*Kathe* starts on a positive

note, without giving us a

another story.

na, adding that he has built international standard pickleball courts at the Bhupathi Tennis Village, which is a major training hub in Kodigehalli, Vidyaranyapura post, Bengalu-

"We built four courts in the tennis village with flexi pave and an acrylic surface, which can accommodate 16 players at a time. Pickleball is a simple game requiring only a paddle and a plastic ball, making it quite affordable. Anybody in the age group of eight to 80 can quickly learn the game; it provides aerobic exercise and helps in promoting fitness,"

Krishna. "As it is played on smaller courts, pickleball is a fast-paced game, but speed and power alone are not as important as strategy. Indian players use the wrist more often than their Western counterparts they can easily adapt to the game and excel at it," he

Pickleball courts,

Krishna Bhupathi

(below). SPECIAL

"My vision is to push the game to new heights by providing good courts and the right type of environment for the sport. I'm sure pickleball can become a major sport in the country and it is likely to become an Olympic sport in 2032. Hopefully, by then, Indian players would have gained enough experience and expertise to become dominant in the sport and make a mark on the world stage."

# 'Swan Lake' gets an Odissi flavour Poetry in motic A scene from Hansika SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

#### Charumathi Supraja

'Glide' is a word often used in the context of swans. The dance production, Hansika, created by Bengaluru-based Odissi exponent Sharmila Mukerjee, highlighted why. A remake of the timeless dance ballet, Swan Lake, in the Indian context, Hansika was marked by slow, graceful movements, and the beauty, associated with swans.

Originally choreographed by Julius Reisinger, with unforgettable music by Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky (released in 1877), Swan Lake has withstood the test of time, igniting curiosity in dancers, storytellers and performers, over the centuries. Watching Hansika, it was

easy to understand why it is so. The tragic tale of two lovers separated by a curse will never become outmoded, packed as it is with a range of emotions from love and jealousy to anger and vengeance, not to mention the age-old tussle between good and evil.

These emotional elements and the skill of the performance-creators allowed for a smooth transfer of the Eastern European tale to the Indian classical dance context. It is indeed creditable that the collaborators had made everything in the production from the music to lighting and costumes blend harmo-

Opening with a spectacular swan dance sequence, the aesthetic motifs and metaphors were established early in the performance. The group of dancers moved as one, their poise and unity conjuring the behaviour of a flock of birds as the evening light painted the lake and forest in its colours.

Here, we see the young Prince separated from his friend, wandering by the lake, searching for the elusive swans that mesmerised them just a few minutes ago. He meets Odette, who, transforms by night from swan to woman, living the curse of an

The use of Indian classical instruments held the story, while retaining the feel of the original music

enchantress, who, in this version of the Russian folk tale, happens to be her jealous sister. The classical Odissi sequence that followed showcased the competition between the sisters (both talented dancers even in the tale) that takes a nasty turn when one sister gives in to an evil streak and curses the other.

The never-say-die Enchantress, as she gloats over the lovers' plight, leaves the audience with a question on how long even the swans might last since the lakes are drying up on a dying planet. This was the only point in the performance that was ambiguous as it did not resonate with the character of the Enchantress or come through clearly as the story played out at that point.

Sharmila graciously acknowledged this when we spoke about the performance the next day. The performance evolves every time it is viewed, she says, highlighting that it was a "pleasure" to create this work based on a folk tale that has held her in thrall since childhood

a dance rooted in more

than one form.

hint of how things are going to stumble later. Suni establishes his characters It would not be an exagwith fine control. Atishay geration to say that the (Vinay Rajkumar) is a musmusic in the production ic composer, while Anurawas pitch perfect. The use ga (Swathishta Krishnan) is a brave television journalof the pakhawaj, flute, sitar, violin and vocals – all ist who exposes corrupt held the story, while repoliticians. The two have taining the twang of the known each other since childhood, but are perenoriginal music created by Tchaikovsky. This, coupled nially at loggerheads. with the elegant dancing by the artistes of Sanjali Ensemble, made Hansika a rich experience of viewing

The film treats music and the world of musicians with dignity. Sadhu Kokila plays himself, a gifted music composer, and kudos to Suni for not wasting him



#### **Ondu Sarala Prema Kathe** (Kannada)

Director: Suni Cast: Vinay Rajkumar, Swathishta Krishnan, Mallika Singh, Rajesh Nataranga, Sadhu

Runtime: 149 minutes Storyline: In a twist of fate, poles apart youngsters Atishay, a music composer and Anu, a journalist, get married to each other. What happens when they decide to call off the marriage, and go on a quest for true love?

on cringe comedy like some Kannada movies. Veer Samarth's score emphasises more on tone and atmosphere, and it works well as the plot shifts to Mumbai and Jaisalmer. Malika Singh plays a singer and is the third party in the love triangle. It helps that her character is a non-Kannadiga, as Malika appears more natural while conversing in her preferred languages of English and

Hindi. Just when the plot

seems set to take off, however, the writer in Suni becomes clueless. Once the second half kicks in, Ondu Sarala Prema Kathe suddenly feels all over the place, with uninteresting scenes and abrupt transitions from one scene to another.

Ondu Sarala Prema Kathe suffers from the director's urge to make it an intelligent film, while all he had to do was create characters that emotionally resonate with the audience.

However, Suni's trademark quirky one-liners and his hold on situational comedy make the film tolerable.Suni makes a somewhat slow return to form with this film but mind you, the bar is low considering how underwhelming his previous movies (Avatara Purusha, Sakath, Bazar) were.

Ondu Sarala Prema Kathe is currently running in theatres

# Shah has come empty-handed and has no right to speak about farmers: Siddaramaiah

Revenue Minister Krishna Byre Gowda urges Shah to consider the situation seriously and take immediate decision on the issue of drought relief

BENGALURU

hief Minister Siddaramaiah on Sunday expressed anguish over the delay in Karnataka getting drought relief by remarking that Union Home Minister Amit Shah had come to Karnataka emptyhanded and that he had no moral right left to speak for poor and farmers.

"It has been nearly five months since drought was declared in the State and Mr. Shah, who is the chairman of the committee concerned, has not convened even one meeting. What moral right does he have to speak when farmers are



reeling under the drought situation. Though it is mandatory to increase the number of man days under the MGNREGA to 150 days during drought, it has not been done so far despite multiple communications in this regard," the Chief Minister said here after chairing a pre-budget

meeting with farmers' leaders.

He also said that the former Prime Minister H.D. Deve Gowda should not justify the injustice being meted out to State from the Centre.

Meanwhile, Revenue Minister Krishna Byre Gowda urged Mr. Shah to announce drought relief immediately before winding up his State visit.

#### Accusation

He accused the Centre of causing an inordinate delay in the release of drought relief funds. The State, which has declared drought in 223 taluks, has sought a total compensation of ₹18,172 crore, including ₹4,663 crore under the NDRF to compensate crop loss.

The Revenue Minister asked Mr. Shah to consider the situation seriously and take an immediate decision on the issue of drought compensation. "It is a sensitive issue and for the welfare of the people. The compensation under the NDRF is a State's right and the constitutional obligation of the Centre. We are not asking for help or charity." BJP and Janata Dal (Secular) leaders should convince the Centre to release the compensation immediately, he said, failing which the public would think that the two parties are not in favour of their welfare.

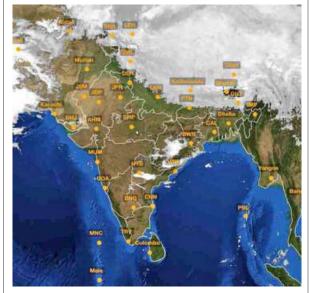
"It has been four-and-ahalf months since we submitted our memorandum. I do not want to politicise the issue. The delay has been unreasonable. We declared drought in the State on September 13. A memorandum was submitted to the Centre on September 23 following which the Central drought monitoring team visited Karnataka and submitted its report in October. The high-level committee meetings scheduled for December 23 and January 16 were postponed. The Centre has kept the file pending for

three months now. The result has been that the farmers already in trouble have been further distressed," Mr. Byre Gowda told presspersons here.

He said of the eight States that have approached the Centre for drought relief, Karnataka had submitted its memorandum two months before others did.

He said that the State government had released ₹2,000 as drought relief to 33 lakh farmers in the first instalment, totalling to about ₹628 crore, adding that further compensation could only be released to farmers if the Centre released the NDRF amount.

Rainfall, temperature & air quality in select metros yesterday



Forecast for Monday: Thunderstorm with lightning likely at isolated places over Vidarbha and Jharkhand. Squally Weather with wind speed reaching 40-45 kmph gusting to 55 kmph over Gulf of Oman adjoining north west Arabian sea. Fisherman are advised not

o venture ir	nto thes	e area	ıs.	
TY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY
gartala		28.5	11.7	Kozhikode
nmedabad		29.6	16.2	Kurnool
zawl		29.0	9.2	Lucknow
lahabad		25.2	8.8	Madurai
engaluru		31.0	18.0	Mangaluru
nopal		23.8	12.4	Mumbai
nubaneswar		31.1	16.4	Mysuru
nandigarh		24.0	7.8	New Delhi
nennai		31.1	25.1	Patna
oimbatore		32.8	22.0	Port Blair
ehradun		25.5	8.4	Puducherry
angtok		17.4	8.1	Pune
oa		32.0	22.6	Raipur
uwahati		29.2	9.8	Ranchi
ubballi		35.0	19.0	Shillong
yderabad		31.8	21.3	Shimla
nphal		26.5	6.2	Srinagar
ipur		—		Thiruvananthapuram
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				,

Pollutants in the air you are breathing

.10 ..17 23 ...3 ..23 63

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#### Yesterday In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Buxar recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 389 indicating an unhealthy

level of pollution. In contrast, Ooty recorded a

... 145 ...104

... 102 ...130

PM2.5 & PM10: Particulate matter pollution can cause firitation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease

#### NIT-C professor interrogated after she praised Godse

The Kunnamangalam police on Sunday interrogated National Institute of Technology-Calicut (NIT-C) professor Shaija Andavan as part of the ongoing investigation into a controversial Facebook comment by her which praised Nathuram Godse, Mahatma Gandhi's assassin, on the death anniversary of the Father of the Nation. The officers who reached the professor's house also directed her to report at the station on February 13.

### Bid to capture jumbo in Wayanad proves futile; Kerala to form panel

The Hindu Bureau KALPETTA/THRISSUR

An operation of the Rapid Response Team of the Forest Department on Sunday to capture Belur Makhna. the tuskless wild elephant that killed a farmer in Wayanad on Saturday, proved futile.

The forest officials launched the search around 6.30 a.m. at Mannundi after receiving signals from the radio collar attached to the elephant. The animal later moved to



**Tension prevails:** A group of persons blocking forest officials in Wayanad district on Sunday evening. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

the inner forest of the Bavali section on the Kerala-Karnataka boundary. However, the officials could not tranquillise the ele-

phant as they were unable to hem it in a suitable location, sources said.

A group of farmer organisations under the aegis boundaries. Forest Minister A.K. Saseendran told the media that Wayanad district will receive two more Rapid

of the Farmers' Relief Fo-

rum called for a dawn-todusk hartal in the district

Meanwhile, the Kerala

government has decided to

form an inter-State coordi-

nation committee to moni-

tor the movement of wild

Response Teams (RRT) in

addition to the one it has

across

on Tuesday.

animals

### THE HINDU

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# Let grammar take a back seat

K. Elango

revolutionary shift is required in the realm of English language teaching to empower learners in acquiring linguistic competence. The current approaches, methods, strategies, and techniques in practice have not yielded the desired results. English remains an aspirational language, despite our country's centurieslong acquaintance with it.

The theories and practices of the English language were predominately shaped by the British, especially the monolinguals who did not have much grip over the bi/tri/multilinguals' styles of acquiring languages. They laid undue emphasis on the peripherals of the language such as grammar and pronunciation and insisted on achieving a 'native-like fluency and accuracy'.

#### **Obstacles to learning**

Let us examine how the grammar of English is an obstacle to learning the language, grounded on the experiences of numerous teachers and learners, but which remain unarticulated, as we are treated as non-native speakers. Drawing upon our expe-

riential knowledge of mother tongues, we could affirm that we acquire them in 'immersive' contexts by watching, listening, imitating, and producing. The initial stages articulating involve sounds, gradually progressing to individual words, then expanding to chunks of words and ulti-



mately maturing to produce simple sentences. Notably, grammar hardly figures in the scheme of learning. Polyglots vouch for this, as they constantly keep their antenna alive to pick up expressions from all possible sources and are least concerned about the grammatical correctness of their acquisition. A parallel can be drawn from migrant the 'survival language' in their place of residence and work. Even those who never stepped into schools can absorb the necessary language, unaware of their grammaticality.

In informal settings such as homes or any non-institutionalised contexts, grammar takes a back seat, facilitating smoother and quicker language acquisition. The insistence on grammar, particularly in institutionalised settings, reveals a distortion in the cognitive process, be it the mother tongue or other tongues. Recognising this, educational curriculums introduce the grammar of the mother tongue at a later stage; even then, learners are averse to its components.

In our pedagogy, con-

Another misplacement

the other skills, particular-

ly in the initial phases, is

imperative. An often over-

looked, yet crucial, distinc-

tion lies in the differences

between the spoken and

written forms. While writ-

ten language adheres

strictly to grammatical

rules, spoken language

provides leeway; a single

word, a phrase, or an un-

finished utterance can ef-

fectively convey the in-

tended message. The

additional advantage of the

non-verbal elements such

as gestures, postures, vi-

sual cues, and tonal varia-

tions can amplify mean-

ings and keep the listeners

tems, the introduction of the language and grammar of English occur almost simultaneously, as if learners could acquire the language through grammar. This ignores the truth that grammar is about the language, not the language. significance lies in attributing equal weightage to all four skills – Listening, labourers, who focus on Speaking, Reading, and Writing (LSRW) - disregarding the natural order of acquisition. Speaking and listening inherently take precedence over the other two. Therefore, prioritising speaking over

trary to real-life ecosys-

captivated. Further, the spoken form could be imbued with emotions to sway the audience, but the written mode consistently maintains a formal tone, follows a linear progression, and 'distanced' from Regrettably, the gram-

mar of written language is imposed onto the spoken mode, which acts as a stumbling block to gain speaking competence. Nevertheless, a liberating development is the acceptance of non-traditional grammar usage on social media, where code switching, and code mixing are liberally employed and embraced by all.

#### **Reading helps**

The most practical approach to gain grammatical sense is predominantly by reading, and this unconscious cognitive process seamlessly embeds grammar into long-term memory. In contrast, the conscious teaching grammatical items may enable learners to comprehend, store, and recall but incapacitate them in application, serving little pur-

Applied linguists emphasise that grammar can be learnt without knowing the language and, conversely, a language can be learnt without knowing its grammar. For spoken communication, grammar is not a necessity; hence, we must cease to insist on it for the effective acquisition

The writer is a retired Professor of English and National Secretary of English Language Teachers Association of India (ELTAI).



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### **Parliamentary affairs**

The last session of the 17th Lok Sabha served as a preparatory forum for polls

ith the conclusion of the last session of the 17th Lok Sabha on Saturday, the bugle has been sounded and the battle lines drawn for the general election. Prime Minister Narendra Modi mounted a sharp attack on the Congress and its leaders in his various interventions during the session, while avoiding criticism of any of the regional parties or their leaders. After the unprecedented suspension of 146 members during the winter session, the last session began on a more cheerful note. All members were back in the House, including the 14 Members of Parliament (MP) whose cases were referred to the privilege committees of the two Houses. The committees cleared their names, just ahead of the session. But Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) MP and leader Sanjay Singh, who was recently reelected to the Upper House, could not take oath on the ground that the breach of privilege cases against him moved in his previous term are still pending. The Rajya Sabha privileges committee has not even scheduled a meeting.

The session was extended by a day to debate a resolution on the Ram Temple. The Left parties were the only ones to take a clear stand in their boycott by announcing that they would not be a party to any communal agenda. The other Opposition parties, not willing to invite any controversy, came up with different reasons to stay away. The Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam, in the Lok Sabha, cited the plight of Tamil fishermen, and, in the Rajya Sabha, focused on the Centre's indifference towards the destruction caused by flooding in the State to stay away from the proceedings. The Trinamool Congress and AAP MPs were not to be seen. The last five years have been unprecedented in Indian parliamentary history. Parliament shifted to newer and much larger precincts, amid criticism of its design, from the British-era building. Paradoxically, just as parliamentarians got more room, the 17th Lok Sabha witnessed the continuous erosion of the role of the Opposition. In a first, the Lok Sabha functioned without a Deputy Speaker – a post that is conventionally occupied by the Opposition – for the entire term. The five years were also marked by a steady decline in the Opposition's bench strength in the Rajya Sabha. The Congress has only 30 members in the Upper House, far behind the 93 members from the Bharatiya Janata Party. The government had its way and say, while the Opposition spent time on the sidelines.

