



DRISHTI JUDICIARY

An initiative by Drishti IAS

JUDICIARY FOUNDATION COURSE

English Medium • Offline (Hybrid) • Live Online (Drishti Learning App)

New Batch Commences From | 11 March 11:00 AM | Offline ₹99,000 | Live Online ₹49,000



8010 208 000 | 707, Dr. Mukherjee Nagar, New Delhi

Join Us For the Free Demo Class at 11:00 AM Today!

Admissions Open Register at Discounted Price

IN BRIEF

Case against H.P. legislator, Cong. rebel's father

SHIMLA
The Himachal Pradesh police on Sunday registered a case against an Independent MLA, the father of a Congress rebel, and others over "electoral offences" related to the recent Rajya Sabha elections in the State. » Page 4

Probe ordered after body pulled out of borewell

NEW DELHI
A man died after he reportedly fell into a 40-foot borewell on a Delhi Jal Board premises on Sunday, prompting the police to launch a probe. » Page 7

15th Anniversary
PLUTUS IAS
Don't miss out on Faculty Panel!
ANTHROPOLOGY OPTIONAL
Dr. Harsha Hissar
Both Online & Offline
Kareem Bagh, Mukherjee Nagar, Ghazipur, Delhi-110029
+91 8448440231
www.plutusias.com

EDUCATIONPLUS » PAGE 5

'Differences' with CEC may have led to Goel quitting

The differences with Rajiv Kumar are said to have arisen during a visit to West Bengal earlier this month to oversee election preparations; Opposition raises question over resignation of poll official

Mahesh Langa
AHMEDABAD

The sudden resignation of Election Commissioner (EC) Arun Goel, barely a week before the announcement of the Lok Sabha election, came as a surprise to many, but insiders in the poll body have said that apparent differences emerged between Mr. Goel and Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Rajiv Kumar during their visit to West Bengal to oversee poll preparations earlier this month.

According to well-placed sources, Mr. Goel refused to attend the press conference in Kolkata to brief the media about the preparations in the State after his reported differences with Mr. Kumar.



Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar (right) with former Election Commissioner Arun Goel. R. RAVINDRAN

The CEC addressed the media alone on March 5. In the press briefing, the CEC mentioned that Mr. Goel had returned to Delhi due to "health concerns". However, sources close to Mr. Goel have dismissed that and maintained that "he is in the pink of health".

Instead, they said that "he flew back to Delhi cutting short his visit in West Bengal owing to some serious differences". However, they did not elaborate what transpired between the two officials nor what issues they differed on that caused Mr. Goel's abrupt exit from the

Govt. likely to appoint new ECs by March 15

NEW DELHI
The two vacancies in the Election Commission, created by the resignation of Arun Goel and the retirement of Anup Chandra Pandey, are likely to be filled by March 15, sources said on Sunday. The high-level Selection Committee is likely to meet on March 14. » PAGE 13

poll body. Reacting to Mr. Goel's resignation, Opposition parties on Sunday asked whether he had stepped down due to differences with the CEC or to contest an election.

CONTINUED ON » PAGE 12

India signs free trade pact with 4 European countries

Suhasini Haidar
NEW DELHI

India signed a free trade agreement (FTA) with four European countries – Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, and Switzerland – on Sunday, with a goal of reaching \$100 billion in investments in India and one million jobs within 15 years.

The Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement (TEPA) marks the second such full-fledged FTA signed after India's agreement with the United Arab Emirates, and will see considerable tariff reduction, increase in market access, and simplification of customs procedures.

The EFTA (European Free Trade Association) countries, which are separate from the European Union, said that for the first time, the FTA also included a chapter on commitments to human rights and sustainable develop-



Landmark pact: The signing ceremony of the India-EFTA Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement in New Delhi on Sunday. ANI/PIB

ment. The agreement will come into force after ratification by the EFTA states, expected possibly by the end of the year.

'Unique achievement' Touting the clauses on investment as a unique achievement, Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal said it was "for the first time in the history of the world that we are inking an FTA with a binding commit-

ment to invest \$100 billion in India from EFTA countries". However, EFTA Ministers clarified that the commitment was in fact a "goal" for both sides, based on the current levels of investment, pegged at about \$10.7 billion, the GDP predictions, and the estimated value of the TEPA.

CONTINUED ON » PAGE 12



PM'S U.P. VISIT
'Development push by BJP rattled Opposition'
NEWS » PAGE 12

Trinamool list for all 42 seats in Bengal out

Shiv Sahay Singh
KOLKATA

Putting an end to speculation over seat-sharing arrangements with the Congress, the Trinamool Congress on Sunday announced candidates for all 42 Lok Sabha seats in West Bengal.

The list has surprises, with the party fielding former cricketers Yusuf Pathan from Berhampore and Kirti Azad from Bardhaman-Durgapur. The party retained veteran MPs Sudip Banerjee from Kolkata, Saugata Roy from Dum Dum Lok, and Kalyan Banerjee from Serampore.

While the party dropped Nushrat Jahan from Basirhat (the consti-



Mamata Banerjee addressing an election rally in Kolkata on Sunday. AP

tuency under which Sandeshkhali falls), it has fielded Bengali actors Rachana Banerjee from Hooghly and June Maliah from Medinipur.

CONTINUED ON » PAGE 12
DOORS STILL OPEN: CONG. » PAGE 13

Gig workers suffer from lack of social security, regulations: study

A.M. Jigeesh
NEW DELHI

Almost a third of app-based cab drivers work for over 14 hours a day, while more than 83% work more than 10 hours and 60% work over 12 hours, according to a study of more than 10,000 Indian cab drivers, gig and platform workers.

It noted that social disparities make the situation worse, with over 60% of the drivers from the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes working for over 14 hours a day, while only 16% from the unreserved category work such long hours. The study was conducted by the People's Associa-

Constantly at work

Asked if they take a single day off in a week, 40% of the app-based workers surveyed said "No"



that over 43% of participants in the study earn less than ₹500 a day, or ₹15,000 a month, after deducting all costs. It found that 34% of the app-based delivery persons earn less than ₹10,000 a month, while 78% spend over 10 hours daily at work.

Adding to the problem Noting the differences among workers from different castes, the report said that "these income disparities further exacerbate the already existing social inequalities and perpetuate cycles of poverty and distress within these communities".

CONTINUED ON » PAGE 12

Since 2001
LAW AMBITION
LAW INSTITUTE

On the auspicious occasion of
53rd BIRTH Anniversary
of our Guru & Mentor
Shri Alok Kr. Ranjan
a renowned educationist, author, motivator & law guru

Offers One-time **GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY** for **life time learning** at **LOWEST FEES** ever for all students of India

SCHOLARSHIP from ₹53,000 to ₹93,000

ON ALL JUDICIARY ENGLISH MEDIUM COURSE FROM 10TH MARCH TO 30TH MARCH. SCHOLARSHIP ON OTHER COURSES TOO.

Respected All,

As India knows that **New Criminal Laws** will come into force on **July 1, 2024**. We believe that it is our national duty to share our understanding of New legislations especially its nuances, niceties and novelty & comparison of Old and New Laws for benefit of all. We want to offer our honorary service to the legal fraternity including all law Colleges, Universities, Bar and Benches. For any invite, please mail us on **ambitionevents03@gmail.com**.

Thanks!

Team Ambition

JUDICIARY (Online / Offline) Regular / Weekend 1 Year / 2 Years / 3 Years 8800660301	न्यायिक सेवा (हिन्दी माध्यम) 2 Years 9599293900	IAS LAW (Online / Offline) 6 Months 8800662140	CLAT/LL.B. (Online / Offline) 1 Year / 2 Years / 6 Months 8800660380
--	---	--	--

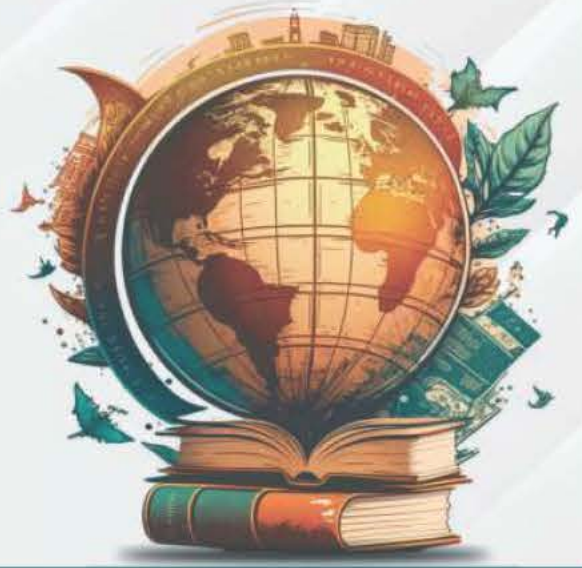
8800660301/2140 Website: ambitionlawinstitute.com

GTB NAGAR: 30, G.T.B. Nagar, Near G.T.B. Metro Gate No. 2, Delhi-110009
MUKHERJEE NAGAR: B-10, 1st Floor, Mukherjee Nagar, Delhi-110009.



SAHITYA AKADEMI organises

World's Largest Literature Festival



1100+ Writers, Scholars & Distinguished Personalities
175+ Languages 190+ Sessions

Rabindra Bhavan, 35 Ferozeshah Road, New Delhi-110001 <https://www.sahitya-akademi.gov.in>
nearest Metro Station : Mandi House



11-16 MARCH 2024

Rural Works Department
Office of the Engineer-in-Chief, Rural Works Department, Bihar
Vishweshwaraiya Bhawan, 5th Floor, Rural Works Department, Bailey Road, Patna, Bihar -800015
(मुख्यमंत्री ग्रामीण पथ उन्नयन कार्यक्रम)

Notice Inviting Tender for MMGSUY based on Output and performance based Contract through e-procurement mode on Model Bidding Document (MBD).

(Notice Inviting Tender No. - MMGSUY-4515-16/2023-24)

- Designation and Address of the Advertiser : Office of Engineer-in-chief, Rural Works Department, Bihar, Patna
- Date of Issue of Notice Inviting Tender : 06.03.2024
- Period for downloading of Tender documents : From 28.03.2024 (9:00) to 12.04.2024 up to 15:00 hrs. From website- <http://pmsgsyntenderbih.gov.in>
- Date, Time & Place of Pre- Bid Meeting : Date 01.04.2024 time 15:00 hrs. Place O/o Concerned Superintending Engineer
- Last Date & Time for uploading tender : Date 12.04.2024 up to: 15:00 hrs. Document by bidder <http://pmsgsyntenderbih.gov.in>
- Date, time for online opening of Technical bid : Date 12.04.2024 up to Time: 15:30 hrs.
- Last date, time and place for submission of Original instrument of EMD, Cost of BOQ, and an Affidavit regarding correctness of Information provided with bid document : Till 15:00 hrs on 12.04.2024
: Place -O/o-concerned (i) Executive Engineer Or (ii) Superintending Engineer Or (iii) Chief Engineer

8. The Engineer in chief, Rural Works Department on behalf of Governor of Bihar invites bids from the eligible bidders for the works detailed below.