### Conjuring a catharsis

The White Paper on the economy is a political diversion

he Finance Ministry, in a White Paper on the economy placed in Parliament, has accused the Manmohan Singh-led United Progressive Alliance (UPA) of 2004-2014, of botching the economy. The Ministry has some credit for the Narendra Modi-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government's repair and reform job since 2014 for lifting India to the world's fifth largest economy from one of the 'Fragile Five' 10 years ago. It listed 15 "high-profile" UPA "scams", including coal, 2G spectrum, the Commonwealth Games and even a ₹44 crore misappropriation case in the Jammu & Kashmir cricket board. Hours before this, the Congress released a Black Paper on "10 years of Anyay Kaal (Era of Injustice)". It highlights this government's "economic blunders" such as demonetisation (something the White Paper is silent on), the flawed GST regime, the unemployment situation with stagnant wage growth, farmers' distress, and high inflation despite crude oil prices being lower than in the UPA's times. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman questioned the UPA's 'extra-constitutional' governance system and Dr. Singh's failure to undertake reforms that were still pending after the 1991 liberalisation rush, and said this government delivered on those reforms and beyond. She even invoked cases from the 1950s and 1970s to argue that corruption runs in the Congress's

The government's assertion that the White Paper will serve as a record for posterity for India's youth to know the efforts it took to undo the UPA-era damage and "restore India's glory", belies its anxiety that the young may not be adequately convinced about recent years' outcomes. That may explain the curious absence of real GDP growth and employment rates in the UPA and NDA years from the data-laden paper, which even compares waste volumes processed by urban local bodies. The paper argues the UPA failed to deliver GST and use Aadhaar effectively, but the NDA embraced and delivered on both. That a few BJP States, including Gujarat, had reservations about GST and Aadhaar at the time is a lost nuance. The NDA had a resounding majority twice, but has yet to find a consilient approach to undertake critical pending factor market reforms such as on land (an ordinance approach was abandoned in 2015) and labour (new Codes are yet to kick in), while it had to backtrack on farm sector reforms. The UPA was a rainbow coalition that navigated tricky terrains such as telecom and insurance FDI liberalisation and the India-U.S. civil nuclear deal. India's reform journey has been marked by successive governments building on past efforts, rather than reversing course, and, in hindsight, many opportunities may be considered missed or bungled. The paper seems to be an attempt to temper voters' higher expectations from a government with a majority mandate. But a pointed finger leads to three pointing right back. It is no surprise that the White begot Black.

### Pakistan's democratic revolution, with seam and swing

mran Khan has won the general elections in Pakistan. However, he will not be able to form a government or become Prime Minister. Even though he did not contest the elections and his party, the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaaf (PTI), was denied its election symbol on the ballot paper, his party, contesting as 'Independents', has emerged as the largest group in Parliament. It has an overwhelming majority in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa and is a very close second in the largest province, Punjab. Moreover, leaders of the PTI are claiming that dozens of seats have been stolen from them and they would have won an absolute majority in Parliament and the Punjab as well. They intend to challenge these results in court over the next few days, which may see their tally rise.

This is a phenomenal victory for Pakistan's former Prime Minister who has been in jail for almost a year, has had no access to the electorate and has not participated in electioneering (his name cannot even be mentioned on television). A few days before the election, he was given three prison terms after being found guilty on charges which include corruption, getting married illegally and revealing state secrets. He has also been barred from running for public office for 10 years and has over 170 other cases against him.

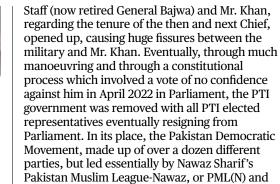
#### The plan that failed

This was certainly not the intention nor the plan. The powers that be – what is called the 'Establishment' in Pakistan – largely the military and those who subscribe to its bidding, had worked out a very different scenario. From around November 2021, Mr. Khan and the military had a major and public falling out. Ironically, it was the military establishment that had got rid of Nawaz Sharif in 2017 and began supporting Mr. Khan when he was not yet the Prime Minister. It is widely believed – and there is ample evidence to support the claim – that the military establishment enabled Mr. Khan's victory in the 2018 elections, which made him Prime Minister.

For around three years, the military leadership and Mr. Khan were 'on the same page', a phrase which was repeated ad nauseum by both parties to show that the PTI government had the military's backing and was in a comfortable and safe position to complete its five-year tenure. Disagreements between the then Chief of Army



is a political economist and heads the Institute of Business Administration (IBA), Karachi



the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) led by Asif

government which lasted until the tenure of

Parliament came to an end in August 2023.

Zardari and Bilawal Bhutto, formed the

Former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, who was in exile in London because he was found guilty of corruption and was banned for life for holding public office or contesting elections, was able to return to Pakistan in October 2023. Remarkably, within a few weeks, the major cases against him were overturned and he was allowed to contest the elections, receiving a complete clean sheet, and resurrected anew.

With Mr. Khan in jail, his party the PTI losing its electoral symbol, PTI candidates hounded by un-named goons while campaigning, their hustings broken, and where many were attacked and picked up in the middle of the night, the plan was to ensure that Mr. Sharif's PML(N) would win with a clear majority. He was considered a shoo-in, to become Prime Minister for the fourth time. There was complete consensus on this likelihood, yet the plan came badly undone.

#### The time for parleys

Despite allegations of widespread rigging -Pakistan's leading journalist Hamid Mir said on television that the "PML[N] supporters are saying that they have received more votes on 9 February than on 8 February, the day of the elections" – and numerous other impediments to there being free and fair elections, the PTI has completely sabotaged the Establishment's plan. A noticeably subdued Mr. Sharif, who was expected to make a victory speech on the day of the elections. appeared 24 hours later on television claiming victory and giving a call for a government which would include most parties, but not Imran Khan's

At the moment, there is a great deal of bargaining, negotiation and horse-trading in order to create a government in Pakistan. The PML(N) is in discussions with other parties and hopes to lead the government, especially in partnership with the PPP. On the other hand, the PPP is apparently talking to the many independents hoping to lead the government. The PTI, which does not exist as a parliamentary party at the moment, is also claiming that it will form the government which, while unlikely, is not an impossibility. The incumbent President of Pakistan, who needs to invite the 'largest party' in the new Parliament to form the government, was elected from the PTI.

There are also major players on the scene who may have their own plans. Asif Zardari might be wanting to become President again if the Prime Minister is from the PML(N). Moreover, Nawaz Sharif's daughter is being seen as the Chief Minister of Punjab, which would mean that Nawaz Sharif's brother, Shahbaz Sharif, and not Nawaz Sharif, might become Prime Minister. Then there is Bilawal Bhutto, a new, confident, aspirant for prime ministership.

The Chief of Army Staff, General Asim Munir, has made his preferences clear, stating that "Pakistan's diverse polity and pluralism will be well-represented by a unified government of all democratic forces imbibed with national purpose." It is a clear message to all the participants.

#### The core contradiction

The core contradiction in Pakistan's politics, as of now, is between Imran Khan and the military. Essentially, both parties are competing for the same political constituency - primarily, young supporters in the Punjab and Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa.

In every single public survey conducted in Pakistan over the last two years, Mr. Khan has, by a huge margin, always emerged as the most popular politician and leader in Pakistan. At the same time, in each of these surveys, almost every single time, the military emerges as the 'most trusted' or popular institution in Pakistan. Given the huge contradiction between the two, the election results from last week clearly show, at least for now, who has won this last contest.

The views expressed are personal

# A privileged strategic partnership, without a gulf

rime Minister Narendra Modi is scheduled to pay an official visit to the United Arab Emirates (UAE) from February 13-14, 2024 which will include inaugurating a temple built by the Bochasanwasi Shri Akshar Purushottam Swaminarayan Sanstha in Abu Dhabi. This is Mr. Modi's seventh visit to the UAE since 2015 and the third in the last eight months. In this short duration, India's relationship with UAE has evolved into becoming one of the most prominent bilateral relationships for New Delhi. Not only has the HAE become India's strategic partner but it has also become one of the most important linchpins of India's engagement in the Gulf region. There is a close rapport between the President of the UAE, Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, and Mr. Modi.

The BAPS temple, which is built on a 27-acre plot of land donated by the UAE President, will be the second big Hindu temple to be inaugurated in the UAE in recent years, the first being the Hindu Temple in Dubai, opened in October 2022.

Mr. Modi will also address the World Government Summit on February 14 in Dubai as the 'Guest of Honour'.

#### The pillars of ties

The India-UAE story however goes beyond temples, faith or the signing of strategic partnerships. This special relationship was evident when the UAE President was felicitated in a road show when he was in Gandhinagar in January this year as the chief guest of the 10th Vibrant Gujarat Summit. The convergence of ideas on global climate issues too was clear when Mr. Modi was in Dubai for the COP28 climate summit. Both India and the UAE co-launched the Global Green Credit Initiative.

Another special and strong pillar is the economic partnership. Bilateral trade grew to \$85 billion in 2022-23, making the UAE India's third-largest trading partner and India's second-largest export destination. The UAE is



It remains to be

happens after

controversial

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Pakistan

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plan

Tehreek-e-

#### Rajeev Agarwal

a retired colonel, is the Assistant Director of the Manohar Parrikar Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses (MP-IDSA), New Delhi. He has served as Director in the Ministry of External Affairs and as Director, Military Intelligence

Among India's strategic partnership agreements, none displays more convergence and mutual respect at all levels than the one with the United Arab

**Emirates** 

also the fourth-largest overall investor in India. The India-UAE Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement, signed on February 18, 2022 in a record time of 88 days, aims to increase trade in services to \$115 billion in five years. On February 1, 2024, the Indian government also approved the signing and ratification of a bilateral investment treaty with the UAE, which would significantly boost bilateral economic engagement, especially manufacturing and foreign direct investment.

Fintech is vet another area of mutual convergence. The RuPay card, a key component of India's Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI), is accepted in the UAE since August 2019, while from July 2023, the rupee was being accepted for transactions at Dubai's airports. India and the UAE also operationalised a rupee-dirham settlement system when, in August 2023, the Indian Oil Corporation made a rupee payment to the Abu Dhabi National Oil Company for crude oil

#### **Energy security**

The UAE is also India's trusted partner in energy security, being the only nation from the region which has strategic oil reserves stored in India. An agreement was signed in Indian Strategic Petroleum Reserves Ltd (ISPRL) and the Abu Dhabi National Oil Company to to invest in the strategic crude oil storage facility in Mangaluru with an initial investment of \$400 million. Defence and security cooperation and people-to-people ties too are critical cogs in the relationship.

Both countries have often gone out of their way to make exceptions for each other. When the UAE hosted the OIC Foreign Ministers' Meeting in 2019, it invited India's External Affairs Minister (the late) Sushma Swaraj as a keynote speaker/guest of honour country despite protests from some nations, including Pakistan. Earlier, in 2018, India was the 'Guest of Honour' country at

the Abu Dhabi Festival (ADF), the UAE's annual cultural festival. During his visit to the UAE in August 2019, Mr. Modi was conferred the UAE's top civilian honour, the Order of Zayed. Sheikh Mohammed Bin Zayed Al Nahyan (Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and the Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE armed forces) was the chief guest at the Republic Day parade in Delhi in January 2017. The UAE was one of few nations specially invited for the G-20 summit, in September 2023, under India's G-20 presidency. The IIT Delhi Abu Dhabi campus has been established, and the UAE opened a consulate in Hyderabad in June 2023.

#### Strategic ties

Within the region, both countries are in close coordination and a part of a number of important groupings such as the I2U2 or the West Asian Quad comprising India, Israel, the United States and the UAE. The UAE is also part of the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEEC) infrastructure project that was signed during the G-20 summit in Delhi. The corridor aims to connect India to Europe across the Arabian peninsula, and is a potential rival to China's Belt and Road Initiative.

The visit also comes at a critical time with the war in Gaza enveloping the region. The visit will provide the two leaders an opportunity to confer on this very critical issue.

India has numerous strategic partnership agreements across the globe, but none displays more convergence and mutual respect at all levels than the one with the UAE. There are few major issues of divergence, which is something unique even among the best of friendly nations. While India recognises and values the UAE's role in the region, the UAE too is cognisant of the 'global leadership' role that India is set to acquire. Both countries recognise that this privileged strategic partnership is only set to grow stronger in the years ahead.

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

'New era of governance' The report, "Parliament hails temple consecration resolution" (Page 1, February 11), is amusing. One is really at a loss to understand how such a religious ceremony can 'usher in a new era which will make generations proud'. The Prime Minister, who avoided mentioning in Parliament burning issues such as Manipur, or issued a clarification on what some States are calling as an inequitable distribution of resources to them, has been waxing eloquent on stray subjects, ensuring that the Opposition or States do not get a chance to mention their genuine grievances.

Till date, the ill-effects of demonetisation or lopsided GST implementation have not been explained by the ruling party even once. It is time good sense prevails. People are not interested in empty slogans.

A. Shreevas, Chennai

As speculated, the BJP is striving to reap a rich political dividend. What is however hard to digest is the attempt being made to pass off the consecration as a victory for secular India. Although the Election Commission of India has frowned on the use of caste and religion in political campaigns, there is hardly

any doubt that the consecration will be one of the main talking points in the BJP's campaign. C.V. Aravind, Bengaluru

#### The Pakistan result

The election outcome in Pakistan could affect the already precarious state of the country, reeling under the effects of a devastated economy, rising militancy, internal political instability, and strained relations with Iran. The result so far is a setback to the Pakistani army, which indirectly backed Nawaz Sharif's party against Imran Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf. However, it would be

unwise to write the army off, as it still wields significant influence and may work towards forming a coalition government of its choice to keep the PTI-backed independents at bay. As it is often quipped in political circles, it must not be forgotten that though the Pakistani Army has not won any wars, it has not

lost any elections either. Michael Jom,

**Corrections & Clarifications** 

been the Swaraj Abhiyan.

#### A jaw-dropper

That Hungarian President Katalin Novak has resigned for pardoning a man convicted as an accomplice for helping cover up a sex abuse case in a children's home is an eye-opener. In India we not only give remission but also felicitate criminals, as seen in the Bilkis Bano case. One wishes that Indian politicians take the cue from the Hungarian

President.

Faridabad, Haryana

**Bidyut Kumar Chatterjee,** 

**Road safety in Tamil Nadu** 

It is not uncommon to see

many in Tamil Nadu driving a two-wheeler distracted a mobile in one hand or a baby being balanced precariously (Tamil Nadu, "Road accidents and fatalities register an upward trend in Tamil Nadu", February 11). In the absence of any action or penalty for such errant driving, accidents will rise. Drivers need to shed the 'do not care for my safety or that of others' attitude.

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In the report titled "Allow NREGS workers to choose how to be paid: plea"

(February 10, 2024), the name of the NGO-petitioner was erroneously

mentioned as the Association for Democratic Reforms. It should have

### How women can be represented in politics

Reservation Bill being passed in Parliament last year, the debate on whether quota within political parties or in Parliament and State Assemblies may be the best route for increasing women's representation in politics seems to have come to an end. The Assembly elections in Rajasthan showed that the only way for increasing women's political participation seems to be to provide them reservation in Parliament and State Assemblies. In the elections, the women candidates of both the Congress and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) put up dismal performances.

#### The case of Rajasthan In the Rajasthan Assembly

elections, everyone highlighted and criticised the ticket distribution to women by all political parties. But how did the women who contested perform? Rajasthan has 200 Assembly seats but polling was held in 199 seats following the death of Congress candidate Gurmeet Singh Kooner. The BJP fielded 20 women candidates of which nine managed to enter the Assembly. The success rate of women candidates of the BJP remained 45%, which was much lower than the success rate of the party's male candidates -60% (106 male candidates won out of the 179 who contested).

The picture with regard to the Congress's candidates was not very different. Of the total 28 women candidates of the Congress, nine got elected to the Rajasthan Assembly (32%). The absolute number of women who were elected to the Rajasthan Assembly was the same for the BJP and the Congress, though in percentage terms, the success rate was higher for the women candidates of the BJP compared to those of the Congress.

It is important to note that in the current Rajasthan Assembly, the total number of women MLAs is 20 (nine each from the Congress



**Vipul Anekant** 

is Deputy Commissioner of Police with Delhi Police. Views are personal and not that of the government



Sanjay Kumar is a Professor at

Centre for the Study of Developing Societies. Views are personal

Providing a quota for women in Parliament and State Assemblies seems to be the only way to increase their political representation

and the BIP and two independents). This is four fewer than the number in the outgoing Assembly. It is surprising that the political parties were not enthusiastic about giving ticket to more women candidates. The voters, too, did not seem keen on electing women candidates, either from the BJP or from Congress, even after the Women's Reservation Bill was passed with so much fanfare. Not giving more women ticket to contest elections clearly shows that parties are not enthusiastic about fielding women candidates. And the votes polled by the women candidates, irrespective of the parties they belong to, also indicates the voters' low enthusiasm for voting for women candidates.

There were seven Assembly constituencies where the women candidates of the Congress and the BJP were pitched against each other. Since these two parties were in serious contest, one would have expected the voters to choose one of these two women candidates. Of the seven Assembly seats, the BJP and Congress won three each, while the Sadulpur seat was won by the Bahujan Samaj Party. It is important to note that in these seven Assembly constituencies, the BJP polled 34% of the votes compared to its overall 42% vote share, though the Congress polled almost similar votes in these constituencies as well in the whole of Rajasthan. This shows that voters seem to prefer male candidates to female candidates. In the Sadulpur Assembly seat, the BSP candidate, Manoj Kumar, polled 32.9% of the votes, the Congress candidate, Krishna Poonia, polled 31.6%, and the BJP candidate, Sumitra Poonia, polled 30.1%. All this to some extent explains why political parties may be reluctant to give tickets to women candidates and why mandatory quota within the party may not be the way forward for increasing women's representation in politics.