9. Details of Works:-

SL.No	Package No.	District	Name of Division	Block	Name of Road	Length (In Km)	Cost of Upgradation/ Strengthening (in lakh)	Cost of 5- Years Maintenance (in Lakh)	Total Estimated Cost (in Lakh)	Cost of BOQ (in Rs)	Bid Security (in Lakhs)	Amount Payable to Works Division
1	MMGSUY/23-24 Bagaha-1/02	West Champaran	Bagaha-1	Bagaha-1	Gram Chhatrasa Tola Bahurwa Kanta to Gram Lagunaha Tola Ahibaliya Bandh Tak Sadak	2.510	223.570	26.760	250.330	10000	24.779	EE, RWD Works Division, Bagaha-1
		West Champaran	Bagaha-1	Ramnagar	L040-Semrauni to Betahni (VR20)	9.770	903.400	85.210	988.610			
		Total for the Group				12.280	1126.970	111.970	1238.940			
2	MMGSUY/23-24 Bagaha-1/03	West Champaran	Bagaha-1	Bagaha-2	Harna Tad to Khajuriya with 1st HL Bridge 2x18.75m At Ch. 1.5 km and 2nd HL Bridge 2x18.75m At Ch. 2.23 km	3.120	1297.370	38.510	1335.880	10000	26.718	EE, RWD Works Division, Bagaha-1
		Total for the Group				3.120	1297.370	38.510	1335.880			
3	MMGSUY/23-24 Bagaha-2/03	West Champaran	Bagaha-2	Bhitaha	L040-Bishui to Bhagwanpur (VR24)	2.400	212.610	23.810	236.420			EE, RWD Works Division, Bagaha-2
		West Champaran	Bagaha-2	Bhitaha	Khara Tola Nawaganj Bridge to Semarban Road (Recind)	11.690	1099.590	108.600	1208.190		28.892	
		Total for the Group				14.090	1312.200	132.410	1444.610			
4	MMGSUY/23-24 Beta/03	West Champaran	Beta	Bairiya	Bettah Khirya Ghat to Paterwa Ghat	12.750	1277.370	122.560	1399.930	10000	27.999	EE, RWD Works Division, Beta
		Total for the Group				12.750	1277.370	122.560	1399.930			
5	MMGSUY/23-24 Beta/04	West Champaran	Beta	Majhauia	L073-T02 to Gudra (TRACK73)	5.000	519.930	46.810	566.740			
		West Champaran	Beta	Majhauia	Manjhaulia Jagdishpur Road to Rampur Bairaj	4.010	276.900	39.240	316.140			
		West Champaran	Beta	Majhauia	Bhanachowk to Bishunpurwa Path	2.500	175.010	25.590	200.600		28.790	EE, RWD Works Division, Beta
		West Champaran	Beta	Majhauia	L074-L041 to Ahr Tola (TRACK74)	2.100	151.730	19.710	171.440			
		West Champaran	Beta	Yogapatti	Nawalpur to Dhadhawa	1.520	170.990	13.590	184.580			
		Total for the Group				15.130	1294.560	144.940	1439.500			
6	MMGSUY/23-24 Narkatyaganj/02	West Champaran	Narkatyaganj	Narkataganj	Sathi (Hichopal) to Bhasurari	9.050	1313.030	105.560	1418.590	10000	28.372	EE, RWD Works Division, Narkatyaganj
		Total for the Group				9.050	1313.030	105.560	1418.590			
7	MMGSUY/23-24 Narkatyaganj/03	West Champaran	Narkatyaganj	Chanpatia	L043-Kaithwalia Chauha Tola to Sembhapur (VR43)	3.400	268.130	29.810	297.940		19.918	EE, RWD Works Division, Narkatyaganj
		West Champaran	Narkatyaganj	Chanpatia	L046-Chanpatia to Lagunaha (VR46)	3.610	286.560	32.330	318.890			
		West Champaran	Narkatyaganj	Chanpatia	Chaurahi Chowk to Sirsua (VR32)	4.700	336.530	42.520	379.050			
		Total for the Group				11.710	891.220	104.660	995.880			
8	MMGSUY/23-24 Narkatyaganj/04	West Champaran	Narkatyaganj	Chanpatia	L039-Rampurwa to Raikhorwa (VR39)	4.960	414.370	47.950	462.320		16.359	EE, RWD Works Division, Narkatyaganj
		West Champaran	Narkatyaganj	Gaunaha	L021-PWD Road to Parsauni (VR21)	3.400	322.280	33.370	355.650			
		Total for the Group				8.360	736.650	81.320	817.970			
9	MMGSUY/23-24 Narkatyaganj/05	West Champaran	Narkatyaganj	Narkataganj	Katghrwa to Rajpur	7.000	611.150	64.410	675.560	10000	13.511	EE, RWD Works Division, Narkatyaganj
		Total for the Group				7.000	611.150	64.410	675.560			
10	MMGSUY/23-24 Mothari/06	East Champaran	Mothari	Mothari	Dhaka PWD Road Basantpur Middle School to Imalya (Old REC Road)	1.070	91.780	4.500	96.280			
		East Champaran	Mothari	Turkauliya	PWD Areraj Road to Bariya Bazar se PWD Road tak	2.000	151.690	7.990	159.680			
		East Champaran	Mothari	Turkauliya	PWD Areraj Road Boring Chowk se Brahama Tola via Turkauliya Bazar	4.250	297.400	16.520	313.920		13.438	EE, RWD Works Division, Mothari
		East Champaran	Mothari	Turkauliya	Mathurapur Janki Singh School se Baraham Sthan hote hue Kotwa Swan tak	1.300	96.970	5.050	102.020			
		Total for the Group				8.620	637.840	34.060	671.900			
11	MMGSUY/23-24 Raxaul/02	East Champaran	Raxaul	Adapur	Adapur Block to Rice Mil	0.900	66.650	3.710	70.360			
		East Champaran	Raxaul	Raxaul	Piparia Prathamik Vidyalay se Dhutha Nadi (Construction of HL RCC Bridge 2x16.5m on Dhutha River on Road, Ch-860M)	0.955	477.040	12.013	489.053	10000	13.882	EE, RWD Works Division, Raxaul
		East Champaran	Raxaul	Raxaul	Kaurihar Chowk to Raxaul railway station via anumandal office	1.000	132.160	2.520	134.680			
		Total for the Group				2.855	675.850	18.243	694.093			
12	MMGSUY/23-24 Sikharua Dhaka/02	East Champaran	Sikharua Dhaka	Dhaka	Birahya to Purhani	5.025	502.170	55.600	557.770		16.259	EE, RWD Works Division, Sikharua Dhaka
		East Champaran	Sikharua Dhaka	Ghorashan	Gahai to gurmia North	3.000	247.920	7.240	255.160			
		Total for the Group				8.025	750.090	62.840	812.930			

For further details please visit : www.state.bihar.gov.in/prdbihar

PR- 019222 (RWD) 2023-24 नरो से बचने का हे एक ही उपचार, दृढ़ संकल्प और परिवार से प्यार

Rural Works Department
Office of the Engineer-in-Chief, Rural Works Department, Bihar
Vishweshwaraiya Bhawan, 5th Floor, Rural Works Department, Bailey Road, Patna, Bihar -800015
(मुख्यमंत्री ग्रामीण पथ उन्नयन कार्यक्रम)

Govt. of Bihar

Notice Inviting Tender for MMGSUY based on Output and performance based Contract through e-procurement mode on Model Bidding Document (MBD).

(Notice Inviting Tender No. - MMGSUY-4515-21/2023-24)

- Designation and Address of the Advertiser : Office of Engineer-in-chief, Rural Works Department, Bihar, Patna
- Date of Issue of Notice Inviting Tender : 06.03.2024
- Period for downloading of Tender documents : From 28.03.2024 (9:00) to 12.04.2024 up to 15:00 hrs. From website- <http://pmsgsyntenderbih.gov.in>
- Date, Time & Place of Pre- Bid Meeting : Date 01.04.2024 time 15:00 hrs. Place O/o Concerned Superintending Engineer
- Last Date & Time for uploading tender : Date 12.04.2024 up to: 15:00 hrs. Document by bidder <http://pmsgsyntenderbih.gov.in>
- Date, time for online opening of Technical bid : Date 12.04.2024 up to Time: 15:30 hrs.
- Last date, time and place for submission of Original Instrument of EMD, Cost of BOQ, and an Affidavit regarding correctness of Information provided with bid document : Till 15:00 hrs on 12.04.2024
: Place -O/o-concerned (i) Executive Engineer Or (ii) Superintending Engineer Or (iii) Chief Engineer

8. The Engineer in chief, Rural Works Department on behalf of Governor of Bihar invites bids from the eligible bidders for the works detailed below.