Let's look at some other trends. There were 13 Assembly

constituencies where the Congress fielded male candidates against the BJP's female candidates. Of these, the BJP won six seats while the Congress won seven. It is important to note that the Congress's performance was much better when it fielded male candidates against the BIP's women candidates, despite the overall mood of the voters being in favour of the BIP

Similarly, the BJP fielded male candidates against the female candidates of the Congress in 21 Assembly constituencies. Of these, the male candidates of the BJP won in 15 Assembly seats and the female candidates of the Congress won in only six. Female candidates of both parties had a relatively low strike rate if they had to face male candidates of the other party. This also proves the existence of a vote bloc which wants to see a man as their representative. This is why there is lack of winnability of women candidates. And this forces parties to think twice before giving tickets to women candidates, especially in a closely fought battle.

No contagion effect Distributing more tickets to women in the first-past-the-post system may not necessarily lead to more representation of women in legislature. There is hope of a contagion effect, but this has not happened. The Trinamool Congress gave ticket to 46 women candidates in the 2021 West Bengal Assembly elections of which 32 candidates won. But the total number of women MLAs did not increase in the Assembly. Instead, it declined from 41 women MLAs in 2016 to 40 in

Similarly, the Congress awarded 40% of tickets to women candidates in the Uttar Pradesh Assembly elections, but this did not lead to a higher representation of women in the Assembly. In the first-past-the-post system, if one party provides a gender quota, it does not incentivise other parties

### Jagan Reddy's unusually aggressive posture

What compelled him to bring up special category status and attack the Centre

STATE OF PLAY

Sumit Bhattacharjee sumit.b@thehindu.co.in

hile delivering the inaugural inaugural address of the State's Interim Budget, Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy made a statement that is being seen by many as a veiled attack against the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)led government at the Centre.

For the first time since he became Chief Minister, Mr. Reddy has made a statement that hints at the apathy of the Union government in giving Special Category Status (SCS) to Andhra Pradesh. He said that he wishes that no party comes to power with an absolute majority in the upcoming Lok Sabha elections, as this leaves the State with little bargaining power. "A Central government dependent on the State would have conceded to our demands," he said. Mr. Reddy added that Andhra would have tried to secure the SCS through all possible means, including by approaching the court, had the assurance of SCS been incorporated in the Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation Act.

This is an unusually aggressive posture by the Chief Minister against Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government. Though Mr. Reddy had made SCS one of his main poll planks in 2019, he has been soft-pedalling the issue since, as his YSR Congress Party has always tried to maintain a good relationship with Prime Minister Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah. The YSRCP has supported the National Democratic Alliance both within and outside Parliament. Many Opposition leaders believe that though the



YSRCP is not part of the NDA, it has more or less served as a loyal ally.

There are many examples of the YSRCP's support of the Central government's moves. Last year, the party voted against the 'No Confidence' motion moved by the Congress and the Bharat Rashtra Samithi. It also supported the Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi (Amendment) Bill, 2023. While 19 Opposition parties boycotted the inauguration of the new Parliament building, YSRCP MPs attended the event. Earlier, the regional party had also supported the election of the President and Vice President the controversial Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019, the National Register of Citizens, the three farm laws that were later withdrawn by the government, and the dilution of Article 370.

All through this, while it is true that the party has been dissatisfied with the Central government for not granting the SCS to Andhra Pradesh, it has never been vociferous in its demand. The Opposition recognised this and saw in the situation an opportunity to attack Mr. Reddy.

Some political experts believe that Mr. Reddy's comments are "opportunistic" since the dates of the general and Assembly elections will be announced soon. They also believe that he was forced into a corner as the Opposi-

tion has been upping its ante on the issue. But it is not just the YSRCP; the TDP-Jana Sena Party combine has not been resolutely calling for the SCS as both Chandrababu Naidu and Pawan Kalyan, the leaders of the two parties, respectively, have been seeking an alliance with the BJP to fight the 2024 elections together against the YSRCP. The JSP is already an ally of the BJP in Andhra Pradesh.

But the heat is picking from the Congress, which is in a resurgent mood in Andhra, especially after Mr. Reddy's sister, Y.S. Sharmila, was made president of the Andhra Pradesh Congress Committee earlier this year. Ms. Sharmila has demanded that the government hold a discussion in the floor of the Assembly on the "betrayal of the people of Andhra Pradesh by the BJP government at the Centre in the last 10 years" and pass a resolution on the "rights of the people of Andhra Pradesh" and send it to the Centre and the President for their approval. She also urged her brother and Mr. Naidu to wage a united war for securing the SCS.

Mr. Reddy's comments on the SCS also come at a time when Mr. Naidu, who had been trying to warm up to the BJP, was once again called by Mr. Shah to New Delhi. It appears that the BJP and the TDp are trying to rework the alliance.

With the possibility of a BJP-TDP-JSP alliance likely, and with Ms. Sharmila resolving to continue fighting about the issue of SCS, Mr. Reddy appears to be compelled to once again rely on this issue to evoke sentiments and secure votes. This is an approach that worked not only for him in 2019 but also Mr. Naidu in 2014.

### 2023 saw the most prisoners on death row in nearly 2 decades

But the death sentences confirmed by High Courts in 2023 was the lowest since 2000

#### **DATA POINT**

### **Rebecca Rose Varghese**

n 2023, the High Courts confirmed the death sentences of 1% of prisoners whose cases were up for decision. This is the lowest confirmation rate by the appellate courts since 2000. The lone confirmation came in the Karnataka High Court in a murder simpliciter case. If the dominant intention of the act was to kill a person, it is 'murder simpliciter': otherwise, it is categorised as an accidental murder. These were some of the findings of the 'Death Penalty in India: Annual Statistics 2023' report, which was released by Project 39A, an advocacy group with the National Law University,

The death sentences of 45% of prisoners were commuted. An equal share of prisoners were acquitted. The remaining 6% were remanded to trial courts (Chart 1).

Notably, the rate of disposal of death penalty confirmation proceedings at the High Courts decreased by around 15% in 2023. Last year, 57 death penalty cases were disposed of compared to 68 cases in 2022. This decline is attributed to the high number of prisoners who are on death row in the country. The report noted that with 120 death sentences being imposed by trial courts, there were 561 prisoners on death row by the end of December 2023. This is the highest number in nearly two decades, and the second-highest since 2000, according to the National Crime Record Bureau's Prison Statistics Reports. Chart 2 shows the number of prisoners on death row as on December 31 each year. The number of prisoners on death row by the end of December 2023 had increased by over 40% compared to 2016.

Last year, the Supreme Court did not confirm any death sentence, the second time since 2021. **Chart 3** shows the number of

death penalty cases confirmed each year by the Supreme Court.

As has been the trend in the recent past, the majority of death penalty cases in trial courts in 2023 involved crimes related to sexual offences. Of the 120 death sentences imposed by trial courts in 2023, more than 50% were for crimes involving homicidal rapes. Notably, the trial courts imposed death sentences in 87% of cases in the absence of any information relating to the accused. This is despite the Supreme Court's mandate in Manoj v. State of Madhya Pradesh (2022), which requires trial courts to proactively elicit material on the mitigating circumstances of the accused, including psychiatric evaluations, while sentencing them in death penalty cases.

In 2023, the Supreme Court acquitted six death row prisoners in five cases and remanded two cases involving two prisoners to the trial courts while criticising the negligence in investigation and trials. In one particularly grievous case, it found, 28 years after his imprisonment, that the convict was a minor at the time of the offence.

Highlighting potential changes in criminal laws, the report also noted their impact on the administration of the death penalty. In August 2023, Parliament passed three new Bills to repeal existing criminal codes. These Bills received the President's assent on December 25, 2023. The passing of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023, will increase the number of offences punishable by death to 18 from 12 under the Indian Penal Code,

Citing the example of Ghana, where the Parliament passed a Bill in July 2023 to abolish the death penalty for ordinary crimes, and countries such as Malaysia and Kenya, the report also discussed international developments in death penalty laws. According to the latest data from Amnesty International, China executed the most number of death row inmates in 2022. (Chart 4).

### Death row inmates cross 550

The data for the charts were sourced from the report titled, 'Death Penalty in India: Annual Statistics 2023'



Chart 1: The share of prisoners whose death sentences were confirmed, commuted and remitted by the High Court. It also shows the share of prisoners on death row who were acquitted

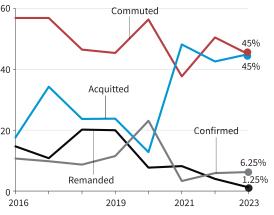


Chart 3: The chart shows the number of death penalty cases

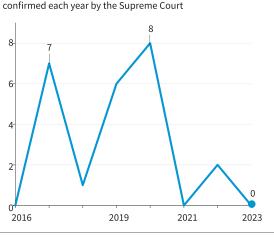
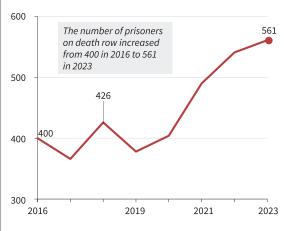
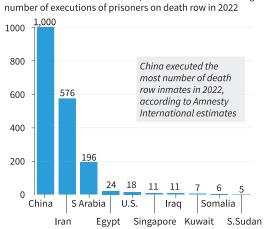


Chart 2: The chart shows the number of prisoners on death row as on December 31 each year



**Chart 4:** The chart shows the top ten countries with the highest number of executions of prisoners on death row in 2022



#### should give adequate compensation for loss of life and property suffered by Keralites in Bombay. He also promised to consider a suggestion for sending a deputation of Kerala MLAs to the Prime Minister and the Maharashtra Chief Minister. The Chief Minister said besides the Prime Minister, he had also written to the Kerala MPs to bring the issue to the notice of the Centre and that the Karnataka MPs too were said to be organising a move in this direction. Apart Maharashtrians themselves who should organise themselves against the Shiv Sainiks. Deprecating

FIFTY YEARS AGO FEBRUARY 12, 1974

Kerala Assembly's concern

over Shiv Sena harassment

Trivandrum, Feb. 11: The Kerala Assembly to-day

harassment of and assaults on South Indians and

especially Keralites in Bombay by Shiv Sainiks".

It further called upon the Government of India

properties and right to work of the minorities in

the city of Bombay." The resolution was moved by the Chief Minister, Mr. C. Achutha Menon. In

unanimously adopted an official resolution

voicing "grave anxiety over the continued

"to intervene urgently to protect the lives,

his reply to the four-hour debate, the Chief

Minister said the Maharashtra Government

from all this, he felt the solution lay with the the Opposition criticism of the Congress on this issue, the Chief Minister said this was not the occasion or forum for it. He said he knew well this statement would be construed as a weakness on his part since the CPI and the Congress were coalition partners here, but the situation demanded that all sections, including the Congress, should join hands. If the approach was to exclude the Congress, he could not subscribe to it.

### A HUNDRED YEARS AGO FEBRUARY 12, 1924

#### Persian Parliament

Teheran, Feb. 11: The Crown Prince opened the Mejliss this afternoon with great pomp. The Diplomatic Corps and distinguished persons had been invited. Seventy-two members were present, but sixty-six had not yet arrived in Teheran from the provinces. The Crown Prince in a speech in the name of the Shah opening the fifth period of the Mejliss said that their foreign relations were very satisfactory and the Government would continue to preserve order and peace which had been established all over the country.

#### From Page One

### Direct tax kitty picks up pace, up 20% by Feb. 10

"Refunds amounting to ₹2.77 lakh crore have been issued [between] April 1, 2023 [and] February 10, 2024," it added.

"We are issuing refunds and intend to keep issuing refunds as they arise. So let us see; every year, we are seeing refunds rising. The year before last, it was ₹2.25 lakh crore and last year, it rose to ₹3.07 lakh crore," Mr. Gupta said, adding that the Board was also trying to process and give quick effect to appellate orders on tax demands, which are likely to pick up in the remaining period of this financial year.

Prior to refunds, gross revenue collections from corporate income tax were 9.2% higher than a year ago, while revenues from personal income tax were up 25.7%. Growth in PIT collections, when combined with the Securities Transaction Tax (STT) receipts, stood at 25.93% at the gross level, while it was 27.2% after making refund adjustments.

As of January 10, the net growth in CIT collections was 12.37%, while PIT revenues, excluding STT receipts, were up 27.26%.

### Farmers may start Delhi march today as talks fail

Though Mr. Kakka was released later, farmer leaders told The Hindu that they are considering a boycott of the second round of discussions with Union Ministers, scheduled to be held on Monday, in protest against his detention.

At the first round of talks on Thursday, Commerce and Food Minister Piyush Goyal, MoS Agriculture Arjun Munda, and MoS Home Nityanand Rai told the farmers that their demands could not be accepted without consulting multiple Ministries.

Bhartiya Kisan Union (Ekta Sidhupur) president Jagjit Singh Dallewal, a senior leader of the SKM-NP, told *The Hindu* over phone from Chandigarh that the Union government was destroying the atmosphere by arresting leaders who should be part of the discussions.

'On the one hand, the government is saying it is ready for discussions. On the other hand, they have arrested hundreds of our leaders and supporters. By doing this, the Centre has made it clear that it has no intentions to address the issues of farmers," Mr. Dallewal said.

Mr. Kakka said that he was on his way to Chandigarh when the arrest took place. "I was about to board a train to Chandigarh to participate in Monday's discussions. I was arrested and taken to the police station. I understand that hundreds of SKM-NP's activists have also been sent to jail. I was released after three hours. But I will go to Chandigarh at any cost to participate in the protests. The Centre is vitiating the atmosphere by arresting farmers," he said.

The farmers have a seven-point charter of derands: guaranteed MSP as per the M.S. Swaminathan Commission's formula, freedom from debt for farmers; hiked import duties on all agricultural products; cancellation of all free trade agreements and other deals with the World Trade Organisation; no privatisation of electricity boards; a ban on Foreign Direct Investment and corporatisation in agriculture; and a pension for

#### SKM, CTUs call for strike

The original SKM, which has similar demands, has also announced a rural and industrial strike on February 16, in collaboration with ten Central Trade Unions (CTUs). In a joint statement here on Sunday, the SKM and the unions urged the Narendra Modi-led government to learn lessons from the growing discontent among the farming community and workers of European countries and reconsider its pro-corporate policies, which are being intensified in India.

### 25 held; extra forces sought in Haldwani

A number of people in adjoining areas were seen leaving, with their bags on their shoulders.

Even as normalcy returned to much of the town, the kin of 24-year-old Prakash Singh, one of the five who died in the violence, were still trying to come to terms with their tragic loss.

The sole breadwinner in his family of six, Singh was travelling from Bhojpur in Bihar to Haldwani in search of work. He died within hours of reaching the town. His family only learnt about his death three days later.

His mother has been unconscious since being told of her son's death, his brother-in-law Pintoo Singh told The Hindu. "After his father suffered huge loss in farming, Prakash decided to look out for work outside. He was told about some employment oppourtunity in Haldwani through a friend. He had landed here on Thursday evening only and police told us that they had found his body from Banbhoolpura during the wee hours on Friday. This means he couldn't survive even for a few hours in this cruel city," Mr. Singh said.

The police found a chain and some cash belonging to the deceased youth, which was handed over to his family, and local administration officials assured them of financial help. "Even if they will pay us a few lakhs, how will this family marry the two unmarried daughters, manage the education of a teenage son, and medicines for the two elderly parents?" Mr. Singh asked.

# Bihar parties try to keep flock together on eve of floor test

Four MLAs of ruling JD(U) fail to turn up for Legislature Party meeting led by Nitish Kumar; party claims they took prior permission; Opposition RJD, Congress, and Left MLAs camp at Tejashwi's residence; BJP moves its MLAs to Patna hotel

**Amit Bhelari** 

he Nitish Kumarled National Democratic Alliance government is all set to face a floor test on Monday to prove its majority in the Bihar Assembly.

On the eve of the crucial floor test, political parties in the State remained busy trying to keep their flock together.

All 79 MLAs of the Opposition Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) have been camping at the residence of former Deputy Chief Minister Tejashwi Yadav since Saturday night. On Sunday evening, 16 MLAs of the Congress returned from Hyderabad and went directly to Mr. Yadav's residence. Three more Congress MLAs were already present there.

Similarly, 16 MLAs of the Left parties also reached there. All 114 MLAs will stay overnight at Mr. Yadav's residence and go to the Assembly from there on Monday morning. Later in the evening, a large number of police personnel were deployed outside Mr. Yadav's residence.

The BJP MLAs, who



Prime gathering: Congress MLAs return from Hyderabad ahead of the floor test of Bihar CM Nitish Kumar-led government, at Jay Prakash Narayan Airport, in Patna on Sunday. PTI

were camping at a resort in Bodh Gaya, also returned to Patna. They were taken to the residence of Deputy Chief Minister Vijay Kumar Sinha. Later, 40 MLAs were shifted to a hotel in Patna, while the remaining stayed back.

Late in the evening, the 45 MLAs of the Janata Dal (United) were asked to gather at the official residence of Parliamentary Affairs Minister Vijay Choudhary for a Legislature Party meeting led by Mr. Kumar. However, four MLAs gave it a miss. They had also skipped the lunch organised by Cabinet Minister Shravan Kumar Saturday.