9. Details of Works:-

SL. No	Package No.	District	Name of Division	Block	Name of Road	Length (In Km)	Cost of Upgradation/ Strengthening (in lakh)	Cost of 5- Years Maintenance (in Lakh)	Total Estimated Cost (in Lakh)	Cost of BOQ (in Rs)	Bid Security (in Lakhs)	Amount Payable to Works Division
1	MMGSUY/23-24 Benipatti/03	Madhubani	Benipatti	Benipatti	Repair of Road From Benipatti to Devpura Akaura	6.450	609.02	72.05	681.070	10000	13.621	EE, RWD Works Division, Benipatti
		Total for the Group				6.450	609.020	72.050	681.070			
2	MMGSUY/23-24 Benipatti/04	Madhubani	Benipatti	Benipatti	Repair of Road From Nagdad to Kapasiya	1.850	299.8	23.78	323.580		10.855	EE, RWD Works Division, Benipatti
		Madhubani	Benipatti	Benipatti	L053-T03 TO NAVKARHI (TRACK53)	2.150	194.208	24.953	219.161			
		Total for the Group				4.000	494.008	48.733	542.741			
3	MMGSUY/23-24 Benipatti/05	Madhubani	Benipatti	Benipatti	L042-T05 TO CHANDPURA (VR42)	2.050	226.759	21.926	248.685		11.052	EE, RWD Works Division, Benipatti
		Madhubani	Benipatti	Benipatti	Baliya to khasiya Ghat	2.400	275.621	28.317	303.938			
		Total for the Group				4.450	502.380	50.243	552.623			
4	MMGSUY/23-24 Benipatti/06	Madhubani	Benipatti	Bisfi	Simri to Muriya Chowk	5.890	476.68	70.14	546.820	10000	10.936	EE, RWD Works Division, Benipatti
		Total for the Group				5.890	476.680	70.140	546.820			
5	MMGSUY/23-24 Benipatti/07	Madhubani	Benipatti	Bisfi	PAROHI TO KHANGAIRATHA VIA PATUNA	4.450	378.621	50.025	428.646			
		Madhubani	Benipatti	Bisfi	Chahuta Gumti To Chahuta Post office	0.550	40.401	3.782	44.183		16.477	EE, RWD Works Division, Benipatti
		Madhubani	Benipatti	Bisfi	Kakoraw Sukan Chowk to Khangairatha	2.530	203.59	29.78	233.370			
		Madhubani	Benipatti	Bisfi	SH 75 To Pokhraini hat	1.000	110.766	6.874	117.640			
		Total for the Group				8.530	733.378	90.461	823.839			
6	MMGSUY/23-24 Benipatti/08	Madhubani	Benipatti	Madhapur	BAINGRA - POKHROUNI	1.250	90.78	9.95	100.730			
		Madhubani	Benipatti	Madhapur	L027-T01 TO PAHIPURA (VR27)	4.150	382.228	44.028	426.256		10.540	EE, RWD Works Division, Benipatti
		Total for the Group				5.400	473.008	53.978	526.986			
7	MMGSUY/23-24 Benipatti/09	Madhubani	Benipatti	Harlakh	T01 - SABROULI	1.720	200.98	17.75	218.730			
		Madhubani	Benipatti	Harlakh	kaurna - kamalawarpatti	3.230	254.601	32.325	286.926		10.113	EE, RWD Works Division, Benipatti
		Total for the Group				4.950	455.581	50.075	505.656			
8	MMGSUY/23-24 Jaynagar/03	Madhubani	Jaynagar	Ladania	Ladania to Laxmalina	4.250	343.267	49.967	393.234			
		Madhubani	Jaynagar	Ladania	Jankinagar to Danwari	4.070	329.917	45.467	375.384		15.372	EE, RWD Works Division, Jaynagar
		Total for the Group				8.320	673.184	95.434	768.618			
9	MMGSUY/23-24 Jaynagar/04	Madhubani	Jaynagar	Jaynagar	L032-T03 to Gabrahi (VR032)	5.650	390.515	67.88	458.395			
		Madhubani	Jaynagar	Jaynagar	NH-105 Dulli Road to Kuber Tol	2.430	199.356	33.363	232.719		13.822	EE, RWD Works Division, Jaynagar
		Total for the Group				8.080	589.871	101.243	691.114			
10	MMGSUY/23-24 Jaynagar/05	Madhubani	Jaynagar	Babubarhi	L057-L021 to Chhaurahi (VR57)	6.150	476.554	76.371	552.925	10000	11.059	EE, RWD Works Division, Jaynagar
		Total for the Group				6.150	476.554	76.371	552.925			
11	MMGSUY/23-24 Jhanjharpur/03	Madhubani	Jhanjharpur	Andhratharhi	L022-T03 to Ghoghriaria (VR22)	2.780	239.04	35.28	274.320		11.784	EE, RWD Works Division, Jhanjharpur
		Madhubani	Jhanjharpur	Andhratharhi	L029-T01 to Rakhwari (VR029)	3.750	265.96	48.648	314.608			
		Total for the Group				6.530	505.000	84.176	589.176			
12	MMGSUY/23-24 Jhanjharpur/04	Madhubani	Jhanjharpur	Lakhnour	Lauffa to Belaucha	2.750	209.494	30.434	239.928			
		Madhubani	Jhanjharpur	Lakhnour	Belaucha Lofa Rd to West Mahato Tol	0.930	67.24	6.393	73.633		13.146	EE, RWD Works Division, Jhanjharpur
		Madhubani	Jhanjharpur	Lakhnour	kathniya middle schools se harijan tola to Deep via suriyahi	4.000	310.81	32.91	343.720			
		Total for the Group				7.680	587.544	69.737				

Join Magazine Group @ ₹60/m WhatsApp To 8969469464



Vision IAS Monthly Current Affairs, Drishti IAS Current Affairs, Next IAS Current Affairs, SHIELD Current Affairs, Shankar IAS Current Affairs, संस्कृति IAS Current Affairs, Hindu Monthly Review, Pratiyogita Darpan, प्रतियोगिता दर्पण, सामान्य ज्ञान दर्पण, सक्सेस मिरर, Yojana, Kurukshetra, योजना, कुरुक्षेत्र, Employment News, रोजगार समाचार, Frontline, Forbes, Dalal Street Investment Journal, Down to Earth, India Today, The Week, Economic and political weekly, Outlook, The Economist, इंडिया टुडे, गृहशोभा, चंपक, The Caravan, Hotelier, Vanita (Hindi, Malayalam)

(अगर और कोई मैगजीन चाहिए तो डिमांड करे उपलब्ध करा दिया जाएगा)

Join Epaper Group @ ₹30/m WhatsApp To 8969469464

राष्ट्रीय संस्करण (National Group)



Hindu, Indian Express, Business Line, Business Standard, Economic Times, Financial Express, Editorial Times Of India, Mid-Day, Hindustan Times, Mint, Asian Age, Tribune, Deccan Chronicle, Eastern Chronicle, Telegraph, The Daily Guardian, The Business Guardian, Millennium Post, First India, Hans, Statesman, Free Press Journal, Pioneer, The New Indian Express, Mirror Bangalore, Telangana Today, Punjabi Tribune, The Daily Excelsior, The News Now, Sangai Express, The Meghalayan Gaurdian, Daily Jammu Jottings, The Hills Times, Salar, The Excel Express, Nagaland Post, The Himalayan Mail, YugMarg, Tripura Times, Tripura Observer, The Mizoram Post, Samaja, Inquilab, Malayalam Manorama, राष्ट्रीय जागरण, हिंदूस्तान, जनसत्ता दिल्ली, नव भारत टाइम्स दिल्ली, अमर उजाला, बिजनेस स्टैंडर्ड, पत्रिका, दैनिक भास्कर, राष्ट्रीय सहाय, प्रभात खबर, हरिभूमि दिल्ली, देशबन्धु, संपादकीय हिंदी

Up Zone Group For All UP District EPapers (हिंदूस्तान, अमर उजाला, जागरण)

Bihar Zone Group For All Bihar District EPapers (हिंदूस्तान, प्रभात खबर, जागरण)

Rest India Zone Group For Others District Of India EPapers

Join Magazine Group @ ₹60/m WhatsApp To 8969469464



Vision IAS Monthly Current Affairs, Drishti IAS Current Affairs, Next IAS Current Affairs, SHIELD Current Affairs, Shankar IAS Current Affairs, संस्कृति IAS Current Affairs, Hindu Monthly Review, Pratiyogita Darpan, प्रतियोगिता दर्पण, सामान्य ज्ञान दर्पण, सक्सेस मिरर, Yojana, Kurukshetra, योजना, कुरुक्षेत्र, Employment News, रोजगार समाचार, Frontline, Forbes, Dalal Street Investment Journal, Down to Earth, India Today, The Week, Economic and political weekly, Outlook, The Economist, इंडिया टुडे, गृहशोभा, चंपक, The Caravan, Hotelier, Vanita (Hindi, Malayalam)

(अगर और कोई मैगजीन चाहिए तो डिमांड करे उपलब्ध करा दिया जाएगा)

Join Epaper Group @ ₹30/m WhatsApp To 8969469464

राष्ट्रीय संस्करण (National Group)



Hindu, Indian Express, Business Line, Business Standard, Economic Times, Financial Express, Editorial Times Of India, Mid-Day, Hindustan Times, Mint, Asian Age, Tribune, Deccan Chronicle, Eastern Chronicle, Telegraph, The Daily Guardian, The Business Guardian, Millennium Post, First India, Hans, Statesman, Free Press Journal, Pioneer, The New Indian Express, Mirror Bangalore, Telangana Today, Punjabi Tribune, The Daily Excelsior, The News Now, Sangai Express, The Meghalayan Gaurdian, Daily Jammu Jottings, The Hills Times, Salar, The Excel Express, Nagaland Post, The Himalayan Mail, YugMarg, Tripura Times, Tripura Observer, The Mizoram Post, Samaja, Inquilab, Malayalam Manorama, राष्ट्रीय जागरण, हिंदूस्तान, जनसत्ता दिल्ली, नव भारत टाइम्स दिल्ली, अमर उजाला, बिजनेस स्टैंडर्ड, पत्रिका, दैनिक भास्कर, राष्ट्रीय सहाय, प्रभात खबर, हरिभूमि दिल्ली, देशबन्धु, संपादकीय हिंदी

Up Zone Group For All UP District EPapers (हिंदूस्तान, अमर उजाला, जागरण)

Bihar Zone Group For All Bihar District EPapers (हिंदूस्तान, प्रभात खबर, जागरण)

Rest India Zone Group For Others District Of India EPapers

IN BRIEF



Cheetah gives birth to 5 cubs at M.P.'s Kuno National Park

Cheetah Gamini on Sunday gave birth to five cubs in Kuno National Park in Madhya Pradesh's Sheopur district, taking the total number of cheetahs in the country to 26, Union Environment Minister Bhupendra Yadav said. Taking to X, Mr. Singh said, "High Five, Kuno! Female cheetah Gamini, aged about 5 years, brought from Tswalu Kalahari Reserve, South Africa, has given birth to 5 cubs today." The number of cheetah cubs born in India now stands at 13, he added. This is the fourth cheetah litter on Indian soil and the first litter of cheetahs brought from South Africa, the Minister said. [PH](#)

CPI parts ways with INDIA bloc in Jharkhand, to go solo

The Communist Party of India (CPI) on Sunday parted ways with the Opposition INDIA bloc in Jharkhand, announcing that it will contest eight of the 14 Lok Sabha seats in the State. The CPI has no representation in the Lower House of Parliament from Jharkhand. "We have decided to contest the poll on our own," CPI State secretary Mahendra Pathak said. "The BJP has announced its candidates, but the Congress and the Mahagathbandhan have not yet held any talks on seat sharing. So, we have decided to go solo," he said. The CPI will field candidates in Ranchi, Hazaribagh, Koderma, Chatra, Palamu, Giridih, Dumka, and Jamshepur seats. [PH](#)

JJP, INLD face uphill battle as core voters drift away

NEWS ANALYSIS

Ashok Kumar
GURUGRAM

The upcoming Lok Sabha and Haryana Assembly elections seem to be a battle for survival for the Indian National Lok Dal (INLD) and its breakaway faction, the Jan Nayak Janta Party (JJP), which is facing the ire of its core voters for its "anti-farmer" stance during the year-long stir against the Centre's now-withdrawn farm laws.

The JJP — led by Ajay Singh Chautala — came into existence in December 2018 after a vertical split in the INLD following a feud in the Chautala family. The party won 10 seats in the 2019 Assembly election and

formed a coalition government with the BJP.

The INLD, led by former Chief Minister Om Prakash Chautala, however, was reduced to a single seat in the 2019 Assembly poll, five years after it finished runner-up in the 2014 election with 19 seats.

Any further weakening of the two parties would also mean an end to the several decades-old dominance of the regional political force led by the Chautalas in the State.

While the image of JJP leader and Haryana Deputy Chief Minister Dushyant Chautala — once seen as the next Chaudhary Devi Lal — took a hit after the farmers' agitation, the party's failure to deliver on its two most important electoral promises — ₹5,100 monthly old-

age pension, and reservation in private sector jobs — added to its woes.

Trying hard to make the party stand on its feet again, INLD secretary general Abhay Chautala, too, had taken out a Statewide "padyatra" last year. However, his outfit failed to catch the people's imagination due to the lack of charismatic leadership.

Setback for revival plan

The INLD's efforts for a tie-up with the Congress and the Bahujan Samaj Party ahead of the Lok Sabha poll, too, have fallen flat — a major setback for its revival plan. Professor Rajendra Sharma, head of the Political Science Department at Rohtak's Maharshi Dayanand University, said the JJP's alliance with the BJP

for Lok Sabha poll, which would be a confirmation for their pre-poll alliance for the Assembly election as well, could be the only hope for its survival. "The JJP has lost much of its goodwill in the past five years because of the farmers' movement. It is on a sticky wicket. An alliance with the BJP will give it some breather, else it will be wiped out. The JJP has nothing significant to claim in terms of bringing any new policy or scheme. As far as the reservation in private jobs is considered, everybody knew it was a hoax," Mr. Sharma said.

He said the rise of the BJP in several States has been at the cost of regional parties. "In Haryana, too, the BJP has occupied the political space that the

INLD once held. The INLD may replace the JJP, but is unlikely to regain its old glory," said Mr. Sharma.

Tussle for Jat votes

The fact that the two regional parties depend heavily on Jat votes and face tough competition from the Congress, led by prominent Jat leader and two-time Chief Minister Bhupinder Singh Hooda, has also not helped their cause. Mr. Sharma said the Jats had already shifted to Mr. Hooda in a big way as they thought that he alone could challenge the BJP.

The political history of the State also does not offer much hope to the JJP as almost all new political outfits launched over the past two decades have failed to make a mark.

Press Trust of India
SHIMLA

The political crisis in Himachal Pradesh took a new turn on Sunday with the police registering a case against Hamirpur's Independent legislator Ashish Sharma, Gagret's now-disqualified MLA Chetanya Sharma's father, and others on charges of "electoral offences" and bribery.

Mr. Ashish and Mr. Chetanya are among the nine MLAs, including six Congress rebels and three Independents, who voted in favour of the BJP nominee, Harsh Mahajan, in the Rajya Sabha elections on February 27. This led to a crisis in the Congress government, which appeared to have lost its majority in the Assembly.

Guarded by the Central Reserve Police Force, the nine MLAs and two BJP legislators are currently in Rishikesh in BJP-ruled Uttarakhand and have alleged pressure from CM Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu.



The Supreme Court is scheduled to hear on Tuesday a plea by the six rebel Congress MLAs against their disqualification. FILE PHOTO

The case was registered at the Boileauganj police station on the basis of a complaint by Congress MLAs Sanjay Avasthi and Bhuvneshwar Gaur, who sought an investigation into charges of money trading, misuse of helicopter and security forces, and criminal misconduct.

The legislators said direct evidence is available that the BJP is paying for the transportation of the Congress rebels and Independents through choppers and accommodation in five-star properties in Haryana and Uttarakhand. They said there is proof of

BJP legislators accompanying them, and cited the Supreme Court's recent ruling in *Sita Soren vs Union of India* in the complaint.

They also alleged the role of Mr. Chetanya's father Rakesh Sharma, a retired bureaucrat, in arranging for the transportation.

Joint statement

Termining the present Congress government as the most unpopular and inexperienced till date, the rebel MLAs said a lot of pressure is being put on them to return to the Congress fold. In a joint statement issued on Sunday, they said

they are fighting a battle for self-respect and questioned the mindset of the Chief Minister, who is approaching them for compromise on the one hand and issuing statements like "black snakes" and "shepherds" on the other.

Lashing out at the BJP for adopting "unfair and undemocratic means to weaken" the democratic process of the State, Mr. Sukhu said "we are not afraid of political challenges". Addressing a public gathering in Solan, the Chief Minister said, "We will face every challenge with determination and realise the vision of self-reliant Himachal by 2032."

Cong. sets up panel

Later in the day, the Congress constituted a six-member committee to ensure better coordination between its government and the party organisation.

The members of the committee include Mr. Sukhu, his deputy Mukesh Agnihotri, and State party president Pratibha Singh.

As alliance talks with BJD progress, BJP cadre flag concerns

Satvasundar Barik
BHUBANESWAR

Despite sources from both the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the Biju Janata Dal (BJD) indicating significant progress in alliance talks, the BJP cadre in Odisha are still struggling to come to terms with the impending outcome.

A section of the local BJP leaders feels the party will unnecessarily shoulder the burden of anti-incumbency accrued from 24 years of BJD rule despite it expending much effort to rebuild itself after the break-up of the alliance in 2009.

On Sunday, a delegation led by State BJP president Manmohan Samal rushed to New Delhi after being summoned by the central leadership, possibly to attend a meeting to discuss the proposed alliance and seat sharing. "We are going to New Delhi to discuss the preparations made for fighting the Lok Sabha polls," Mr. Samal said.

Political experts in Odisha suggested that the statements from Mr. Samal and some other State BJP leaders claiming ignorance about alliance talks might simply be an effort to offset the growing discontent among the grassroots-level



PM Narendra Modi and Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik.

cadre, as aspirants of both parties remain uncertain of chances of contesting the election.

"Although we have worked hard to rise from the third position to the principal Opposition since 2009, there is a possibility of the BJP being branded as a ruling party if the alliance is approved by the central leadership. The natural advantage of fighting the election against 24 years of incumbency would be lost," said a BJP aspirant from Sambalpur district.

If an alliance is formed, BJP leaders and workers would be forced to defend the policies and actions of the BJD government, which they were critical of for the past 15 years. It will be a tricky situation to be in, said a BJP worker.

Gehlot asks Congressmen to learn from Rahul how not to succumb to 'pressure from ED'

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

As more Congress leaders from Rajasthan, including former Ministers Rajendra Yadav and Lal Chand Kataria, joined the BJP on Sunday, former Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot said people are leaving because of pressure from the Central agencies. He also asked those who are bowing to pressure to learn from Congress leader Rahul Gandhi and his family.

Mr. Gehlot said on X that people are saying they are facing pressure from Central agencies and, there-



Former Rajasthan CM Ashok Gehlot. FILE PHOTO

fore, they are leaving the Congress and joining the BJP. He added that the Congress nurtured these leaders and made them Ministers and appointed them to big positions within the party, but they chose to

run away in a difficult time.

Mr. Gehlot asked those who are under pressure to learn from the Gandhi family. "Mr. Rahul Gandhi and his family were harassed by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) for many days on the pretext of questioning. His Parliament membership was cancelled, he was even evicted from his house, but he is facing every pressure strongly. Through the Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra, he is travelling across the country, and creating public awareness on injustice, inflation, hatred, and unemployment," he said.

Waiting for water in Unnao: the outlier in U.P.'s Jal Jeevan Mission 'success' story

SPOTLIGHT

Jacob Koshy

"What water?" exclaims Naseema, about her experience with the Central government's ₹3.6-trillion Jal Jeevan Mission that aims to provide free, piped water to every village home in India by 2024. Peeved, she points out her house in Supasi-Azadpur, Unnao district, Uttar Pradesh. A cluster of around 250 houses, Supasi-Azadpur is a segregated slum, with the familiar sight of young girls hauling water pitchers from the nearest hand pump. "During the monsoon, it is the worst. Water rises waist-high and we have to wade through dirt to get to our houses," says Naseema, who makes a living as a rag-picker.

In the *dera*, dominated by Nat-Muslims (U.P.'s Pasmanda Dalit community), as a resident describes the hamlet, the most prominent public building is a mosque that doubles as a madrasa. "We are used to visits by panchayat and dis-

trict officials. They promise us water connections. Then there are visits by politicians during polls; that are never kept. What is Jal Jeevan?" queries Muhammad Khurshid Aalam, the imam of the mosque. "You mean we will get taps and water without paying for it?" he says.

The Jal Jeevan Mission was announced in 2019, but picked up steam only after the COVID-19 pandemic. As of last month, about 74% of India's 19.2 crore rural households have received tap connections, up from 3.2 crore in 2019, according to a dashboard maintained by the nodal Jal Shakti Ministry. In Uttar Pradesh alone, the number of tap connections has risen from 5.1 lakh in 2019 to 2 crore, the highest among all States.

However, as *The Hindu* has reported, these numbers do not imply that three-fourths of U.P.'s 2.6 crore households have functioning tap connections. A significant number is 'self-reported', that is officials report that connections have been provided



In short supply: A child washes utensils with water drawn from the nearest hand pump in Supasi-Azadpur, a segregated slum in Unnao; (right) Ram Naresh Azad, an Ayurveda practitioner in Tikargarhi village, says people have fallen ill after using groundwater. R.V. MOORTHY

and there isn't yet a count of how many households have independently been 'certified' by the gram panchayat as having a working tap connection.