They are Barbigha MLA Sudarshan Kumar, Sursand MLA Dilip Ray, Rupauli MLA Beema Bharti and Parbatta MLA Sanjeev Kumar. The Hindu tried to contact them, but their mobile phones were either switched off or not reachable. The JD(U) also issued a whip to its legislators to vote in support of the motion. All the MLAs were later shifted to another hotel in Patna.

Earlier, RJD national spokesperson Manoj Jha urged the NDA MLAs to vote according to their conscience. He also hit out at the ruling government for moving a no-confidence motion against Speaker Awadh Bihari Choudhary, who belongs

to the RJD.

Mr. Jha claimed that as per a Supreme Court judgment, a no-confidence motion against the Speaker must be supported by at least 122 MLAs in the 243member Assembly.

The Speaker had earlier

BJP releases first list of RS nominees;

sitting Ministers fail to make the cut

said that he would not step

down before the floor test. The no-confidence motion is likely to be taken up soon after the Governor's Address to a joint sitting of of the Bihar Legislative Assembly and the Bihar Legislative Council.

The total strength of the Bihar Assembly is 243 and the NDA needs the support of at least 122 MLAs to prove its majority. The NDA has 128 MLAs, including 78 of the BJP, 45 of the JD(U), and four of the Hindustani Awam Morcha (Secular). The Opposition grand alliance has 114 MLAs - 79 of the RJD, 19 of the Congress, and 16 of the Left parties. After the Legislature

Party meeting, Mr. Vijay Choudhary told mediapersons that the NDA would win the trust vote on Monday. "Nitishji addressed our MLAs during the Legislature Party meeting and we are confident of winning the floor test. Two or three MLAs were not present in the meeting, however they had informed party officials and taken prior permission. Everyone knows that our number is 128 and we have the majority," he said.

With AAP going solo in Punjab, Cong. says it will win all 13 seats

The Hindu Bureau CHANDIGARH

A day after the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), which is part of the INDIA bloc, declared it would go solo in Punjab in the 2024 Lok Sabha election, the Congress, also a partner in INDIA bloc, on Sunday said it would win across all the 13 parliamentary constituencies in Punjab.

Congress national president Mallikarjun Kharge addressed the first Punjab Congress Workers Convention in Samrala in Ludhiana. "The resolute presence of our workers underscores the unwavering determination of the Punjab Congress to secure victory across all 13 constituencies in the forthcoming elections," he said.

Mr. Kharge accused the BJP of neglecting the interests of the poor, Scheduled Castes, tribal people, and OBC, and urged the ouster of the BJP from power.

Mr. Kharge alleged that a conspiracy was being hatched to "eliminate farmers in a planned manner", and a plan was ready to handover the country's agriculture to a few corporates, but it was the struggle of farmers that saved farming.

### Journalist, Matua leader in Trinamool's list of RS candidates

**Shiv Sahay Singh** KOLKATA

The Trinamool Congress on Sunday sprung a surprise as it named Delhibased journalist Sagarika Ghose as one of its candidates for the Rajya Sabha elections from Bengal.

The other candidates are Sushmita Dev, Mohammad Nadimul Haque, and Matua leader Mamata Bala Thakur. Elections to the five Rajva Sabha seats from the State will be held on February 27. The party has renominated Mr. Hagu, who is the owner of the popular Urdu daily Akbar-

E- Mashriq. Though the nomination of Ms. Ghose came as a surprise to the Trinamool rank and file, party chairperson Mamata Banerjee is known to make such choices for the Rajya Sabha. Last year, the party nominated RTI activist Saket Gokhale to the Upper House.



Sagarika Ghose

The Trinamool leadership has also tried to reach out to the Matua community by nominating Mamata Bala Thakur. She hails from the family which is believed to the founder of the Matua sect, which has significant followers in South Bengal. This nomination also comes at a time when the BJP is promising the implementation of the Citizenship (Amendment) Act before the polls. The CAA is an emotive issue for the Matuas and the support of the community may be crucial to win the Bongaon Lok Sabha seat.

Sobhana K. Nair

The average annual sitting

days of the first Lok Sabha,

with Prime Minister Jawa-

harlal Nehru as the Leader

of the House, was 135 days,

while the 17th Lok Sabha,

which concluded on Fri-

day, sat only for 55 days on

According to a statistical

study of Parliament from

June 2019 to February

2024 by the non-profit PRS

Legislative Research, the

17th Lok Sabha held 274 sit-

One of the explanations

average in a year.

tings.

fewer sittings.

# The Hindu Bureau

The BJP on Sunday announced a list of 14 candidates for the elections to the Rajya Sabha, with former Union Minister R.P.N. Singh – who joined the BJP ahead of the Assembly election in Uttar Pradesh in 2022 - among those nominated. With 28 of its members retiring and the same number expected back, the list of 14 names has nominations from Uttar Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Karnataka, Harvana, Uttarakhand, West

Bengal and Bihar. The list also clarifies what was only speculation till now, that Union Ministers who are Rajya Sabha members are being encouraged to contest the Lok Sabha polls, as none of the candidates appear to be renominated Ministers. Barring any changes in the second list, the policy of not repeating them stands.

From Uttar Pradesh,

where the BJP is retiring nine MPs and getting seven seats, party spokesperson Sudhanshu Trivedi, former Agra Mayor Navin Jain, former State Minister Sangeeta Balwant (hailing from the Extremely Backward Classes [EBC]), former MLA Sadhna Singh, Amarpal Maurya (OBC) and Chaudhary Tejveer Singh are its nominees. The latter five candidates have maintained a low profile but have worked in the State BJP organisation for a long time.

#### **Proportional share**

In Bihar, where the BIP will gain one seat to two, it has nominated Bhim Singh, presently State vice-president of the party and belonging to the EBC category. He had been a Minister during the Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) government in the past. The other nominee, Dharmsheela Gupta, is currently the State president of BJP's women's wing and belongs to the

Average annual sitting days in LS down to 55

The party has carefully worked out the caste dynamics in different States

Other Backward Class (OBC) category.

From Chhattisgarh, BJP has nominated Devendra Pratap Singh - a descendant of the erstwhile Raigarh royal family and the grandson of Chakradhar Singh Mahraj, the last king of separate Raigarh State; Mr. Singh is also a member of the BJP's ST cell.

Balancing the Thakur-Brahmin equation in Uttarakhand seems to have guided the choice of the party, with State unit chief Mahendra Bhatt being nominated, as Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami belongs to the Thakur community. He replaces BJP's national media cell chief Anil Baluni, who may yet contest Lok Sabha election.

In Haryana, Subhash Ba-

rala, a Jat leader and a former president of the party's Haryana unit, has been nominated. The candidature of Mr. Barala is seen as an attempt by the local BJP to appease Jats, the largest community in the State.

Narayansa Bandage, former MLC and a promi nent Hindutva activist, is the BIP's nominee from Karnataka. He was among those jailed during the Emergency period; he had also been involved in the Ram Mandir movement.

The BIP in West Bengal chose the chief spokesperson in the State and oldtime party loyalist Samik Bhattacharva for the nomination. Mr. Bhattacharya was the BJP MLA from Basirhat Dakshin Assembly seat from 2014 to 2016.

Elections for 56 Rajya Sabha seats spread across 15 States are scheduled to be held on February 27, and the last date for filing nominations is February

### AAP accuses Centre of stalling funds for Punjab

**The Hindu Bureau** CHANDIGARH

Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) supremo and Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Sunday accused the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)-led Central government of stalling ₹8,000 crore meant for various pro-people schemes in Punjab.

He said this was a grave injustice to Punjab that could not be tolerated. The Union government was afraid of the AAP's rising popularity and hence was stooping low to stall the party's progress, he said. He also accused the Centre of working overtime to defame the AAP.



Worrying list: The 17th Lok Sabha was the first ever to function without a Deputy Speaker, a constitutionally mandated position. PTI

The four previous Lok of the 15 sessions held dur-Sabhas, all of which were ing this Lok Sabha were addissolved before the stipujourned early, resulting in lated five-year period, had the cancellation of 40 scheduled sittings.

Different reasons were for the drop in sittings is cited for each cancellation. the pandemic, though it Out of the five years, Parliadoes not explain why 11 out ment sat for the lowest



number of days - 33 in total - in 2020. The 17th Lok Sabha was the first ever to function

without a Deputy Speaker, a constitutionally mandated position. Article 93 of the Constitution requires that the Lok Sabha elect a Speaker and a Deputy Speaker as soon as possible.

The Opposition has often criticised the government for passing Bills in a hurry, many a time amid a din, without any debate. The statistics appear to the Opposition's claim.

#### **Passing Bills**

According to the study, 58% of Bills were passed within two weeks of their introduction. The J&K Reorganisation Bill, 2019 and the Women's Reservation Bill, 2023 were passed within two days of their in-"Thirty-five troduction. per cent of Bills were passed with less than an hour of discussion in Lok Sabha. The corresponding figure for Rajya Sabha was 34," the PRS study notes.

Only 16% of the Bills were referred to Standing Committees for Parliamentary scrutiny. "This is lower than corresponding figures for the previous three Lok Sabhas," the PRS study observed.

Another big casualty of the fewer sittings were Private Members' Bills (PMB) and resolutions. In all, 729 PMBs were introduced in the 17th Lok Sabha, which is higher than all the previous Lok Sabhas except the 16th. However, only two of them were discussed.

In the same period, 705 PMBs were introduced in Rajya Sabha, and 14 were discussed.

Till date, only 14 PMBs have been passed and received assent. None have been passed in both Houses since 1970.

Seeking the support of

the tribal community, Mr.

Modi said that it was the

BJP government led by

former PM Atal Bihari Vaj-

payee that had established

a separate ministry and

budget for the interests of

which has made record in-

crease in the MSP [mini-

mum support price] for

forest produce. We also

opened Van Dhan Kendras

so that the tribal products

get new marketplaces," he

tribals only mean some

votes. They only remem-

ber the villages, the poor,

and the people from back-

ward sections when the

elections are announced,"

Mr. Modi said, adding that

the reason why Madhya

Pradesh was labelled a "bi-

maru rajya" was because

of the Congress' "hateful

attitude towards the villag-

es, and the backward and

Modi inaugurated or laid

the foundation for deve-

lopment works worth

₹7,550 crore, including the

inauguration of road deve-

lopment projects worth

more than ₹3,275 crore be-

nefiting the three States.

Earlier in the day, Mr.

tribal regions".

"For the Congress, the

"It was our government

the community.

said.

THE HINDU

# Cong. dividing people on lines of caste, region: PM

BJP alone will cross 370-seat mark in the Lok Sabha election, says PM in Madhya Pradesh; he adds that Congress and its friends already sense defeat, and hence are resorting to a few 'last tricks'

Mehul Malpani BHOPAL

rime Minister Narendra Modi said on Sunday that the Congress was trying to "create a divide among people in the name of caste, language and region" in its attempt to regain power. He was speaking in Madhya Pradesh's Jhabua district.

Mr. Modi said that the Congress and its friends could already see their defeat, and hence are resorting to their "last tricks".

"I have to make you aware of the Congress' conspiracy. The Congress and its friends have only two strengths. When they are in power, they loot. When they're out of power, they create "foot" (divide) and get people to fight. Loot and "foot" are oxygen for the Congress. The public has already shut the doors for their loot in most States, so to regain power, they are busy creating a divide among people in the name of caste, language, and re-

gion," he said. The Prime Minister was addressing a tribal rally in Jhabua, which is located on the State's boundary



**Reaching out:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi with Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav at Jhabua on Sunday. A.M. FARUQUI

with both Gujarat and Ra-

The three States have sizeable tribal votes, with the community constituting 21% of the population of Madhya Pradesh, 14.75% of Gujarat, and 13.5% of Rajasthan.

Mr. Modi also claimed that while the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) was sure to get more than 400 seats in the upcoming Lok Sabha election, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) alone would cross the 370-seat mark.

"Senior leaders of the Opposition themselves have already started saying in Parliament that in 2024, [we are getting] more than

400 seats. Even I am hear-

seat mark," Mr. Modi said. The Prime Minister, however, said that he had not come to Jhabua to campaign for the Lok Sabha election, but had instead come as a "sevak (servant)" to thank the people of the State for ensuring the BJP's victory in the 2023 Assembly election.

ing about the NDA getting

400 seats, but I would also

like to say that the BJP

alone will cross the 370-

**Mood for LS poll** 

"Through the Assembly election, you have already conveyed what your mood will be for the Lok Sabha election," he said.

### BJP may release first list of candidates for LS election soon <u>Nistula Hebbar</u> NEW DELHI

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) may release its first list of candidates for the Lok Sabha election as early as the last week of February, right after the party completes its National Council meetings scheduled for the next weekend.

Top sources told the *The* Hindu that after the BJP drew up a list in 2021-22 of 160 or so "vulnerable" seats, where the party has never won or has consistently come second, a decision to announce candidates early for at least some seats where the party does not fancy its chances was taken.

"A list of 62 such seats was to have been announced at the end of January itself but returning allies like the Janata Dal (United) and possible ones like the Akali Dal and the Rashtriya Lok Dal [RLD] have delayed BJP's strategy to announce candidates early," said a senior source in the party. The strategy of announcing candidates for some seats early worked for the BJP in the recent Assembly elections in Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Rajasthan (seat announcements in Telangana and Mizoram were



A list of 62 [vulnerable] seats was to have been announced at the end of January itself but returning allies.... have delayed the party's strategy to announce candidates early SOURCES IN THE BJP

delayed in comparison). "In Madhya Pradesh, of the 34 seats announced early in the first list – seats the party considered tough the BJP won 24," the source said.

#### **Candidate selection**

BJP sources also said that MPs who were fielded in the Assembly elections and lost are unlikely to be repeated from their Lok Sabha seats. "There will be some exceptions, possibly in Telangana, with Bandi Sanjay who lost the Assembly election but is MP from Karimnagar, likely to be repeated," the source said.

The party has also sounded out Union Ministers who are Rajya Sabha MPs on the need to contest Lok Sabha election. With the exception of a couple of Ministers, this strategy too is also on track.



#### U.P. CM, Ministers and MLAs offer prayers at Ram Temple

MLAs from all parties in Uttar Pradesh, except the Samajwadi Party (SP), on Sunday visited the Ram Temple in Ayodhya to offer prayers to Lord Ram along with Uttar Pradesh Assembly speaker Satish Mahana, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath and the entire U.P. Cabinet. Members of the Opposition Congress, the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) and the Rashtriya Lok Dal (RLD) were part of the delegation visiting the temple town. The Samajwadi Party rejected the invitation of the Speaker. Party leaders urged SP chief Akhilesh Yadav to make arrangements for a visit to the Ram Temple.

#### No more subsidised power for Ministers, officers: Assam CM

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said on Sunday that the days of Ministers, government officers and employees enjoying heavily subsidised power will be over soon. He said he had instructed the Power Department to install individual prepaid meters in every government quarters, including the residences in the Ministers' colony, so that they do not get away with paying next-to-nothing for using power. The instruction followed his meeting with the department's officials, who told him that a very nominal amount was being deducted from the salaries of Ministers and senior officers every month as power usage charges. On January 12, the Assam Cabinet decided to expedite the smart prepaid meter installation across the State.

### *'Ahalan* Modi': large turnout expected at PM's diaspora <sup>+</sup> event in UAE

Nistula Hebbar NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate the United Arab Emirates's largest Hindu temple in Abu Dhabi on Wednesday.

During the visit, 'Ahalan Modi', one of the biggest diaspora events to be addressed by the Prime Minister, will also be held.

At least 6,000-7,000 workers of Indian origin are expected to attend the event to be held on Tuesday. 'Ahalan' in Arabic 'hello means welcome'.

#### Last event in 2015

The event will take place at the Zayed Sports City Stadium in Abu Dhabi and registrations for the event have crossed 60,000, with confirmations for attendance currently going out. Speaking to The Hindu, Nisha Singh, a senior virologist and spokesperson for the event, said that the last diaspora event in UAE for Mr. Modi, 'Marhaba Modi', had been held nine years ago when he visited Dubai in 2015.

"He had visited UAE even after that, but without a big diaspora event as part of it. This time, a few of us, around 350 people at the India Club, got together and decided that this should be organised," Dr. Singh, who manned the COVID-19 pandemic helpline for Indians living in Dubai from the Indian Consulate there, said.

"There will be a cultural programme by community people, and all of the funding and work is on a volunteer basis," Dr. Singh said.

The main event of the Prime Minister's visit will be the inauguration of the Bochasanwasi Shri Akshar Purushottam Swaminarayan Sanstha Hindu Mandir. Land for the temple was donated by the UAE government.

## Rahul accuses BJP, RSS of spreading hatred, raises the caste census pitch

**Shubhomoy Sikdar** RAIPUR

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Sunday said he was determined to conduct the caste census as it was a pivotal step towards delivering social justice in the country

Mr. Gandhi, whose Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra resumed in Chhattisgarh after a two-day break, said Prime Minister Narendra Modi was not conducting the caste census as he was not from the Other Backward Classes (OBC).

"He [Mr. Modi] is not an OBC and he will never work for OBC, backwards, and poor. This is the truth. And I have made up my mind that caste census is the next biggest step towards social justice and I will do it. I am not going to

let go," he said. Mr. Gandhi held a road-



Gathering support: Congress leader Rahul Gandhi with party

show each in Raigarh and Sakti districts of the State. He accused the BJP of spreading hatred and flagged a range of other issues, from defence recruitments to the economic policies of the Union government and the situation in Manipur.

leader Sachin Pilot during the yatra in Raigarh on Sunday. ANI

At Raigarh, he said the Congress wanted an India where hatred and violence did not exist, adding that love was in the DNA of the country. "The Bharativa Janata Party and the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh are spreading hatred, while love is in the DNA of this country. In this country, people belonging to different faiths and having different thoughts live together

peacefully with love," Mr.

Gandhi said.

Mr. Gandhi recounted his visit to Manipur and questioned why Mr. Modi has not gone to the strife-

Criticising the Agnipath scheme for recruitment of soldiers, Mr. Gandhi promised justice for the 1.5 lakh youth affected by this scheme. He said the Congress would fight for such people to ensure they either got compensated or were recruited.

"They have made two categories in Army. One Aginveer and then others," he said

The Congress leader also highlighted the disparity caused by policies like GST and demonetisation, stating that they benefited the rich while the poor suffered. He also questioned why both the rich and the poor had to pay the same GST when their earnings were vastly different.

### Few parties switching sides will not impact INDIA bloc, says Pilot

**Press Trust of India** NEW DELHI/RAIGARH

Amid some Indian National Developmental, Inclusive Alliance (INDIA) constituents switching sides to the NDA, Congress leader Sachin Pilot on Sunday said the Opposition alliance was

The BJP is attempting a "frantic rejig" of the political landscape as it is worried over the strength of the coalition, he added.

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Baneriee is verv much part of the alliance, and expressed confidence that a way forward will be found in seat-sharing talks with her party. He dismissed sugges-

Mr. Pilot said that the

tions that the Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra was adversely affecting the poll preparations of the party and asserted that talks for seatsharing with allies were going on simultaneously.

He said the BJP talking about 370 seats for itself and 400-plus for the NDA was more of "bravado and rhetoric" than a practical assessment on the ground. "People may come and

go; one or two moving sides will not make an impact on the effort we are putting in as the INDIA bloc," he said. A one-onone contest between the INDIA and the NDA is tilted in favour of the Opposition coalition, Mr. Pilot added.



#### SEARCH COMMITTEE FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF TWO INFORMATION COMMISSIONERS OF TAMIL NADU INFORMATION COMMISSION

Applications are invited for the posts of two State Information Commissioners for the Tamil Nadu Information Commission. Interested persons may send his / her application in the prescribed form along with the relevant documents by Speed Post / Registered Post and also by e-Mail so as to reach the following address on or before 5.00 pm or

Justice K.B.K.Vasuki (Retd.), Chairperson, Search Committee,

Second Floor, Catholic Center, No.108, Armenian Street, Parry's, Chennai-600 001. E-mail ID : kbkvasuki61@gmail.com

Application form and other details can be downloaded from vww.tn.gov.in/department/22 under the heading "Announcements"

DIPR/124/DISPLAY/2024

Search Committee.

#### **KMF** Karnataka Cooperative Milk Producers' Federation Limited

KMF Complex, Dr. M. H. Marigowda Road, DRC Post, Bangalore-560 029. Tel: 080-25536625 / 26096888, e-mail: engg@kmf.coop

IFT No: KMF/ENGG/PIBOs EPR PWM Call2/2023-24

Date: 09-02-2024

#### SHORT TERM RETENDER NOTIFICATION

(Two Cover System) (Through Karnataka Public Procurement Portal Only) Karnataka Milk Federation Ltd; Bengaluru invites tenders from the eligible CPCB Authorized Post Consumer Plastic Waste Recyclers / Waste Collection Agencies / any other eligible companies who are in the similar business through KPPP for the works mentioned in the table below. The interested Waste Collection Agencies & any other eligible companies who have executed similar kind of works may participate in the tender as indicated below, by logging on to website https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in and also contact Help desk E-mail: hphelpdesk. blr@intarvo.com, support@eprochelpdesk.com and helpline no. +91-8046010000,

SI No.	Name of the work	Tender Qty (MTPA)	EMD (Rs.)
1	EPR Fulfillment / Plastic Waste Management by way of Collection, Segregation & Recycling of Post-Consumer Plastic Waste generated by KMF & its Member Milk Unions & Units Across PAN India. The entire activities shall be managed in confirmation to Plastic Waste Management Rules, 2016 along with Annual Filing for the year 2023-24 (LDPE/LLDPE/PE/MLP/Tetra Pak Paperboard Cartons / waste Film of Milk, Curd, Ghee, Butter Milk and Lassi etc — Pouch Milk, UHT Milk & Fresh Products Packaging Waste-All category Plastic Waste)	Approx 16000	6,00,000/-

1. Tender schedules may be downloaded from dated 12-02-2024 to 21-02-2024 up to 4-00 pm. 2. Last date for Tender submission on date: 21-02-2024 up to 4.00 pm

3. Tender [Part 1] to be opened on date: 22-02-2024 at 4.30 pm.

Any Modifications / changes in the Bid Document / Tender Specification / Tender Schedule will be uploaded in KPP Portal https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in Only.

For KARNATAKA MILK FEDERATION LTD. Sd/- Director [Engineering]-1

#### **SUPREME COURT OF INDIA** RECRUITMENT FOR THE EX-CADRE POST OF DIRECTOR (LIBRARY)

Applications from eligible candidates are invited for selection of a suitable candidate for appointment to the ex-cadre post of Director (Library) in Level 13 of Pay Matrix. The details about eligibility conditions etc. can be downloaded from the website of the Supreme Court of India i.e. www.sci.gov.in. The last date for receipt of applications is 11.03.2024.

Place: New Delhi Date: 09.02.2024

Registrar (Recruitment)



DIRECT RECRUITMENT FOR POST OF RESEARCH ENGINEERS						
Name of Post	No. of Posts	Pay Level in Pay Matrix	Age Limit (Years)			
Research Engineer GEN-3 Pay Level 10 35 Years						
Starting date for Applications: 15 FEBRUARY 2024 Closing date for Applications: 31 MARCH 2024.						

Qualification & Experience Criteria: B.E/B.Tech. in Mechanical Engineering with 5 year experience in specific areas OR M.E/M.Tech. in Engineering with 3 year experience in specific areas and B.E/B.Tech.

in Mechanical Engineering. Experience criteria as cited below: . Post-1. MECHANICAL (Multiphase): Experience in Two-phase flow/ Multi-phase flow research and experimental testing.

2. Post-2. MECHANICAL (CFD/Thermal & Fluids): Experience in CFD in Thermal & Fluids Engineering. The M.E/ M.Tech shall be in Mechanical Engineering (Specialization in Thermal & Fluids Engineering/ Fluid Mechanics & Thermal

Engineering).
3. Post-3. MECHANICAL (Valves/Thermal & Fluids): Experience in design and testing of valves. M.E/ M.Tech shall be in Mechanical Éngineering (Specialization i Thermal & Fluids Engineering/ Fluid Mechanics & Thermal Engineering)
Mode of Selection: Test / Interview For details on Posts, application Form, etc., please visit www.fcriindia.com

#### FLUID CONTROL RESEARCH INSTITUTE

Kanjikode West, Palakkad, Kerala-678623 on No. FCRI/P&A/2024/PO-N003 dated 09.02.2024

RECRUITMENT TO THE POST OF PERSONNEL OFFICER ON DEPUTATION BASIS					
Name of Post   No. of Posts   Scale of Pay   Age Limit   Tenure					
Personnel Officer	1 [GENERAL]	Pay Level 10 in the Pay Matrix	56 Years	3 Years	
Start Date for receiving Applications: 15 February 2024.					

Last Date for receipt of Applications: 31 March 2024. Applications are invited for the post of Personnel Officer for appointment on deputation Autonomous organisations / Central Universities / Indian Institutes of Technologies / similar Central Govt. Institutions including IISc / IISER / NIT / CSIR / DRDO /ISRO / other Research Institutions following Central Govt. Rules, etc.

(1) Essential Qualifications: (i) Must be a graduate in any discipline from a recognized university; (ii) Holding analogous post on regular basis in the parent cadre/ Departme or with two years regular service in posts in the Pay level 9 or equivalent in the parent cadre/ Department; or with five years regular service in posts in the pay level 8 or equivalent in the parent cadre/ Department.

Desirable Qualifications: (i) A bachelor degree in law is preferable. (ii) The candidate should possess wide knowledge on the central government rules and regulations viz. Fundamental Rules & Supplementary Rules, General Financial Rules, orders on reservation policy of the Government of India, various Central Civil Service Rules regarding Pay, Allowances, Conduct, Discipline, Leave, Medical Attendance, etc. (iii) He/ She should also be well versed with the Labour Laws. (2) Only Indian Nationals need apply. (3) Please visit FCRI website www.fcriindia.com/career to download application form and follow the instructions before applying. (4) The Application Form

duly filled up along with following Annexures in the specified Proforma are to be submitted through Proper Channel, to reach us on / before the notified due date: Annexure-A: Details of penalties, if any, imposed, on the applicant during the last 5 FIVE) years. (ii) Annexure-B: Vigilance clearance in respect of the applicant duly signed by an officer of appropriate level. (iii) Annexure-C: Certified copies of ACRs APRs for the last 5 (FIVE) years. **(5)** Canvassing in any form will be render the application as disqualified. **(6)** Candidate shall ensure that their Applications **Through Proper Channel** are received at FCRI before closing Date through REGISTERED POST/ COURIER, addressed to: The Director, Fluid Control Research Institute Kanjikode West, Palakkad, Kerala-678623. (7) Applications NOT forwarded through Proper Channel OR Applications not enclosing the full information / Annexures will be

### News



#### Two volunteers found dead in Manipur in separate incidents

Two volunteers of the village defence force were found dead in Manipur, one on Saturday and the other on Sunday morning, police said. A police party accompanied by villagers found the bullet-riddled body of Ningthoujam Manisana (35) in the hill ravine in Imphal East district on Sunday morning. His family had lodged a missing person report on February 7. In another incident, the body of another volunteer, N. Oken (26), was recovered from a utility vehicle on Saturday night; the vehicle was parked in the compound of JN Institute of Medical Sciences in Imphal. Search operations have been launched in all vulnerable areas, police said. However, there has been no report of any arrest.

#### CAPF exam to be conducted in 13 regional languages

For the first time, constable recruitment examinations in Central Armed Police Forces such as the CRPF, BSF, and CISF will be conducted in 13 regional languages apart from Hindi and English. The examinations are being conducted from February 10 to March 7 and around 48 lakh candidates are appearing in 128 cities across the country, according to an official statement. The Ministry of Home Affairs had decided to conduct the constable (general duty) examination for recruitment in CAPFs in regional languages including Assamese, Bengali, Gujarati, Marathi, Malayalam, Kannada, Tamil, Telugu, Odia, Urdu, Punjabi, Manipuri and Konkani. PTI

#### FIFA, Education Ministry join hands to promote football

Aiming to significantly broaden the accessibility of football within the school setting for students, the Ministry of Education has tied up with the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) to distribute 11 lakh footballs across the country. The exercise is slated to benefit more than 1.5 lakh schools. Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan launched the distribution of 6,848 footballs to 1,260 schools in 17 districts of Odisha under the Footballs for Schools (F4S) programme on Friday. The distribution of balls was launched by Mr. Pradhan in December in JNV Cuttack, Odisha.

#### Stop referring to trial courts as lower courts: SC to registry

The Supreme Court, in an order passed on Thursday, asked its registry to stop referring to trial courts as "lower courts". A Bench of Justices Abhay S. Oka and Ujjal Bhuyan passed the order while hearing a plea filed by two persons challenging the Allahabad High Court verdict which dismissed their appeal against conviction and life sentence awarded to them in a murder case of 1981. The order said that even the record of trial courts should not be referred to as "lower court record". "It will be appropriate if the registry of this court stops referring to the trial courts as 'lower courts'. Instead, it should be referred as the trial court record (TCR)." PTI

Across

8 God may lay devious traps (8)

Detection from sixth sense with face denying lead (6)

11 Fish drift around in the middle of dragnet (8)

**10** Acute high pressure causing the proverbial storm in this? (6)

12 Special ventilation passage keeping temperature in place for

# Over 3 lakh ASHAs apply for Centre's health cover

The Centre had announced that it would cover anganwadi workers and helpers, as well as ASHAs, under AB-PMJAY; Health Ministry to get their healthcare cards ready before end of the month

Bindu Shajan Perappadan NEW DELHI

fter the Central gonounced its decision to include Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHAs) and Anganwadi workers and helpers in the Ayushman Bharat free public health cover scheme, the Health Ministry has so far received Aadhaar details of 23 lakh anganwadi workers and helpers and over three lakh ASHA workers from various

"The government aims to get their cards ready by the end of the month as the scheme comes into effect from March 1 this year," said Health Secretary Apurva Chandra.

#### **Key component**

Ayushman Bharat-Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY) provides health coverage of up to ₹5 lakh a year for poor and vulnerable families and the decision to include this group of healthcare workers was announced by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman during the presentation of the interim Union Budget 2024-25 recently.

The Ministry has noted



country's response for prevention and management of COVID-19. AFP

added.

that the ASHA programme is a key component of community processes that has continuously evolved over the last decade and a half.

"Serving as a facilitator, mobiliser and provider of community-level ASHA has emerged as the cornerstone of the National Health Mission and the group has been acknowledged for their substantial contribution in improving access to care for commun-

"ASHAs are also a critical component of the community platforms like Village Health and Sanitation Committees, Mahila Arogya Samiti, and Community-Based Planning and Monitoring under National Health Mission. ASHAs have been playing a key

role in the country's response for prevention and management of the CO-VID-19. In addition to performing tasks related to COVID-19, ASHAs also continued to support community members for accessing essential health services," Mr. Chandra

According to figures released by the Health Ministry, there were over 13 lakh Anganwadi workers and over 10 lakh anganwadi helpers in the country as on December 31, 2023. In its annual ASHA update 2020-21, it further adds that the country has 9.83 lakh ASHAs in position against the target of 10.35 lakh across 35 States and UTs (i.e., all except Goa and Chandigarh) making it the world's largest community volunteer programme.

In India, currently 55 crore individuals corresponding to 12 crore families are covered under the Ayushman Bharat scheme, according to government figures while many States/ UTs implementing AB-PMJAY have further expanded the beneficiary base, at their own cost.

The government has created approximately 28.45 crore Ayushman cards till December 20, 2023 and a total of 6.11 crore hospital admissions amounting to ₹78,188 crore had been authorised under the scheme, of which 1.7 crore hospitals admissions worth over ₹25,000 crore were authorised during the year 2023.

"Also a total of 26,901 hospitals including 11,813 private hospitals have been empanelled under AB-PMJAY to provide healthcare services to scheme beneficiaries and the scheme has ensured gender equity in access to healthcare services with women accounting for approximately 49% of the total Ayushman cards created and approximately 48% of total authorised hospital admissions," said the government data.

### Ensure fair, equitable evaluation process in **NExT:** House panel

Bindu Shajan Perappadan NEW DELHI

The National Exit Test (NExT) should be brought in only after "meticulous due diligence", keeping in mind the diverse background of medical colleges from which the first batch of NExT aspirants will emerge, the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Health and Family Welfare said in its report on the quality of medical education in India. The report was presented in Parliament earlier this week.

The Committee, under the chairmanship of Bhubaneswar Kalita, explained that presently, it is medical colleges which conduct final-year MBBS examinations. At the same time, the responsibility for NEET PG and FMGE - which are licensing and qualifying examinations for those who have completed their undergraduate medical degrees – falls under the purview of the National Board of Examinations (NBE), overseen by the Director-General of Health Services

within the Health Ministry. The National Medical Commission Act now provides for the NExT to enhance the competence of graduating MBBS students who obtain licences to practice annually. This initiative addresses the current emphasis on clearing the NEET-PG, which is predominantly theoretical and necessitates memorisation.

"In June 2023, the National Medical Commission developed the NMC Exit Test Regulations 2023 (NEXT Regulations). The test was to replace the final MBBS examination, act as a licentiate exam for grant of registration to practice medicine, and provide a basis for entry to postgraduate courses instead of NEET PG. The NExT would be a medical licensing exam that is designed to assess the competency of medical graduates. However, in July 2023, NMC issued notice stating that 'the National Exit Test (NExT) examination is deferred on the advice of the Ministry till further directions'," the parliamentary panel's report said.

#### 'Ensure fairness'

The Committee also recommended that the evaluation criteria should be moderate for the first round, stating that it was imperative to ensure that no group of graduates faces any undue advantage or disadvantage in the examination.

Striking a fair and equitable balance in the evaluation process will be pivotal to ensure the success and fairness of the NExT exam, it said.

# bullock-cart races revoked in Punjab

The Hindu Bureau CHANDIGARH

Ahead of Punjab's celebrated Rural Olympics, which is set to begin on Monday, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BIP) has asked the Union government to intervene and ensure the resumption of bullock-cart racing that was banned in 2014.

BJP national spokesperson Jaiveer Shergill met Union Minister for Housing and Urban Affairs Hardeep Puri in New Delhi and sought his intervention for the resumption of bullockcart racing in the 'Kila Raipur Sports Festival', which is organised at Kila Raipur village in Ludhiana.