While the Jal Jeevan data portal graphically maps out the extent of coverage in U.P. districts, only one conspicuously stands out — Unnao. With about 4.8 lakh households and 1,654 villages, it reports only 20% of households as having functional tap connections. This is still a rise from the 1.9% of households reported with connections in 2019. However, only about 3% of villages in Unnao have been certified

as having tap connections by their panchayats.

The fall of the tanneries

Situated between the bigger cities of Kanpur and Lucknow, Unnao is home to several tanneries. However, the last decades have been tough on the industry, with hundreds of tanneries being held responsible for polluting the Ganga that flows through Unnao. The government's Namami Gange Programme has focussed efforts on commissioning sewage infrastructure and treatment plants as well as getting tannery associations to either shut opera-



tions or pool resources to establish effluent treatment plants that treat the waste water from their units. This has led to conflict.

Taj Alam, proprietor of King's International, a large tannery in the area, says, "Vietnam, with barely any cattle, is now a \$15-billion leather exporting industry. In India, it is \$5 billion. We are losing out."

One of the major historical reasons for the success of the leather industry in the Kanpur-Unnao belt was the presence of the Ganga and the "salty water," says Nayyar Jamal, an advocate and tannery proprietor. However, this elevated pres-

ence of salts is reflected in the high fluoride content in the groundwater, one that makes it unpalatable.

"For over 10 years, we've had a large tank that supplies water for an hour or two a day. But that groundwater isn't good. There have been illnesses. There is an alternate supply connected to a water filtration plant. That's the water most of us use," says Ram Naresh Azad, an Ayurveda practitioner in Tikargarhi village of Unnao.

Salinity challenge

Away from the industrial, more urban parts of the district, the Lucknow-Kan-

pur-Unnao highway branches off into several villages. Monu, a resident farmer of Baliya Kheda, a hamlet of about 200 households, says he is unaware of the Jal Jeevan Mission and blames the high salinity in the groundwater, ironically, on the (Namami Gange) "mission". "Much of the tannery waste is being diverted and making its way into the ground. This wasn't the case before. The water that we get has a yellowish tinge," he says.

At the primary school in Khanapura, a 20 minute-drive from Baliya Kheda, teachers say they would rather not drink the water from the hand pumps. "There is a reverse osmosis treatment system. It's the local gram panchayat's responsibility to maintain it, but it is not always reliable," says Fakhru Islam, the head teacher.

At the local water board office, several administrative staff are preparing for a 'visit' by Unnao's District Magistrate to inspect the progress of the Jal Jeevan Mission. Puneet Kumar, assistant engineer and in-

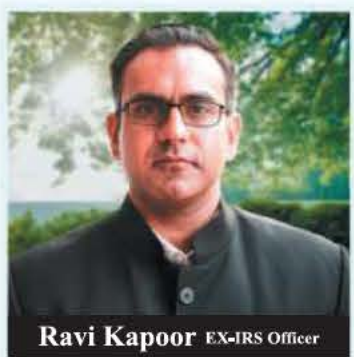
charge of water management works, says Unnao's limited adoption of the scheme is due to a "belated" realisation that the high fluoride levels in the groundwater would make supplying potable water to all households a challenge. "The administration prepared a project report to supply water from groundwater. But later, Unnao and six other districts were asked to draw water from the Ganga and use that as the main source. The process of tendering and finding a company for the civil work took time, but now we expect the work to be complete by January 2025," he says.

At the Ganga barrage, a water diversion and pump house structure is in the early stages of construction. Engineers and workers scurry in anticipation of an inspection. "Let this be completed and following this, a water treatment plant. Then we will provide taps and pipes," one says. The others concur.

LINK TO FULL STORY
» <https://rb.gy/49h8y9>

Can working professionals prepare for UPSC and beat their competition?

Below is a roadmap of practical advice on how to navigate the tiresome UPSC preparation journey for busy working professionals or busy students. Given the obvious challenges of paucity of time, this is NOT an article about 'time-management' but something much more fundamental that busy UPSC aspirants need to know. The advice rendered below will turn out to be customized for every reader if they engage with it.



Ravi Kapoor EX-IRS Officer

1. Know your numbers

Research proves that our subjective sense of time is often misleading, and the only way to objectively appreciate the time situation is through numbers. Consider the following:

Work:

Assuming you have a 9-5 job, which means spending 8 hours at an office/college every day. Six times a week. You spend about 50 hours at work /college each week.

Travel:

Between 60-90 min., per day for commuting to and fro. You spend approx. 10 hours every week traveling.

Pre And Post work routines:

Add another hour for changing, refreshing, etc., before and after work. You spend about 7-10 hours per week.

Wastage and unexpected events:

Assume half an hour wasted on social media or just being lazy. Another half-hour every day dealing with unexpected events. So, 10 hours are wasted or spent dealing with whatever new thing happens to you.

Sleep:

Assuming 7 hours of sleep every day, which is the minimum recommended amount for being healthy. You are asleep for about 50 hours a week.

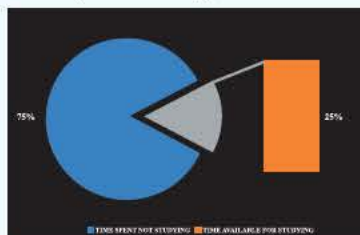
Chores and Entertainment:

Add 1 hour of leisure time to unwind & include time spent with family and

friends. You spend at least 10 hrs. a week on chores and entertainment.

Adding the above, we arrive at average of 130-150 hours spent, per week **not studying.**

(Note that I have NOT included time for exercise, which is imp.)



So effectively speaking, you have approx. 30-40 hours a week available for UPSC preparation.

(I encourage my mentees not to take the above for granted & to CALCULATE the above using a tool I created called the time-managzyer, which can be accessed by enrolling in the Time-Management Sutra via the QR code)

2. The currency of productivity is not time, but energy.

Is it any surprise that you don't feel like reading boring NCERTs after a day at work/college, EVEN if you have a few hours to spare?

Consider that when you have high energy, you are more productive- you use your time efficiently as you are able to focus. When you can focus, your ideas flow smoothly, & you look forward to what's next. The exact opposite happens when your energy levels are low.

Energy management is far more imp. than Time Management.

You might mistakenly blame yourself for not being motivated & feel disappointed. Don't. Because you must realize that your body is a machine hosting an organ- your brain, which needs a break & can overheat. That said, everyone has different energy

cycles during the day, and it pays to know your body's patterns.

It is also imp. for you to know that willpower is not some magic sauce you can conjure up with emotions or thoughts alone. Research suggests that willpower is more like a currency that we spend throughout the day on different activities. As the day goes by, it gets depleted. Therefore, schedule the most difficult tasks in your day when your energy levels are highest.

3. Task-lists are wish-lists

You can't manage your time until you design tasks intelligently. The biggest mistake people make about setting daily tasks is that they are based on what they HOPE to do in a day vs what they actually CAN do. They set tasks that are too vague, too big, or too challenging. Task design is a survival skill every serious UPSC aspirant should know.

For example, "Read NCERT" is not an intelligent example of task design. An intelligently designed task would look like this: "Do 1st reading of chapters 1-5 of History NCERT & attempt MCQs- score above 60%".

Here's why-

1. It has a clear cut goal, includes metrics for feedback & the task is neither too easy nor too hard.
2. It is linked to a higher order weekly goal ("To finish History NCERT this week")

This is how you should structure your own tasks for UPSC preparation. These insights are inspired by the Goal Setting theory of motivation by Psychologist, Edwin Locke.



Other critical principles to keep in mind while designing tasks are-

1. Have NO MORE than 3 Priority tasks in a day
2. Always keep 20% buffer room for over-estimation, disturbances etc
3. Once the tasks are set, stop thinking about the big picture & push to completion.

Always remember that your tasks will take up as much time as you allocate to them. The longer you give a task, the longer it will take. The opposite is true but only to an extent. So, keep your targets tight but not impossible.

4. Treat yourself as an athlete competing in "inttellectual Olympics"

No matter how devoted you are to your studies, your body & mind have needs that must be met. You must carve out time for these needs and treat them like medicine, as they are vitamins for your mind.

Here are the optimal dosages for brain health-

- Sleep:**
 1. 7 Hrs sound sleep is minimum with preferably, a 30-min nap during the day
 2. Treat your sleep as sacred and invest in good sleep.
 3. Circadian rhythms are important- research clearly supports that the body and mind work best when we rise with and sleep in sync with the sun.

Exercise:

1. 4-6 hrs. of medium intensity exercise a week is minimum
2. Possibly the best exercises for brain health & clearing the mind is long-distance cardio- walking, jogging, etc.
3. Choose an exercise format that you enjoy & integrate into your lifestyle.
4. Even if it makes you tired in the short-term, exercise will benefit your brain health tremendously.

Socialization:

1. Healthy social relations are a perquisite for happiness and brain health.
2. Don't isolate yourself. Even if it seems to conserve time, your mood will pay the price.
3. Develop a peer/study group where you can get psychological support form or find a trusted mentor who can support you.

Hobbies:

1. Some activities like painting, music, cooking etc which fill you with joy should exist. Don't give them up.
2. Dosage is key. Use them when you are down but don't over-indulge.
3. Aim to invest around 4-6 hours per week on such activities

5. To harvest time, the tool you need is a focussed mind.

Deep-Focus is a state wherein you block out all distractions until nothing remains in the universe but the task and you. Recall a time from your life when you felt complete immersion in an activity- perhaps, while dancing or painting. Such states are called "Flow" States, popularized by the groundbreaking work of psychologist Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi. In such states, time seems to stop altogether. Where, there is nothing else, just the task at hand & your full engagement with it. But to enter these 'flow' states during study sessions is not easy.

Here's what you need to know about focussing on demand-

1. Attention is like a muscle- it needs to be trained & can be improved drastically with the right practices
2. The most efficient, natural & time tested method is through meditation. Particularly, awareness of breath meditation (Ana-Pana OR Shamatha meditation) which can be practiced for 20-40 min each day
3. The Single biggest source of distraction is your smart-phone
4. Keep your phone out of your hand's reach AND away from visible range during study sessions.

(If you use your phone for watching lectures or study, delete irrelevant apps/ don't use social media on your device and keep it only for emergency calls)

6. Find Scientific Mentorship with accountability partners -

The fact of the matter remains that if you are a working professional or busy student, you require special attention & a customized approach. A one-size-fits-all approach is very likely to fail in your case, so choose your mentor/guide wisely. You need someone who can keep close track of your progress using data, change your orientation according to the data, & find shorter, more efficient paths through the journey - including how to keep abreast with current affairs, manage backlog of classes, make notes, revise, etc.