#### **Cultural heritage**

Mr. Shergill said that he has urged Mr. Puri to press for

getting the President's assent to The Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (Punjab Amendment) Bill, 2019, which would pave the way for bullock-cart races to resume at the Rural Olympics. The Bill was passed in the Punjab Legislative Assembly, after which it was sent to the President for assent.

"Bullock-cart racing is a crucial issue of culture and heritage, associated with Punjab and Punjabiyat for many decades. The Kila Raipur rural games have been organised continuously since the year 1933. Presently, these games are known all over the world by the name of Mini Olympics," he said.

The rural Olympics will be held from February 12 to 14 at Kila Raipur.

## Shergill wants ban on | West Bengal Governor might visit violence-torn Sandeshkhali today

**Shiv Sahay Singh** 

West Bengal Governor C.V. Ananda Bose on Sunday cut short his Kerala trip and is likely to visit the violence-torn Sandeshkhali in West Bengal's North 24 Parganas on Monday.

The Governor has also called for a comprehensive report from the State government on the incidence of violence, and held discussions with top brass of the Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF), a Raj Bhavan official said. "The Governor has been repeatedly stressing that he will continue his fight against violence and corruption in West Bengal," the source added.

The Leader of the Opposition in the State Assembly Suvendu Adhikari, and



Poultry and fish farms set on fire allegedly by villagers in Sandeshkhali in North 24 Parganas district on Friday. ANI

other BJP legislators, have demanded that the Governor visit Sandeshkhali block in North 24 Parganas, and threatened to protest if Mr. Bose does not do so.

Violence was reported in the area on February 8 and 9, when villagers allegedly attacked the properties of local Trinamool Congress leaders. In an attempt to quell public anger, the Trinamool suspended its local leader Uttam Sardar. Mr. Uttam Sardar was arrested late on

Meanwhile, the West Bengal Police arrested former Sandeshkhali MLA

Saturday evening.

Nirapada Sardar of the Communist Party of India (Marxist). The arrest triggered waves of protest by the Left Front workers. CPI(M) supporters held

protests outside the Bansdoni Police Station in Kolkata, where Mr. Niranada Sardar was detained.

"We strongly protest the detention of agricultural workers' leader Nirapada Sardar and demand the arrest of those accused of perpetrating atrocities on villagers," Left Front chairman Biman Bose said in a statement. CPI(M) State Secretary Md. Salim demanded Mr. Nirapada Sardar's unconditional release.

Prohibitory orders have been imposed in Sandeshkhali under Section 144 of the Cr.P.C, and Internet services have been suspended.

### TH CROSSWORD+ 14095





15 Sheer farce, endlessly repent blowing part of capital (10,5)

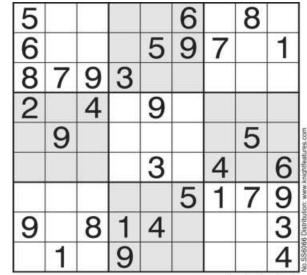
To solve this puzzle online,

get across to our crossword site. @ https://qrgo.page.link/jjpTn

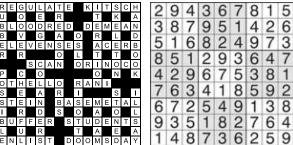
- 18 Cheap liquor, Spooner's acquired habit (6) Toothed wheel starts to swiftly propel missile (8)
- 22 Sculpted objects, fancy art say, leaving me mute (8)
- 24 First lady Marcos' daughter entering international festival (6) 25 Fellow in power on a balcony primarily ready for assembly (6)
- Check diamonds in custody and acknowledge (4,4)

- 1 Nitrogen in exhaust vent ultimately flowing freely (6) 2 Money is capital, that's the trouble (8)
- 3 Breaking statute frequently, who are black sheep those in authority? (3.6.4.2)
- Agreement appended to book extras (4)
- 5 The ten commandments originally ratified lie on the rocks (8,7)
- 6 Tap to hog alcoholic drinks (6)
- 7 Waving marks an American Indian salute (8)
- 13 Upset for example about kin, heartless jerks (5) 16 Sun welcomed by those cheering birds (8)
- Brewed chai close to a Mexican ranch (8) 19 Escaped convict finally shares blunder by force (3,3)
- 21 Dies to protect old women's funds (6)
- 23 Characters in Tokyo hotels call to attract attention (2-2)

### SUDOKU



#### DIFFICULTY RATING: Solution to yesterday's Sudoku 9 4 3 6 7 8 1 5





#### Tirumazhisai Piran

Unwavering devotion to the Supreme Being is the only prerequisite to divine benediction. This is clearly evident from the life of the Azhwars, the Vaishnavite Acharyas. Their bhakti was unparalleled, so much so that the Lord Himself reciprocated it, as in the case of Tirumazhisai Azhwar, who came to be known as Tirumazhisai Piran, said Thirukkudanthai Dr. Venkatesh in a discourse.

Born in the Tamil month of Thai, Tirumazhisai Azhwarhe was a staunch devotee of the Lord. Once when he waited outside the sanctum sanctorum of Sarangapani Temple in Kumbakonam, the deity instructed the priest to first feed his devotee Tirumazhisai Piran and thereafter offer the leftover to Him. It is also recorded that the Vasihnavite preceptor, on entering the sanctorum where the Lord was in anathasyanam pose, sang, "Nadantha kaalgal nondhavo? Nadunghujinala mEnamaay, Idanthameygu lunghavOvilangu maalvaraicchuram (Are your legs paining Oh Lord Kesava? Can You please get up and speak to me, Lord, the One who is lying down at Tirukkudanthai, on the banks of the Cauvery?) As the Lord started to rise, the devotee felt bad and said, "I should not have said that. You are Sarveswaran. Please lie down" and the Lord lay down again. To this day, the deity is seen in Uttana Sayanam (a few degrees from horizontal posture).

THE HINDU

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



The death toll from a Philippine landslip 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 landslip 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



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, AFF

#### 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



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

he 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

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

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-

case by case basis.

Lankan ports?

Is that why Sri Lanka

placed a one year ban

on all foreign research

vessels coming in to Sri

ships are coming to con-

duct research in our wa-

ters, we should have the

kind of capacity to under-

stand 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

improve

Chinese media have said

that the ban was due to

**Indian pressure, to stop** 

No this was our decision,

for the betterment of our

country. Of course we con-

tinue to allow military

Chinese dual purpose

research vessels from

coming in.....

and

capacities.

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 government.

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

A nationwide electionday 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-southern 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

here 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

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

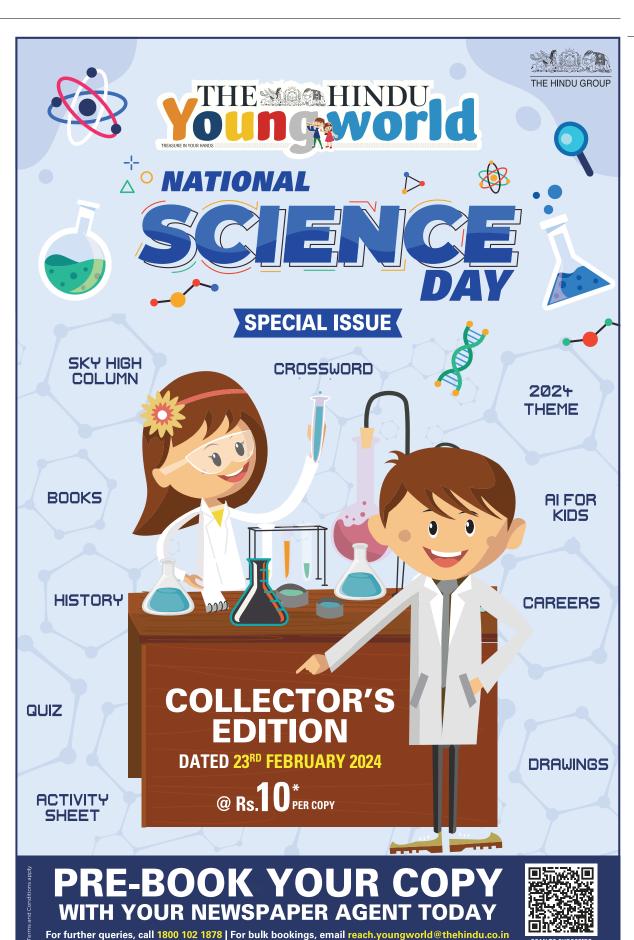
aligned foreign policy on a When it comes to regional groupings, there seems to be more emphasis now on **BIMSTEC than SAARC –** given Indian tensions with Pakistan, Afghanistan and now Maldives, do you see the That is a technical decision - basically we felt that if concept of SAARC going

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 IORA 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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### MONBYWISE



# 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)

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



Eye for returns: Non-Resident Indian parents with young kids also actively explore investment options in India to secure the financial

# **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

any 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 portfo-

lios 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 (ULIPs) provide wealth accumulation with the protection of insurance, proving to be a versatile investment option. Investors can 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 newage 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 in-

dividual 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 benefits 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)

### Are you a trader or an investor?

#### **THINKINVESTOR**

Trading refers to buying stocks for capital appreciation; investing refers to buying stocks for earning dividend income; most of us are traders as we buy stocks for capital appreciation

#### **Venkatesh Bangaruswamy**

If you buy individual stocks and label them as "long-term" investments, you may need to reconsider your trading mindset. Here, we discuss the behavioural reasons why most individuals do not like to trade or why they consider trading as investments.

Trading refers to buying stocks for capital appreciation. Investing refers to buying stocks with the primary objective of earning dividend income. Most of us are traders because we buy stocks for capital appreciation.

The question then shifts to time horizon. Are you a short-term or a long-term trader? This question must be considered in the context of the core-satellite framework. The core portfolio contains your goal-based investments. Equity investments in this portfolio must preferably be in mutual funds. The satellite portfolio is a short-term trading portfolio with holding period of not more than 12 months. To put this in perspective, you will incur short-term capital gains tax on these equity holdings. This means you are actively buying and selling stocks, exchange traded funds and, perhaps, derivatives to capture short-term price changes.

Now, if you desire a certain lifestyle, more money is typically preferable, whether you are a working executive or a retiree. If trading can generate additional cashflows, then trading ought to be preferable. So, why then do individuals typically shy away from trading?

Consider this. What if you buy a stock hoping to gain in the next three days only to see the stock tank and recover after two years? You will most likely regret your decision. Also, you will be unable to cut losses. This is because losses hurt us more than gains can gives us happiness for the same magnitude of change in stock price. One way our brain tries to cope with this future regret is to shift out of the trading mindset. Calling it investment extends the time horizon and reduces the pressure to cut losses. Importantly, our brain rationalises the purchase decision in the event the stock tanks; "blue chip stock" and "fundamentally-sound company" then become the narrative.

#### Conclusion

You may argue you are truly investing for the long term. There are two ways to check if that is the case. One, are vou continually looking at your "long-term investments"? And two, do vou sell "investments" if they generate better-than-expected returns in the short term? If your answer is yes, you are a short-term trader, a mindset aligns with your satellite portfolio.

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

#### **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)	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)

\*\*0.50% 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

THE HINDU

#### **BIG SHOW**

#### Ton-up Maxwell sets up Australia's win in second T20I against WI



Glenn Maxwell slammed a 50-ball century as Australia beat the West

Indies by 34 runs in the second T20I in Adelaide on Sunday. The scores: Australia 241/4 in 20 overs (Maxwell 120 n.o., David 31 n.o.) bt West Indies 207/9 in 20 overs (Powell 63, Russell 37, Stoinis

#### **MASTERCLASS**

#### Real show stealer was Boomball: Ashwin lauds Bumrah's feat



K.R. DEEPAK

R. Ashwin said "Boomball" stole the show in the second Test against England and Jasprit Bumrah reaching top of the ICC rankings across three formats is a "Himalayan feat". Bumrah put up a reverse swing masterclass in England's first innings that yielded him six wickets (6/45), following it up with a three-wicket haul in their second essay.

#### THUMPING WIN

#### Asalanka shines as Sri Lanka seals series against Afghanistan



Sri Lanka defeated Afghanistan by 155 runs in the second ODI at Pallekele on Sunday and took a 2-0 lead in the three-match series. The scores: Sri Lanka 308/6 in 50 overs (Asalanka 97 n.o., K. Mendis 61, Samarawickrama 52, Liyanage 50) bt Afghanistan 153 in 33.5 overs (Shah 63, I. Zadran 54, Hasaranga 4/27).

#### MAKING THE GRADE

#### Paltans rout Thalaivas, enter the semifinal; Giants in Eliminator



SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Puneri Paltan put on a masterclass to register an emphatic 56-29 win over the Tamil Thalaivas in Kolkata on Sunday. The Pune side also booked a place in the Pro Kabaddi League Season 10 semifinals through the victory. Gujarat Giants secured its place in the Eliminator after beating Bengaluru Bulls 50-28.

# Beardman on the prowl, Australia dethrones India

The pacer breaks the back of the Indian batting and derails the chase; MacMillan proves ideal foil; Harjas finds form while skipper Weibgen and Peake chip in with crucial knocks to set up the win

**U-19 WORLD CUP** 

**Press Trust of India** 

fresh chapter was added to the script of Australia's domination over India in the ICC World Cup finals when it bagged the Under-19 title with a 79-run victory here on Sunday.

Australia posted 253 for seven, forcing India to mount the highest chase in a youth World Cup summit clash. But Uday Saharan's side floundered, stumbling to 174 all out as the relentless Aussie bowlers led by the furious Mahli Beardman (three for 15) and the crafty off-spinner Raf MacMillan (three for 43) did not give them any breathing space.

This was Australia's fourth title, and the first since 2010. It also washed away the pain of losing to India in two summit clashes (2012, 2018).

India failed to stitch together meaningful partnernins as the frontline batters, including skipper Saharan (8), Musheer Khan (22) and Sachin Dhas (9), departed without making big contributions.

Beardman broke through the defence of Musheer with a delivery that kept a tad low before tempting Saharan with a wide delivery on off-stump. The Indian skipper slashed straight into the hands of



Ending a drought: Australia regained the Under-19 title after a gap of 14 years. ICC

Hugh Weibgen at point. Adarsh Singh was India's highest scorer with a 77-ball 47. Murugan Abhishek (42, 45b) tried gamely in the

company of Naman Tiwari adding 46 for the ninth wicket, the highest of the innings, but the task proved

Earlier, Harjas Singh, who had struggled throughout the competition, saved his best for the last. He topscored with 55.

#### **SCOREBOARD**

#### **AUSTRALIA**

Harry Dixon c Abhishek b Tiwari 42 (56b, 3x4, 1x6), Sam Konstas b Limbani 0 (8b), Hugh Weibgen c Musheer b Tiwari 48 (66b, 5x4). Harjas Singh lbw b Saumy 55 *'64b, 3x4, 3x6)*, Ryan Hicks lbw b Limbani 20 (25b, 2x4), Oliver Peake (not out) 46 (43b, 2x4, 1x6), Raf MacMillan c & b Musheer 2 (8b), Charlie Anderson lbw b Limbani 13 (18b. 1x6). Tom Straker (not out) 8 (13b); Extras (lb-11, w-7, nb-1): 19; Total (for seven wkts. in 50 overs): 253.

**FALL OF WICKETS** 1-16 (Konstas, 2.3 overs), 2-94 (Weibgen, 20.4), 3-99 (Dixon, 22.5). 4-165 (Hicks, 34.1), 5-181 (Harjas, 37.5), 6-187 (MacMillan, 39.5), 7-221 (Anderson, 45.3).

#### **INDIA BOWLING**

Limbani 10-0-38-3, Tiwari 9-0-63-2, Saumy 10-0-41-1, Musheer 9-0-46-1, Abhishek 10-0-37-0, Moliya 2-0-17-0. INDIA

Adarsh Singh c Hicks b Beardman 47 (77b, 4x4, 1x6), Arshin Kulkarni c Hicks b Vidler 3 (6b), Musheer Khan b Beardman 22 (33b, 3x4), Uday Saharan c Weibgen b Beardman 8 (18b), Sachin Dhas c Hicks b MacMillan 9 (8b, 1x4), Priyanshu Moliya c Vidler b Anderson 9 (21b), Aravelly Avanish c & b MacMillan 0 (2b), Murugan Abhishek c Weibgen b Vidler 42 (46b, 5x4, 1x6), Rai Limbani b MacMillan 0 (5b), Naman Tiwar (not out) 14 (35b, 1x6), Saumy Pandey c Hicks b Straker 2 (13b);

Extras (lb-7, w-10, nb-1): 18; Total (in 43.5 overs): 174.

**FALL OF WICKETS** 1-3 (Arshin, 2.2), 2-40 (Musheer, 12.2), 3-55 (Saharan, 16.5), 4-68 (Sachin, 19.1), 5-90 (Moliya, 24.5), 6-91 (Avanish, 25.3), 7-115 (Adarsh, 30.3), 8-122 (Limbani, 31.5), 9-168 (Abhishek, 40.3).