However, data orientation and analytics are just one aspect of mentorship. The core part remains deeply psychological. You need someone who can reorient your mindset and supply the emotional energy needed to pursue the UPSC alongside a job or college. Add to that mind-training aspects like cultivating mindfulness, memory enhancement, and discipline - and you have the recipe for success.

Where you see constraints, a good mentor will see potential for more efficiency & push you towards it.

To Enter in Time Management Sutra

SCAN THIS QR CODE

OR

SEND "Hi" TO THIS NUMBER

+91 72080 82443

This article contains excerpts from the **TIME-MANAGEMENT SUTRA (TMS)** - a 7-day free program I created for my mentees who were struggling to manage time along with their studies or jobs. The TMS takes them through 7 consecutive days of daily email assignments each covering the aspects mentioned above in detail. Each assignment includes a questionnaire, evaluation, and education on each of the critical areas mentioned above. Towards the end, students are put through a test of fire which is a secret, not to be revealed here. The TMS is part of my Free Mentorship Program and can be accessed by anyone free of cost, by signing up here.

EDUCATION PLUS

GET THE EDGE Follow us [facebook.com/thehindu](https://www.facebook.com/thehindu) twitter.com/the_hindu [instagram.com/the_hindu](https://www.instagram.com/the_hindu)

Kinnari Pandya

Finland has one of the best education systems in the world. In this interview, Hannele Cantell, Associate Professor, Faculty of Behavioural Sciences and Education Psychology, University of Helsinki, and a schoolbook writer, talks about textbook development, and the role of textbooks in Finnish schools.

What role do textbooks play in the Finnish education system?

Historically, textbook use has undergone a change. Earlier, education in Finland was highly textbook- and teacher-oriented, but this later came under criticism.

Some schools and teachers trusted phenomenon-based teaching, in which a concept or phenomenon is explored from a multi-disciplinary perspective. Sometimes, phenomenon-based teaching overtakes learning of school subjects and tries to find answers to problem-based questions, such as "Why is there heavy rain during summer?" In this approach, the Internet became the main source of knowledge, causing problems, such as the absence of understanding of concepts of subjects/disciplines and structure in learning. In recent years, there has been a turn back to subject, content, and concepts.

In Finland, schools get money for their pedagogical needs from the government, which is also meant for

Develop thinking skills...

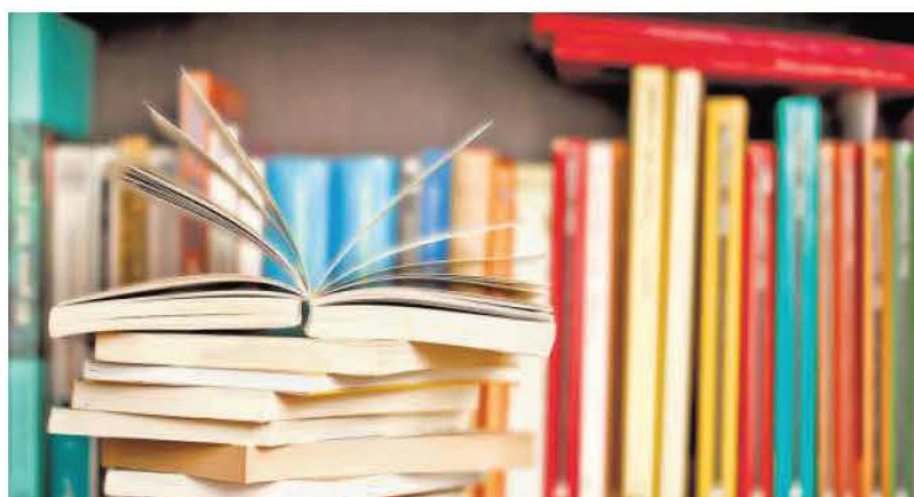
... is what textbooks ought to do, says Hannele Cantell, Associate Professor, Faculty of Behavioural Sciences and Education Psychology, University of Helsinki, Finland

textbooks that schools can choose and buy. The problem is that to save money, some schools don't buy textbooks. Where there are no textbooks, only the Internet, we have noticed that children don't learn enough. My suggestion, therefore, would be to make good, high-quality textbooks, and not to rely only on technology, especially the Internet!

What, according to you, should textbooks contain?

A skeleton of the important concepts and main knowledge to be learnt. Teachers should create "the muscles around the bones"; i.e. all activities, pedagogical exercises and tasks. While each teacher's style is different, textbooks ensure that every student has a similar opportunity to learn the basic concepts. Textbooks ought to connect to questions and creativity. Developing thinking skills is the key focus in Finnish textbooks, which focus on the interaction between knowledge and thinking. Readers' age is a critical component while designing them.

Textbooks don't work in isolation; we offer teachers pedagogical background materials and teaching materials to go with the



GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

textbooks.

These are essential aspects of quality schoolbooks/textbooks that any country striving for quality education would ensure. What matters is the extent to which these elements and principles are practised while developing textbooks, and preparing teachers to use the material in the same spirit and intent with which it is developed.

What are some key principles followed in designing and developing textbooks in Finland?

A group comprising teacher educators, subject and pedagogical (university) specialists and teachers from

schools plans, develops and writes textbooks, exercise books and teachers' materials. All texts and visual material are peer-reviewed. The writers also design the pictures, maps, and so on. Everything is age-oriented.

The newest research should be seen in textbooks. For example, new knowledge and concepts about climate change and loss of biodiversity come from university researchers, and pedagogical expertise comes from teacher educators. They understand, for example, how to deal with environmental anxiety. Describing only the problems can be socially and emotionally harmful for children; it is important to also write about the

possibilities of solving some problems and encouraging students to act.

The school teachers' role is to keep us focussed on classroom realities and the age group the book is meant for. Everyone writes and comments; it's an 'equal' process.

All classrooms have a diverse range of learners. Inclusion is a critical aspect of ensuring learning for all. How can a textbook take care of this?

In Finland, we collaborate with language planners (those who check if the language is correctly written). Often, we also ask Special Needs education experts to



comment on the drafts so that the texts are easy to read and understand.

Visuals are important because many children/students have difficulty in reading very long texts; younger children can learn from pictures. The content of pictures is also planned carefully. Choosing pictures for a textbook has to be done responsibly. For example, if you have space for only one picture of Europe, Finland or India, what kind of picture would you choose?

It is good to split the text into smaller chapters and to use meaningful subtitles. For example, compare these: a. Muscles b. Muscles make us move. The latter includes the chapter's main point. It gives the slower learners an idea about the chapter. But the first does not convey anything.

In addition, it is good to have an abstract in a chapter as well as main/key points. Also, we have thinking questions and small ideas for student activities in every chapter. So, the textbook, in a way, is also an exercise book for students.

Views expressed are personal
The writer is Faculty at Azim Premji University

SCHOLARSHIPS

Chapak Bachelor's Scholarship

An opportunity offered by the French Government to Indian students who wish to study in France.

Eligibility: Open to Indian nationals or OCI card holders who are 23 years or younger at the time of application and have completed secondary school in India and have applied for a Bachelor's degree starting on September 1, 2024.

Rewards: € 860 a month plus benefits
Application: Online
Deadline: April 1
www.b4s.in/edge/CBSS3

British Council Scholarship for Women in STEM

An opportunity offered by the British Council in partnership with universities in the U.K.

Eligibility: Open to females who hold a Bachelor's degree in STEM subjects and have secured admission to a pre-selected PG programme at a

participating U.K. university and demonstrate a need for financial support/ socio-economic need.

Applicants must meet the English language proficiency requirements.
Rewards: Full tuition fees, living stipend, and benefits
Application: Online
Deadline: April 30
www.b4s.in/edge/BCSM1

The University of Birmingham India Outstanding Achievement Scholarships

An opportunity offered by the University of Birmingham.

Eligibility: Open to Indian citizens with a full-time offer for a UG programme at the University of Birmingham; meet the specified academic conditions of their offer; are capable of paying tuition fees not covered under the scholarship; and have sufficient funds to cover the full cost of living at Birmingham's U.K. campus.
Rewards: A one-time award of £4,000
Application: Online
Deadline: April 30
www.b4s.in/edge/UBIA1

Courtesy: buddy4study.com

Women in STEM

Progress has opened applications for the 2024 Progress Software Akanksha Scholarship for Women in STEM in India.

Eligibility: Women residing in India and in the first year of a UG programme in Computer Science Engineering (CSE), Computer Science Information Technology (CSIT) or related course.
Last date: April 12.
<https://bitly.ws/3fd5m>

Hegde seeks two-thirds majority for BJP to amend Constitution; his personal opinion, says BJP

Party asks for clarification; the Karnataka MP had spoken about amending the Constitution in 2017 as well, only to apologise later by stating that his comments had been distorted; statement reflects the hidden agenda of RSS: Congress

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU/NEW DELHI

Courting another controversy weeks ahead of the Lok Sabha election, party MP from Uttara Kannada Anant Kumar Hegde has said that voters should give a two-thirds mandate to the BJP to enable amendments to the Constitution. The BJP, however, distanced itself from his statement.

"The BJP needs a two-thirds majority in both the Houses of Parliament to amend the Constitution and set right distortions and unnecessary additions made to it by the Congress," he said, addressing a gathering in Karwar on Saturday and explaining



Anant Kumar Hegde made the remarks while addressing a gathering in Karnataka's Karwar on Saturday. FILE PHOTO

the numbers required to amend the preamble of the Constitution. The party would also need to come to power in more than 20 States for this, he said.

This is the second instance that the former Union Minister has waded into a controversy over amending the Constitu-

tion. In 2017, he had spoken about amending the Constitution only to later apologise by stating that his comments had been distorted.

The BJP distanced itself from Mr. Hegde's statement and also sought a clarification from him.

BJP spokesperson Gau-

rav Bhatia said, "It is imperative that it is made clear that the statement reflects his personal views and is not a statement that reflects the view of the BJP. The party has also asked for clarification from him," Mr. Bhatia said.

Mr. Hegde's statement, made publicly in Karnataka, accused the Congress of having made changes to the Indian Constitution "that brought laws to oppress the entire Hindu society", and later linked the call given by Prime Minister Narendra Modi for 400 seats for the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) in the upcoming Lok Sabha election to effect changes in the Indian Constitution.

These remarks also set off a flurry of condemna-

tion from Opposition parties, with both Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge and Rahul Gandhi speaking out against it.

'Manuvadi mindset'

Mr. Gandhi said that Mr. Hegde's statement reflected the "hidden agenda" of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) and that its ultimate aim was to "destroy the Constitution framed by Babasaheb Ambedkar".

In a post on X, Mr. Kharge said the Modi government, the BJP and the RSS secretly desired to impose a dictatorship, where they would impose their "Manuvadi mindset" on the people of India and snatch away the rights of the SCs, the STs and the OBCs.

BJP using NCB to defame DMK: T.N. Law Minister

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

Tamil Nadu Law Minister S. Regupathy on Sunday alleged that the BJP government at the Centre had pressed the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) into action "to defame and intimidate the DMK".

Referring to the arrest of former DMK functionary and film producer Jaffer Sadiq by the NCB in Delhi on Saturday, he said, "The Deputy Director of the NCB, Gyaneshwar Singh, interacted with the media about the case before the investigation was completed only to help the BJP gain political mileage during the election."

Addressing the media on Sunday, Mr. Regupathy and DMK Rajya Sabha member P. Wilson said that the party would initiate legal and criminal proceedings against anyone who sought to link the party with the accused in the drug cartel case.

The DMK leaders won-



S. Regupathy.

dered how Mr. Singh could brief the media when the investigation was in the preliminary stage.

"What is the basis and where is the evidence? The media briefing, especially during election time, has been done with the motive of defaming the DMK. We will initiate criminal and civil proceedings against anyone who seeks to link the party or our leaders with the case without any basis and evidence," Mr. Wilson said.

According to Mr. Regu-

pathy, the DMK had two crore members, and it was impossible to check the background of every individual. Mr. Wilson said that the party had expelled Mr. Sadiq when a complaint was made against him.

"We had raised the issue of former Minister C. Vijayabaskar's involvement in the gutkha scam. Did the AIADMK government remove him from the Cabinet? Even the Governor refused to grant sanction to initiate legal proceedings against him and another Minister, Ramana. The gutkha scam was transferred to the CBI only after our leader M.K. Stalin approached the court and obtained a direction for the same," Mr. Wilson said.

The Minister said that the DMK government had made efforts to eradicate drugs from the State, which were appreciated by everyone, including the judiciary. "But during the AIADMK regime, gutkha was sold by Ministers and officials," he claimed.

Rural Works Department												
Office of the Engineer-in-Chief, Rural Works Department, Bihar												
Vishweshwariya Bhawan, 5 th Floor, Rural Works Department, Bailey Road, Patna, Bihar - 800015												
(निहार ग्रामीण पथ अनुसंधान नीति, 2016)												
Notice Inviting Tender for Rural Roads Maintenance based on Output and performance based Contract through e-procurement mode on Model Bidding Document (MBD).												
(Notice Inviting Tender No. - MR-3054-106/2023-24)												
1.	Designation and Address of the Advertiser : Office of Engineer-in-chief, Rural Works Department, Bihar, Patna											
2.	Date of Issue of Notice Inviting Tender : 07.03.2024											
3.	Period for downloading of Tender documents : From 01.04.2024 (9:00) to 15.04.2024 up to 15:00 hrs. From website- http://pmsytenderbih.gov.in											
4.	Date, Time & Place of Pre-Bid Meeting : Date 03.04.2024 time 15:00 hrs.											
5.	Last Date & Time for uploading tender Document by bidder : Date 15.04.2024 up to: 15:00 hrs. http://pmsytenderbih.gov.in											
6.	Date, time for online opening of Technical bid : Date 15.04.2024 up to Time: 15:30 hrs.											
7.	Last date, time and place for submission of Original instrument of EMD, Cost of BOQ, Bank credit facility certificate and an Affidavit regarding correctness of information provided with bid document : Till 15:00 hrs on 15.04.2024											
8.	The Engineer in chief, Rural Works Department on behalf of Governor of Bihar invites bids from the eligible bidders for the works detailed below.											
9.	Details of Works:-											
Sl.No	Package No.	District	Name of Division	Block	Name of Road	Length (In Km)	Cost of Initial Rectification with Surface Renewal (In Lakhs)	Cost of 5-years Maintenance (In Lakhs)	Total Estimated Cost (In Lakhs)	Cost of BOQ (In Rs.)	Bid Security (Rs. In Lakhs)	Amount Payable to Works Division
1	MR-N/23-24 Bhagalpur/15	Bhagalpur	Bhagalpur	Gauradih	Nadiyama Gauradih Mohanpur PMGSY Road to Etea Champa Chak village	2.000	72.563	16.778	89.341			
		Bhagalpur	Bhagalpur	Sultanganj	Deodha Gram Vishahari Sihan to Mbtichak Mahadali Tola Kasmaad House of Sakaldeo House to Goriyasi (shahkud Road)	1.000	106.535	8.171	114.706			
		Bhagalpur	Bhagalpur	Sultanganj	Abujan Kumaitha Path to English Khanpur tak	0.570	82.696	3.764	86.460			
		Bhagalpur	Bhagalpur	Sultanganj	PMGSY Road Hemra Shiv mandir to Barua River	1.404	64.780	10.551	75.331			
		Bhagalpur	Bhagalpur	Sultanganj	PMGSY Nonsar Parshuram Paswan House to Bijay singh House	0.726	44.829	6.349	51.178			
		Bhagalpur	Bhagalpur	Sultanganj	PMGSY Nonsar Parshuram Paswan House to Bijay singh House	0.620	33.684	3.756	37.440			
		Bhagalpur	Bhagalpur	Sultanganj	Udahlid PMGSY Road to Anandi Ray's house	0.800	28.806	7.033	35.839			
		Bhagalpur	Bhagalpur	Sultanganj	Udahlid PMGSY Road to Anandi Ray's house	0.561	31.492	3.669	35.161			
		Total for The Group				7.681	465.385	60.071	525.456			
2	MR-N/23-24 Bhagalpur/16	Bhagalpur	Bhagalpur	Sultanganj	NH-80 Nasopur to Nasopur Railway Gumti tak	0.338	19.061	2.151	21.212			
		Bhagalpur	Bhagalpur	Sultanganj	Kathara (Nishara) Mandan Mandali ke Ghar to Traveni Mandali ke Ghar tak	0.370	20.538	2.268	22.806			
		Bhagalpur	Bhagalpur	Sultanganj	PMGSY Halkarshak (Bajrangwadi) House to Karvanand Roy House	0.592	31.672	3.589	35.261			
		Bhagalpur	Bhagalpur	Sultanganj	NH-80 Jawahar Mandali (Kamanganj) House to Muslim Tola via Ganesh Singh house	0.220	12.909	1.449	14.358			
		Total for The Group				1.520	84.180	9.457	93.637			
3	MR-N/23-24 Bhagalpur/17	Bhagalpur	Bhagalpur	Sultanganj	Gouripur to Mankapur	0.511	27.182	3.106	30.288			
		Bhagalpur	Bhagalpur	Sultanganj	Abujan Kumaitha Road Gangri Ravidas Tola to Asandi Mahadali Tola & Brahman Tola	0.563	30.649	3.706	34.355			
		Bhagalpur	Bhagalpur	Sultanganj	PMGSY Road Mangal Ravidas's house) to Kapildew Paswan house	0.360	19.955	2.281	22.236			
		Total for The Group				1.434	77.786	9.093	86.879			
4	MR-N/23-24 Kahalgaon/07	Bhagalpur	Kahalgaon	Kahalgaon	Rampur to Shivnarayanpur PMGSY Road	4.150	164.916	28.229	193.145			
		Bhagalpur	Kahalgaon	Kahalgaon	L022 NH-80 to Salempur	1.845	55.942	14.754	70.696			
		Bhagalpur	Kahalgaon	Kahalgaon	REO Road to Dewipur	1.365	43.893	10.918	54.811			
		Bhagalpur	Kahalgaon	Kahalgaon	L033- Pankhorha to Sour	2.880	79.529	23.428	102.957			
		Total for The Group				10.240	344.280	77.329	421.609			
5	MR-N/23-24 Kahalgaon/08	Bhagalpur	Kahalgaon	Kahalgaon	Jahtyan to Jagalgaoli	1.350	45.082	10.254	55.336			
		Bhagalpur	Kahalgaon	Kahalgaon	Brahchari more to Lagma Raod	1.880	44.478	16.514	60.992			
		Bhagalpur	Kahalgaon	Kahalgaon	L035- Khusa Dhamara to Masadaha	2.500	98.314	21.920	120.234			
		Bhagalpur	Kahalgaon	Kahalgaon	L051-Ekchari more to Ekchari Tola	0.500	26.434	3.113	29.547			
		Bhagalpur	Kahalgaon	Gauradih	Mirzanhat Nadiyama PmGSY (Siargarh) to Saraiya	3.165	166.186	23.275	189.461			
		Total for The Group				9.395	380.494	75.076	455.570			
6	MR-N/23-24 Kahalgaon/09	Bhagalpur	Kahalgaon	Pirpanti	L095- PMGSY Pylapur to Gauradih Musahri	4.830	180.568	37.836	218.404			
		Bhagalpur	Kahalgaon	Pirpanti	L076- Roshanpur to Govindpur	2.675	87.291	23.288	110.579			
		Bhagalpur	Kahalgaon	Pirpanti	L036-T03 to Saguni Tola	2.384	97.319	17.405	114.724			
		Total for The Group				9.889	365.178	78.529	443.707			
7	MR-N/23-24 Kahalgaon/10	Bhagalpur	Kahalgaon	Sanhaula	dhanari Choti Naaki to Badi Naaki	5.550	212.984	47.206	260.190			
		Bhagalpur	Kahalgaon	Sanhaula	Tulsipur to Bharadha	2.157	87.082	16.686	103.768			
		Bhagalpur	Kahalgaon	Sanhaula	L048- Tehlaunda to Pakariya	1.000	34.083	8.464	42.547			
		Bhagalpur	Kahalgaon	Sanhaula	RWD Road T02 to Banani	1.300	48.750	11.367	60.117			
		Bhagalpur	Kahalgaon	Sanhaula	RCD to Chak Suleman	1.300	40.281	11.733	52.014			
		Total for The Group				11.307	423.180	95.456	518.636			
8	MR-N/23-24 Kahalgaon/11	Bhagalpur	Kahalgaon	Sanhaula	Baniyadi to Nagdaha	2.221	75.148	19.015	95.163			
		Bhagalpur	Kahalgaon	Sanhaula	L022- Bhakhri to Dhanokahr	1.900	99.834	11.886	111.720			
		Bhagalpur	Kahalgaon	Sanhaula	Bhuria to Baisa	1.800	76.929	13.724	90.653			
		Bhagalpur	Kahalgaon	Sanhaula	L025- Kharia to Rasulpur	3.000	114.058	24.145	138.203			
		Total for The Group				8.921	366.969	68.770	435.739			
9	MR-N/23-24 Navgachia/10	Bhagalpur	Navgachia	Narayanpur	PMGSY Road Nago Yadav ke Ghar Se Kanu tola	1.100	62.340	7.699	70.039			
		Bhagalpur	Navgachia	Narayanpur	PMGSY Road se Kushi Sharma Tola Ward No 4	0.800	45.715	5.525	51.240			
		Bhagalpur	Navgachia	Narayanpur	Road no 14 (Raghnath Jha ke ghar) to Brahman Tola	0.550	32.832	3.901	36.433			
		Bhagalpur	Navgachia	Narayanpur	PMGSY road to Paswan tola E.L.O. School	0.890	50.532	6.249	57.081			
		Bhagalpur	Navgachia	Narayanpur	Raghopur Bishari Billa Toil to Railway Dhala Durga Mandir Kall Mandir hote hue Ganga Bandh vilash Mandali ke gar Tak	2.000	110.999	13.914	124.913			
		Bhagalpur	Navgachia	Narayanpur	GN Bandh Road No-14 to Maujmad	1.000	56.702	6.906	63.608			
		Bhagalpur	Navgachia	Narayanpur	MR Road Bharmarpur to Bharmarpur Durga Sthan	0.300	17.549	2.175	19.724			
		Total for The Group				6.640	376.669	46.369	423.038			
10	MR-N/23-24 Navgachia/11	Bhagalpur	Navgachia	Bihpur	Harischandra mishara ke gar se Milki tola	0.400	23.585	2.762	26.347			
		Bhagalpur	Navgachia	Bihpur	Trisuldhari Singh house to Prasad Yadav Basa Bunch	1.170	47.210	8.821	56.031			
		Bhagalpur	Navgachia	Bihpur	Railway Crossing Sadanand Rai Bagicha to Dasolal Pipar Tola	1.480	161.130	12.672	173.802			
		Bhagalpur	Navgachia	Bihpur	NH-31 to Dayalpur	1.390	84.372	10.807	95.179			
		Bhagalpur	Navgachia	Bihpur	Mhant Baba Asthan Near NH 106 to Hario Village	1.300	71.243	8.977	80.220			
		Bhagalpur	Navgachia	Bihpur	Gouripur to Yadav Tola	0.850	47.669	6.063	53.732			
		Bhagalpur	Navgachia	Bihpur	Madhya Vidalya to Uchha Vidyalay Gauripur	0.500	29.027	3.453	32.480			
		Total for The Group				7.090	464.236	53.555	517.791			
11	MR-N/23-24 Navgachia/12	Bhagalpur	Navgachia	Kharik	Road No 14 To Kelawari Chowk	0.700	38.338	4.834	43.172			
		Bhagalpur	Navgachia	Kharik	RCD Road No-14 Purvi Gherari Ramanand Master to Harjan Tola	0.700	38.245	4.834	43.079			
		Bhagalpur	Navgachia	Kharik	Kharik Bazar Gol Chowk PCC to Sahni Tola	0.780	42.336	5.386	47.722			
		Bhagalpur	Navgachia	Kharik	L042- Mirzafri to Dhruv Ganj	1.200	64.514	8.287	72.801			
		Bhagalpur	Navgachia	Navgachia	L021- RCD Road to Borwa	2.326	80.595	19.205	99.800			
		Bhagalpur	Navgachia	Navgachia	L039 T06 to Kanchanpur Tola	1.330	44.681	11.231	55.912			
		Bhagalpur	Navgachia	Navgachia	L046- Jamunia to Mahadattpur	1.297	70.560	6.950	77.510			
		Total for The Group				8.333	379.269	60.727	439.996			