**AUSTRALIA BOWLING** Vidler 10-2-35-2, Anderson 9-0-42-1, Straker 7.5-1-32-1, Beardman 7-2-15-3, MacMillan

10-0-43-3. Toss: Australia Player-of-the-Match:

Player-of-the-Series: Kwena Maphaka (South Africa)

Beardman

### Nagal zooms into top-100 with Chennai Open triumph

**TENNIS** 

Nihit Sachdeva CHENNAI

Sumit Nagal defeated Luca Nardi 6-1, 6-4 in the Chennai Open final on Sunday to achieve a significant milestone in his career as he guaranteed himself a top-100 debut in next week's ATP Rankings.

Nagal, ranked 121 at the start of the event, did not drop a set in any of his five matches as he clinched his fifth title on the ATP Challenger Tour while also becoming the first Indian since Prajnesh Gunneswaran in 2019 to break the top-100 barrier. Coincidentally, Prajnesh had also made it to the top-100 club after reaching the semifinals of the same event.

Around 700 spectators turned up for the summit clash at the SDAT Stadium on a pleasant Sunday evening and Nagal, seeded second, did not disappoint.

Nardi, the top-seeded Italian who was also eyeing a top-100 debut, seemed to be struggling from the after effects of Saturday's threehour long semifinal and had three terrible forehand shanks in the first five points. Nagal broke him in the second and sixth games to pocket the opener.

Nagal consistently peppered the weak backhand of the 20-year-old Italian. Nardi's attempt to shorten the points with drop shots also bore no fruit. He did bounce back twice from a break down in the second set. However, the Indian



past Nardi in the final. B. JOTHI RAMALINGAM



Every player's dream is to at least be in the top-100. The last few years have been tough with being ranked 500, getting surgery done and not having financial support



I'm very happy that I found a way to push every single day and gave myself a chance to be here

broke him to love and earned the chance to close

the match at 5-4. Just when it looked that Nardi would level things up again, Nagal saved two break points before hitting

a clean forehand winner

point, he served wide into the ad court with Nardi's backhand return sailing well past the baseline. An emotional Nagal,

down the line. On match

who entered the same event last year while being ranked outside top-500 and needed a qualifying wildcard, dropped his racquet and spread his arms to let the moment sink in before rushing to his player box to hug his fitness trainer Milos Galecic, and mentor and former World No. 62 Somdev Devvarman.

From Chennai, the caravan moves to Bengaluru for another \$133,250 Challenger event which starts from Monday. For the first time ever, the ATP is providing partial monetary support for the conduct of all four Challenger events in the country.

### Gunners shoot six past West Ham

Agence France-Presse LONDON

Declan Rice scored on his return to West Ham as Arsmashed David Moves' men 6-0 in a statement of intent in the Premier League title race.

Bukayo Saka struck twice, while Leandro Trossard and centre-backs William Saliba and Gabriel Magalhaes were also on target.

Xabi Alonso's unbeaten Bayer Leverkusen took control of the Bundesliga title race on Saturday, thoroughly outclassing Bayern Munich in a 3-0 home win to go five points clear at the

Jude Bellingham struck twice as leader Real Madrid took control of LaLiga with a punishing 4-0 win over second-placed Girona on Saturday, opening up a five-point cushion.

#### The results: Premier League:

West Ham 0 lost to Arsenal 6 (Saliba 32, Saka 41-pen, 63, Gabriel 44, Trossard 45+2, Rice 65); Aston Villa 1 (Luiz 67) lost to Manchester United 2 (Hojlund 17, McTominay 86).

LaLiga: Getafe 3 (Mayoral 41, Mata 45+2, 89) bt Celta Vigo 2 (Larsen 71, Allende 85).

On Saturday: Premier League: Hudson-Odoi 45+6) lost to Newcastle 3 (Guimaraes 10, 66,

LaLiga: Real Madrid 4 (Vinicius 6, Bellingham 35, 54, Rodrygo 61) bt

Bundesliga: Bayer Leverkusen 3 (Stanisic 18, Grimaldo 50, Frimpong 90+5) bt Bayern

Serie A: Roma 2 (Mancini 28, Fl. Shaarawy 44) lost to Inter Milan 4 (Acerbi 17, Thuram 49, Angelino 56-og, Bastoni 90+3).

### Semenistaja makes Hunter become the hunted

**MUMBAI OPEN** 

<u>Kamesh Srinivasan</u>

Darja Semenistaja saved a match point before registering a memorable 5-7, 7-6 (6), 6-2 victory against Storm Hunter in the final of the L&T Mumbai Open WTA tournament at the CCI on Sunday.

The 21-year-old Semenistaja was at her fighting best right through the twohour 30-minute contest. It was her 16th singles title, and the second in India after the triumph in Bengaluru last month.

For a large part of the match, it was World No. 3 doubles player Hunter who recovered every time she was down.

However, leading 6-5 in the second set tie-break, Hunter failed to seal the deal. And when she lost the next two points, Semenistaja broke the door open, smashing a forehand down-the-line winner to



Semenistaja. KAMESH SRINIVASAN

force a decider. Semenistaja

ensured that there was no further 'Storm' as she cruised through losing just two

For someone who had recovered from 3-5 down in the first set and had survived four set points before winning it, the 29-year-old Hunter couldn't find a second wind.

The champion collected

\$15,000 and 125 WTA points while the runner-up got \$8,000 and 81 points. In the doubles final, Dalila Jakupovic and Sabrina

Santamaria stepped it up

in both sets to record a 6-4,

6-3 victory over Arianne Hartono and Prarthana Thombare. The 32-year-old Dalila had lost the singles final to Aryna Sabalenka in 2017 at

the same venue. Prarthana, who made it to her maiden WTA final after having won 26 doubles titles in the ITF circuit, kept the home interest alive by forging a solid

partnership with the free-

stroking Arianne. The doubles champions won \$5000 and 125 points. The runners-up got \$2,500 and 81 points.

#### The results (finals): Singles: Darja Semenistaja (Lat)

bt Storm Hunter (Aus) 5-7, 7-6(6),

Doubles: Dalila Jakupovic (Slo) & Sabrina Santamaria (USA) bt Arianne Hartono (Ned) & Prarthana Thombare 6-4, 6-3.

### Australia won by 79 runs.

### India fights back to draw with the Netherlands, wins a bonus point

**Uthra Ganesan** BHUBANESWAR

A brilliant first half followed by a clumsy, chaotic second before regaining control was the story of Indian men's clash against Netherlands in their second FIH Pro League match here on Sunday and the final result, a 2-2 draw, was a reflection of the performance on field. The mandatory shootout saw India take a bonus point

and its second win on the

Unyielding

The World No. 1 side was always expected to be much tougher but to its credit, the host held their structure for the first two quarters. Sitting deep in defence and accelerating on counter-attacks, the Indians kept the opposition at bay, not yielding space

or pace. The Dutch used long balls both on ground and in the air to bypass the



on the trot. BISWARANJAN ROUT

midfield crowd but were unable to get past the resolute Indian defence. At the other end, India managed a couple of PCs in the 12th minute but couldn't make them count.

Till Hardik Singh decided to step up and break the deadlock a minute later. Running along the middle on a counter, Hardik found Sukhjeet on the right, got it

back on reverse and shot into the goal through the smallest of gaps between the goalkeeper's pad and Manpreet's desperately

diving clearance in the final minute before break was deemed deliberate to concede Netherlands' 2nd PC, Jip Janssen making no mistake to level.

Whether it was the rea-

son or the Dutch switching gears, the Indians seemed to lose their structure and control on themselves and the game in the second

Suddenly, the Dutch seemed to a lot more threatening even as the Indians began getting wayward.

#### **Dutch dominance**

The 3rd Quarter was all about Dutch dominance and they unsurprisingly went ahead, Koen Bijen slapping home a sharp rebound off a PC in the 39th. India finally brought

back a semblance of control in the 4th and had a couple of open chances till Harmanpreet got the equaliser, two minutes from time.

#### The results:

Australia 4 (Lachlan Sharp 9 & 52, Jake Whetton 19, Blake Govers 25) bt Spain 3 (Marc Miralles 29 Nicolas Alvarez 36, Verdielle Pol Cabre 37): India 2 (Hardik Singh 13, Harmanpreet Singh 58) drew with Netherlands 2 (Jip Janssen 30, Koen Bijen 39).

### Amit, Sachin strike gold; Nikhat bags silver

**Press Trust of India** SOFIA

World Championship medallist Amit Panghal and Sachin Siwach struck gold while Nikhat Zareen and three other Indian boxers signed off with silver medals at the 75th Strandja Memorial tournament here on Sunday. Panghal (51kg) pulled off a dominating 5-0 triumph over Kazakhstan's Sanzhar Tashkenbay in the men's flyweight final.

Sachin punched Uzbekistan's Shakhzod Muzafarov through a 5-0 verdict. However, two-time

world champion Zareen (50kg), Arundhati Choudhary (66kg), Barun Singh Shagolshem (48kg) and Rajat (67kg) settled for silver medals after going down in their respective bouts. In all, India signed off

with a haul of eight medals – two gold, four silver, and a couple of bronze in this edition of the event.



#### Uttar Pradesh boys and Tamil Nadu girls triumph

Uttar Pradesh and Tamil Nadu clinched the boys and girls' titles respectively in the 73rd National junior basketball championships in Bhubaneswar on Sunday. UP defeated Rajasthan 106-67 while Tamil Nadu overcame Punjab 91-88 in the girls' summit clash. Tamil Nadu boys and Maharashtra girls finished third.

The results (finals): Boys: UP 106 (Kushal Singh 27, Muhammed Kaif 25, Dev Premi 22) bt Rajasthan 67 (Lokesh Kumar 16, Jaideep Rathore 13, Muhammed Kshan 13, Nithesh Kumar 11). Girls: TN 91 (Harima Sundari 31, Soan Realin 13, Ruth Anna Blessen 11, R. Deepthi 10, Antheya Daisy 10) bt Punjab 88 (Komal Preeth Kaur 29, Manmeet Kaur 27, Nadar Dhillon 14, Anchal 12).



#### High jumper Tejaswin wins gold in Gala Elmos 2024

Tejaswin Shankar, the National record holder in high jump, won the top prize in the International High Jump Gala Elmos 2024 athletics meet at Heist-op-den-Berg, Belgium with an effort of 2.23 metres. Tejaswin, competing for the first time since last October, finished ahead of Greece's Antonios Merlos (2.20) in the World Athletics Indoor Tour Challenger event on Saturday.

#### ISL: Siverio's strike helps Jamshedpur hold Bengaluru

Jamshedpur FC restricted Bengaluru FC to a 1-1 draw at the JRD Tata Sports Complex in an ISL match on Sunday. Suresh Singh Wangjam opened the scoring for the visitor in the 14th minute, but Javi Siverio equalised in the 70th minute to ensure that both teams settled for a point each.

#### Kajol stars with a brace in Sethu's victory in IWL

Kajol D'Souza scored a brace (seventh and 82nd minutes) to help Sethu FC earn its third victory in the IWL 2023-24, defeating East Bengal 2-0 in Vasco on Sunday. Sethu has now 10 points from eight games, but remains fifth in the table.

#### LIVE TELECAST

Ranji Trophy: Jio Cinema App, 9.30 a.m. ISL: Sports 18-1 & Jio Cinema App, 7.30 p.m. PKL: Star Sports 2 & Hotstar, 8 p.m.

Serie A: Sports 18-1 & Jio Cinema App, 1.15 a.m. (Tuesday) LaLiga: Sports 18-1 & Jio Cinema App, 1.30 a.m. (Tuesday)

Premier League: SS Select 1 & Hotstar, 1.30 a.m. (Tuesday) New Zealand vs South Africa: 2nd Test, day 1, Prime Video, 3.30 a.m. (Tuesday)

# Karnataka continues to call the shots despite Ajith Ram's five-wicket haul

The left-arm spinner's spell helps TN bowl out the visitor for 139; the home team, chasing a tough target of 355, is 36 for one

#### RANJI TROPHY

S. Dipak Ragav **CHENNAI** 

espite Tamil Nadu left-arm spinner S. Ajith Ram's fivewicket haul in the second innings, Karnataka is on course for a big win, having set the host a huge target of 355 at the end of day three of the Elite Group C Ranji Trophy match here at the M.A. Chidambaram Stadium on Sunday.

TN resumed the day on 129 for seven in its first innings and got bundled out for a paltry 151 – same as what Devdutt Padikkal alone managed - as Karnataka pacer V. Vyshak (four for 26) struck thrice in as many overs to help his side secure a healthy 215-run

After choosing not to enforce the follow-on, the visitor managed only 139 in its second essay, with Ajith Ram (five for 61) running through the side. But with a 354-run lead, Mayank



Agarwal's men will feel they have more than enough on a pitch that is getting harder to bat on and offering a lot of help to the spinners. At stumps, TN was on 36

for one in its second innings, losing the in-form N. Jagadeesan, caught at slip going for a booming drive to an away-swinger from Vyshak.

Earlier, Ajith Ram again

looked like TN's best bowler, showcasing all his variations. First, he breached Agarwal's defence to peg back his leg stump and then bowled Manish Pandey with a quicker delivery. In between he also castled Kishan Bedare with a delivery that turned sharpaway from the right-hander.

The 25-year-old scalped his third five-wicket haul of his career and finished with match figures of nine for 136. Padikkal once again looked largely untroubled and made a quick 36 before Pradosh Ranjan Paul dismissed him for the second time in this match. Vyshak chipped in with a vital unbeaten 22 to take his side's lead past 350.

The scores: Karnataka – 1st innings: 366. Tamil Nadu - 1st innings: Vimal

Jagadeesan lbw b Shashi Kumar 40, Pradosh Ranjan Paul c Manish b Shashi Kumar 5, B. Indrajith c Sharath b Vvshak 48, S. Lokeshwar c Padikkal b Vyshak 3, Vijay Shankar c Bedare b Kaverappa 6, M. Boopathi Kumar lbw b Shashi Kumar 8, R. Sai Kishore c Bedare b Hardik 2, M. Mohammed b Vvshak 6, S. Ajith Ram lbw b Vyshak 2, Sandeep Warrier (not out) 0; Extras (b-12, lb-2, nb-3): 17; Total (in 69.2 overs): 151.

Fall of wickets: 1-51, 2-66, 3-67,

4-80, 5-93, 6-111, 7-119, 8-146,

Karnataka bowling: Hardik 26-6-56-2, Kaverappa 16-8-14-1, Vyshak 12.2-1-26-4, Shashi Kumar

Karnataka - 2nd innings: R. Samarth lbw b Mohammed 2, Mayank Agarwal b Ajith Ram 11, Devdutt Padikkal c Indrajith b Pradosh 36, Hardik Raj b Sai Kishore 20, Manish Pandev b Aiith Ram 14, Kishan Bedare b Ajith Ram 9, S Sharath c Indrajith b Sai Kishore 18, Nikin Jose run out 0, V. Vyshak 22 (not out), K. Shashi Kumar lbw b Ajith Ram 0, V. Kaverappa c Jagadeesan b Aiith Ram 4; Extras (lb-2, w-1): 3; Total (in 56.4 overs): 139

Fall of wickets: 1-5, 2-32, 3-68, 4-75, 5-88, 6-107, 7-110, 8-120,

TN bowling: Warrier 9-2-23-0, Mohammed 5-1-13-1, Sai Kishore 18-3-27-2, Ajith Ram 19.4-2-61-5,

Pradosh 5-0-13-1. Tamil Nadu - 2nd innings: Vimal Khumar (batting) 16, N. Jagadeesan c Padikkal b Vyshak

8, Pradosh Ranjan Paul (batting) 10; Extras (b-2): 2; Total (for one wicket in 15 overs): 36.

Fall of wicket: 1-14. Karnataka bowling: Kaverappa 3-0-13-0, Vyshak 5-1-12-1, Shashi Kumar 5-1-7-0, Samarth 2-0-2-0.

### Spinners Abid and Vanshaj help Jammu & Kashmir pull off a heist

S. Prasanna Venkatesan **PUDUCHERRY** 

Left-arm spinner Vanshaj Sharma completed his maiden ten-wicket match haul on his debut with five for 16, as Jammu & Kashmir bowled out Pondicherry for 67, in its 87-run chase, to win by 19 runs on day three of the elite Group-D match in the sixth round of the Ranji Trophy at the Cricket Association of Pondicherry (CAP) Siechem ground here on Sunday.

Vanshai had claimed his maiden five-for (five for 74) in Pondicherry's first innings.

Left-arm spinner Abid Mushtaq, who completed his second ten-wicket match haul (five for 64, and five for 28) in First-Class cricket on Saturday to have Pondicherry reduced to 35 for seven, was adjudged Player-of-the-Match.

With this capitulation, Pondicherry's quarterfinals qualification chances looks bleak.

Jammu & Kashmir, on



Match-winners: J & K's heroes Abid and Vanshaj S. PRASANNA VENKATESAN

the other had, has given itself a shot at qualification. With 18 points, it is now third-placed.

Eleven of Pondicherry's 32 runs came off extras on the day where play lasted only 12.3 overs.

Pondicherry captain Rohit Damodaran tried to score as quickly as possible. He charged at off-spinner Sahil Lotra and hit a four to the cow corner boundary on the first over of the day.

His partner and left-

hander Sidak Singh was caught by Qamran Iqbal at short-leg off Vanshaj on the ninth over. Qamran had to parry and take the catch. In the last ball of that over,

In the tenth over, Rohit played a paddle sweep off Abid for four to the fine-leg boundary.

In the eleventh over, Gaurav edged his shot off Vanshaj, for it to pop up high in the air - Lotra took the catch, running towards cover point from gully.

Rohit was the last wicket

to fall on the thirteenth over, as he charged at Vanshaj and missed the ball to be stumped.

In a match that had the then leading wicket-taker of the season Gaurav Yadav and India pacer Umran Malik, pacers bowled only four overs and spinners picked up all the forty wickets.

The scores: Jammu & Kashmir **—1st innings:** 106. Pondicherry —1st innings: 172. Jammu & Kashmir —2nd

innings: 152. Pondicherry -2nd innings: Paras Ratnaparkhe c Abid b Vanshaj 8, Karthikeyan Jayasundaram c Fazil b Abid 1, Paras Dogra lbw b Abid 12, Akash Kargave lbw b Abid 0, K.B. Arun Karthick c Shubham Singh b Vanshai 0, Mohit Mittan b Abid 3 Sidak Singh c Qamran b Vanshaj 7, Krishna Pandey c Vivrant b Abid 6, Rohit Damodaran st Fazil b Vanshai 17. Gauray Yaday c Lotra b Vanshaj 0, Sagar Udeshi (not out) 2; Extras (b-8, lb-2, nb-1): 11; Total (in 35.3 overs): 67. Fall of wickets: 1-3, 2-11, 3-12,

4-13, 5-22, 6-25, 7-31, 8-56, 9-64. Jammu & Kashmir bowling: Abid 18-5-28-5, Vanshaj 8.3-2-16-5, Lotra 9-4-13-0.

#### **RANJI SCORES, ROUND 6, DAY 3** Satish 88, Bikramjit Debnath 64,

Elite: Group-A: At Jaipur:

Pune: Maharashtra 208 & 187/3 in

59 overs (Murtaza Trunkwala 86,

(Dhruv Shorey 92, Karun Nair 129,

Digviiav Patil 61 batting) vs

Vidarbha 552 in 126.2 overs

**Group-B: Vizianagaram:** 

overs (Prithvi Shaw 45) vs

Deshpande 5/121).

Singh 79 batting).

Andhra 261 & 271/5 in 92 overs

(Ricky Bhui 100 batting) vs Uttai

**Raipur:** Mumbai 351 & 97/1 in 28

Chhattisgarh 350 in 106.1 overs

(Amandeep Khare 143, Tushar

Thumba: Kerala 363 & 265/6 d in

64.2 overs (Rohan Kunnummal 51,

Sachin Baby 51, Shreyas Gopal 50

n.o.) vs Bengal 180 in 51.1 overs

(Jalaj Saxena 9/68) & 77/2 in 20.4

Guwahati: Assam 405 vs Bihar

53) & 168/3 in 61 overs (Piyush

Chandigarh 356 & 116/0 in 27

**Group-C: Chandigarh:** 

overs (Shivam Bhambri 61

207 in 71.5 overs (Paramjeet Singh

batting, Arslan Khan 49 batting) vs

with quality and they will

have the quality to per-

form and play against top

countries like Japan, South

"Twenty years ago,

Tripura 438 in 121 overs (Ganesh

Akshay Wadkar 90).

Pradesh 198.

Saurashtra 328 & 174/4 in 57 overs Wriddhiman Saha 66, Manisankar (Sheldon Jackson 48 batting, Arpit Murasingh 94). Vasavada 53 batting) vs Rajasthan **Surat:** Railways 297 & 208 in 63.3 257 in 91.2 overs (Kukna Ajay overs (Ashutosh Sharma 81, Singh 44, Dharmendrasinh Jadeja Darshan Misal 4/44) vs Goa 200 & 5/99, Yuvrajsinh Dodiya 4/88). 93/1 in 31 overs (Suyash Prabhudessai 54 batting). Ahmedabad: Manipur 67 & 70 in **Mohali:** Gujarat 339 & 290/8 d in 40.3 overs lost to Services 333. Jamshedpur: Haryana 509 in 62 overs (Sunpreetsingh Bagga 134.5 overs (Ankit Kumar 109, 79) vs Punjab 219 & 40/4 in 14 Rahul Tewatia 144, Sumit Kumar Chennai: Karnataka 366 & 139 in 86, Anukul Roy 5/80) bt Jharkhand 119 in 39.3 overs (Javant Yadav 5/35) & 185 in 61.4 overs (Utkarsh Singh 53, Jayant Yadav 5/55).

56.4 overs (Ajith Ram 5/61) vs Tamil Nadu 151 in 69.2 overs (B. Indrajith 48, V. Vyshak 4/26) & 36/1 Group-D: Puducherry: Jammu

& Kashmir 106 & 152 ht Puducherry 172 & 67 in 35.3 overs (Abid Mushtaq 5/28, Vanshaj Sharma 5/16)

Dharamshala: Delhi 264 & 381/6 d in 61.3 overs (Anui Rawat 5 Yash Dhull 82, Ayush Badoni 111) vs Himachal Pradesh 319 in 88.2 overs (R.I. Thaku 85, Rishi Dhawan 95, Siddhant Sharma 5/103) & 31/1 in 8 overs.

Indore: Madhya Pradesh 454 vs Baroda 132 in 47.1 overs (Mitesh Patel 80) & 201/3 in 80 overs (Jyotsnil Singh 83, Shashwat Rawat 77 batting).

Cuttack: Uttarakhand 342 &

203/8 d in 56 overs vs Odisha 169 in 56.4 overs & 17/2 in 9 overs. Plate: At Hyderabad (1st semifinal): Hyderabad 462/8 decl. bt Nagaland 206 & 188 in 58.3 (Sumit Kumar 86, Tanay Thyagarajan 6/81).

Mangaldoi (2nd semifinal): Mizoram 144 & 153 lost to Meghalava 145 & 156/4 in 35.5 overs (Kishan Lyngdoh 53 n.o.)

### Ashwa Morocco and Polished Girl should fight out the finish of the Kakatiya Million

HYDERABAD: Ashwa Morocco and Polished Girl should fight out the finish of the Kakatiya Million, the main event of Monday's (Feb.

SAROORNAGAR PLATE (Div. II) SAROORNAGAR PLATE (DIV. 11) (1,200m), rated up to 25 (Cat. III) – 12.50 p.m.: 1. Golden Inzio (1) Ajay Kumar 62, 2. Stoli (11) Kiran Naidu 62, 3. Wandring Warrior (3) Kuldeep Singh (Sr) 62, 4. Bien Pensant (8) Kuldeep Singh (Jr) 61.5, 5. Blue Label (10) Md Ekram Alam 61.5, 6. Federer (5) Ashad Asbar 61.5, 7. Riffa (12) Mukesh Kumar 60.5, 8. Char Ek Char (2) Mohit Singh 60, 9. Glimmer Of Hope (4) Surya Prakash 60, 10. That's My Way (6) Afroz Khan 58.5, 11. Zidane (7) Deepak Singh 58 and 12. Good Tidings (9) Md. Ismail 57.5.

1. GOLDEN INZIO, 2. GLIMMER OF HOPE, 3. BIEN PENSANT

**2** KAMAREDDY CUP (Div. II) (1,400m), 5-y-o and upward, rated 20 to 45 (Cat. III) – 1.20: 1. Doe A Deer (1) Afroz Khan 61, 2. China Town (10) Ashad Asbar 58, 4. Indian King (9) Mukesh Ku mar 56.5, 5. Angel Tesoro (6) P. Sai Kumar 56, 6. Park Lane (5) Md. Ismail 54, 7. Forever Bond (2) Surva Prakash 53.5, 8, Silver Arrow (3) Kaviraj 52.5, 9. Royal Pal (8) Nakhat Singh 51.5 and 10. Track Blazer (4) Kuldeep Singh 1. SILVER ARROW, 2. DOE A DEER,

3. PARK LANE

RISING STAR PLATE (Div. II) (1,400m), rated 80 and above (Cat. I) – 1.50: 1. Malaala (3) Ajay Kumar 62.5, 2. Soloist (5) Vivek G 62.5, 3. Huntingdon (8) Mukesh Kumar 61.5, 4. Beauty Blaze (2) P. Sai Kumar 59.5, 5. Painted Apache (1) P. Ajeeth Kumar 56.5, 6. High Reward (6) R.S. Jodha 54.5, 7. Laurus (4) Abhay Singh 50 and 8. True Icon (7) Surva Prakash 50. 1. MALAALA, 2. HUNTINGDON,

IANGAON PLATE (1,200m). rated 40 to 65 (Cat. II) – 2.20: 1. See My Spark (5) Mukesh Kumar 60, 2. Stoic Hero (8) Deepak Singh 59, 3. La Mirage (3) P. Sai Kumar 58, 4. Adbhut (1) Md. Ekram Alam Pinatubo (9) Surva Prakash 55, 6. Silk (6) Ajay Kumar 53, 7. Wind Sprite (4) Afroz Khan

53, 8. Silver Act (7) Vivek G 52.5, 9. Star Racer (10) Kuldeep Singh (Sr)

52.5 and 10. Colt Pistol (2) Hindu

1. ADBHUT, 2. SILVER ACT, 3. SEE MY SPARK

**5** KAMAREDDY CUP (Div. I) (1,400m), 5-y-o and upward, rated 20 to 45 (Cat. III) – 2.55: 1. Crimson Rose (1) Abhay Singh 61, 2. Power Ranger (5) Md. Ekram Alam 61, 3. Voice Of A Dream (4) P. Aieeth Kumar 59.5, 4, D World (8) Deepak Singh 57, 5. Master Touch (6) Mukesh Kumar 56.5, 6. Beauty Flame (2) N.B. Kuldeep 55,

Sadiya (3) Kuldeep Singh (Jr) 53.5, 8. Wot's Up Jay (9) Kuldeep Singh (Sr) 53.5, 9. Dream Jewel (7) Ajay Kumar 52.5, 10. let Falcon (10) Vivek G 51.5 and 11. Spectacular Cruise (11) Kaviraj 50.

1. CRIMSON ROSE, 2. VOICE OF A DREAM, 3. JET FALCON

VAGAVATHI CUP (1,600m), rated 40 to 65 (Cat. II) – 3.30: 1. Ivanhoe (3) Surya Prakasi 50, 2. N R I Superpower (7) Kaviraj 59.5, 3. D Yes Boss (5) Ashad Asbar 58, 4. Just Incredible (8) Kiran Naidu 56, 5. Blazing Gun (10) Vivek G 55, 6. Detective (4) Abhay Singh 54.5, 7. Kings Best (12) A.A. Vikrant 54, 8. First Class (6) P. Sai Kumar 53, 9. Toffee (11) Md. Ekram Alam 53, 10. Sacred Bond (1) Kuldeep Singh (Sr) 52.5, 11. Beldona (2) Mohit Singh 52 and 12. Grand Duke (9) Nakhat Singh 51.

1. SACRED BOND,

2. FIRST CLASS, 3. TOFFEE

KAKATIYA MILLION (1,200m), 4-y-o and upward – 4.05: 1. Candy Girl (9) Md. Ekram Alam 56, 2. O Hansini (3) Vivek G 56, 3. Ashoka (5) Kuldeep Singh (Sr) Ashoka (5) Kulucep Singii (5): 55.5, 4. Brilliant Star (4) P. Sai Ku-mar 55.5, 5. Kingston (1) R.S. Jodha 55.5, 6. Angelita (8) Mohit Singh 54, 7. Ashwa Morocco (2) Hindu Singh 54, 8. City Of Bliss (10) Mukesh Kumar 54, 9. Kenaf (7) Afroz Khan 54 and 10. Polished Girl (6) Suraj Narredu 54. 1. ASHWA MOROCCO, 2. POLISHED GIRL, 3. ASHOKA

RISING STAR PLATE (Div. I) (1,400m) rated 90 and 1 – 4.40: 1. Mysterious Angel Ajeeth Kumar 63, Siddharth (6) Mukesh Kumar 62.5, 3. Watch My Stride (1) Abhay Singh 61, 4. Akido (3) Md. Ekram Alam 59.5, 5. Thanks (4) Mohit Singh 57.5, 6. Strauss (8) Vivek G 55, 7. Faith (2) Kaviraj 52 and 8. Nightmare (5) Kuldeep Singh (Jr)

1. WATCH MY STRIDE. 2. SIDDHARTH, 3. AKIDO

SAROORNAGAR PLATE (Div. I) (1,200m), rated upto 25 (Co. - 5.15: 1. American Flame (8) Mukesh Kumar 62, 2. Magical Power (9) Surya Prakash 62, 3. Taaliyah (13) Kiran Naidu 62, 4. Exeter (5) Ashad Asbar 61.5, 5. London Bell (4) R.S. Jodha 61, 6. Reining Queen (1) Nakhat Singh 61, 7. It's My Life (3) Ajay Kumar 60.5, 8. Setastar (2) Kuldeep Singh (Jr) 60.5, 9. Pair Of Wings (II) Mohit Singh 60, 10. Sea Of Class (10) A.A. Vikrant 60, 11. Nav Lakhaa (7) Deepak Singh 58, 12. Blue Brigade (6) Kuldeep Singh (Sr) 55 and 13. Cephalonia (12) Afroz Khan 50. 1. EXETER, 2. PAIR OF WINGS, 3. AMERICAN FLAME Day's Best: MALAALA

Jackpot: (i) 1, 2, 3, 4 & 5. (ii) 5, 6, 7, Mini Jackpot: (i) 3, 4, 5 & 6. (ii) 6, Treble: (i) 2, 3 & 4, (ii) 4, 5 & 6, (iii) 7, 8 & 9. Tanala: All races.

### **ISL-10**

Stan Rayan

After India failed to score a single goal in the recent AFC Asian Cup in Doha and sunk in the group stage without picking a point, Kerala Blasters' head coach Ivan Vukomanovic said the country just needs to look around and see what others are doing.

"When I arrived in France in 1997-1998, it was already there. Then other countries started with their process, forming a young new generation. If you want to compete in one big tournament like the Asian Cup hoping to make a result, first you have to create a young national team," said Vukomanovic on the eve of Mon-



day's Indian Super League match against Punjab FC at the Nehru Stadium here. "It means an under-17 or

under-19 team which can go and compete in one big tournament. Then these boys have to grow up and when they do, they will come to the senior level because they will be formed



Creating a quality young national team is

the only way to go up: Vukomanovic

Korea, Australia, Qatar and Saudi Arabia were in the same position where India currently is but they understood the process, how to develop football, new players, new ways, how to create and transfer from the federation to clubs, in

teams in Asia.

order to get those players so that they can compete at the highest level."

If there are no young national teams, the future will continue to be gloomy.

"We can all speak about

our clubs, but at the end it's about the national team, how it can compete at the highest level. If there are no young national teams, there is no chance

that the senior team will ever make anything," said the Serb. Regarding the ISL game, he said though Punjab FC is near the bottom (compared to Blasters third spot in the table), the visitor

opponent. "It will be one of our most difficult games, I expect a hard game with many duels and a lot of running," said Vukomanovic.

could be a very tough

# 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

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

"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

#### 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 it'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

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

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

# 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

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 counterpunch, 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, Syrcina 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



amongst the world's Top 10 boys. In 2019, partnering compatriot Jonas Forejtek, 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, Syrcina 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

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 threefour 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.

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

any 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

#### **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 neasure 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 claimarticles, 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 natterns 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

(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 Grindavík, 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.

#### WHAT IS IT?

### Brumation: winter is coming for reptiles

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#### 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.



# l'extacontext

THEMOHINDU

#### **NEWS IN NUMBERS**

Amount disbursed by Saudi to Yemen government

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

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

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 T20I hundreds. PTI

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

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

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

Follow us f facebook.com/thehindu twitter.com/the\_hindu instagram.com/the\_hindu

# 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

ith the BIP-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

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	UPA-II	NDA-I	NDA-II	Interim Budget
	2004-05 to 2008-09 (Annual Average)	2009-10 to 2013-14 (Annual Average)	2014-15 to 2018-19 (Annual Average)	2019-20 to 2023-24* (Annual Average)	2024-25 Budget Estimates
	Expendit	ures (% of G	DP)		
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
	Revenu	ies (% of GDF	P)		
Centre's Revenue Receitps	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
De	ficits & Debt	Indicators (	% of GDP)		
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
	States' Fin	ances (% of	GDP)		
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	UPA-II	NDA-I	NDA-II
	2004-05 to 2008-09	2009-10 to 2013-14	2014-15 to 2018-19	2019-20 to 2023-24
Growth & I	nflation			
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
Sectoral Shar	res in GVA			
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
Domestic Consumpt	ion & Investr	nent		
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-Land 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 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

### Text&Context

THE HINDU -

# 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

s 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 Sammelan,' 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

#### **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?

O					
	Registere	d 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

0 0	
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

(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?

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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 ever 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

Please send in your answers to

dailyquiz@thehindu.co.in

This is the first of a two-part series on the first time Voters' in Delhi



# 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 stavs calm When Jai was informed that he was

likely to be fired, he gave an insouciant 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. upendrankye@gmail.com

### Word of the day

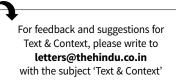
disturb or disconcert someone

Synonyms: embarrass, confuse, rattle

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

Pronunciation: bit.ly/fazepro

International Phonetic Alphabet: /feɪz/



### 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

#### **QUESTION 2**

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

#### 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?

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: 1. 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 2. 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

3. 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) 4. 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 5. 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