For further details please visit : www.state.bihar.gov.in/prdbihar

PR. No. 019199 (RWD) 2023-24

नकी मार, बर्बाद करे सुखी परिवार

Engineer in Chief-cum
Additional Commissioner-cum-Special Secretary
Rural Works Department, Bihar, Patna

Candidate declaration by Sena (UBT) sparks coalition concerns

Abhinav Deshpande
MUMBAI

A day after Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Uddhav Thackeray revealed his party's candidate for the Mumbai North-West Lok Sabha seat, Congress leader Sanjay Nirupam questioned whether this move violated 'coalition dharma' or was an intentional effort to portray his party ineffectively.

Delhi govt. orders probe after body pulled out of borewell

Water Minister Atishi suspects foul play as police look into murder angle; Chief Secretary ordered to seal all abandoned borewells within 48 hours; action recommended against erring officials

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

A man died after he reportedly fell into a 40-foot-deep borewell on a Delhi Jal Board (DJB) premises in the Keshopur Mandi area of the Capital on Sunday, prompting the police to launch a probe, with Water Minister Atishi saying there might be some foul play behind the incident.

During a visit to the site, the Minister said the police should investigate whether the unidentified man, seemed to be in his late 20s, was pushed into the one-foot-wide borewell by someone as the room where it is situated was found locked by the rescue team.

She added that the DJB premises was handed over in 2020 to Delhi Metro Rail



It took around 14 hours for a rescue team to recover the body from the borewell on the DJB premises in New Delhi on Sunday. ANI

Corporation (DMRC), which is constructing a metro station nearby.

The DMRC in a statement said "The pump room inside which this borewell was located belongs to the DJB. The borewell was already installed inside that pump room when the DMRC took over the area around it for con-

struction work," it said.

Ms. Atishi has also ordered Chief Secretary Naresh Kumar to conduct a time-bound investigation and take exemplary action against any officer found guilty of abandoning the borewell without properly sealing it.

She told the officer that all abandoned borewells

on private and government land be sealed and a compliance report be sent to her within 48 hours.

Rescue mission

The police said they had received a call around 1 a.m. that a man has fallen into the borewell. The identity of the caller is yet to be established. A police officer said it might be possible that the man entered the room with the intention of stealing something. He said they are also probing the case from the murder angle.

DCP (West) Vichitra Veer said the body was recovered around 3.30 p.m. after a 14-hour-long rescue mission involving the National Disaster Response Force and the Department of Delhi Fire Services. The rescue team dug a parallel borewell to rescue him.

PM inaugurates revamped Terminal 1 at IGI Airport; to be functional by May

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday virtually inaugurated 15 airports, including the expanded Terminal 1 of Indra Gandhi International Airport at Delhi, which will now have the capacity to handle 40 million passengers per annum (MPPA) – over twice its previous capacity of 17 MPPA.

The expanded Terminal 1 is expected to be functional in May, as currently, processes related to operational readiness are under way and various stakeholders are being familiarised with new procedures, said Videh Kumar Jaipuria, CEO of Delhi International Airport Limited (DIAL).

The expansion work began in 2019 after the airport witnessed a massive surge in air traffic movement and passenger num-



The expanded Terminal 1 at the Delhi airport. PTI

bers, exceeding expectations. Currently, the airport is spread across three terminals. Terminal 2 has a capacity of 15 MPPA, while Terminal 3 has a capacity of 45 MPPA.

The expanded Terminal 1 will feature eight entry gates equipped with Digi-Yatra's facial recognition system, 20 automated tray retrieval systems, 100 check-in counters including 36 self-baggage drop kiosks, and 10 baggage reclaim carousels that will be able to handle 6,000 units

of baggage per hour.

The terminal will also have 24 entry points with realigned pick-up and drop-off lanes to ease vehicular traffic.

Once inside, passengers will be able to utilise shopping and dining facilities, a prayer room, a yoga area, a quiet zone, lounges, charging stations, a self-medication room, baby care rooms, smart washrooms and more, said DIAL, adding that the terminal will be well connected with Delhi Metro.

Demolition drive: U.P. Police pelted with stones

Press Trust of India
LUCKNOW

Residents of Lucknow's Akbar Nagar on Sunday allegedly clashed with the police, pelting them with stones during an anti-encroachment drive in the locality, officials said.

No one was injured in the incident.

The incident took place when a team of the Lucknow Development Authority, accompanied by the police, was demolishing three illegal commercial structures along Faizabad Road.

"While two structures were demolished, locals – spurred on by some rumour – started pelting the officials and the police with stones," Lucknow Development Authority Vice-Chairman Indramani Tripathi said. The official said some locals claimed that the debris from the demolished structures damaged their houses.

Professor, daughter found dead in Hisar

Press Trust of India
CHANDIGARH

A professor and his eight-year-old daughter were found dead in his office inside the campus of Lala Lajpat Rai University of Veterinary and Animal Sciences in Haryana's Hisar district on Sunday evening, the police said.

The deceased professor was identified as Sandeep Goyal, 35. The father-daughter duo's throats were found to have been slit, police said, adding that a probe was under way.

Timings	
DELHI	
MONDAY, MAR. 11	
RISE 06:35	SET 18:28
RISE 07:13	SET 19:42
TUESDAY, MAR. 12	
RISE 06:34	SET 18:28
RISE 07:47	SET 20:49
WEDNESDAY, MAR. 13	
RISE 06:33	SET 18:29
RISE 08:22	SET 21:58

Delhi Weather	max	min
Delhi City	28	10
Safdarjang	28	10
Palam	27	12

Delhi Palam Today
27°C A dry weather to prevail. Morning will be very cool with mist and haze. Day will be comfortable. Night also will be very cool.

Delhi Palam Tomorrow
28°C The weather will be dry. Morning will be very cool with mist and haze. Day will be comfortable. Night will be cool.

© Copyright Skymet Weather 2024
All rights reserved.

Narendra Modi
Prime Minister

Eknath Shinde
Chief Minister

Magnetic Maharashtra

- Maharashtra leads in attracting Foreign Direct Investment (FDI). In the financial year 2022-23, a total of Rs. 1,18,422 crore FDI was attracted, whereas, in a period of 9 months, i.e. from April 2023 to December 2023, a sum of Rs. 1,00,112 crore of investment was attracted in Maharashtra which will contribute to 30% of the Nation's FDI.
- A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to the tune of Rs. 3.73 lakh crore was signed at Davos in 2024 for investment in the sectors of Steel, IT, Green Energy, agriculture, logistics and electronics in the state. This will generate employment opportunities for 2 lakh persons.
- 12,326 loan cases were approved in the year 2022-23 through the Chief Minister Employment Generation Program. Whereas loans of Rs. 342 crore were approved for 14822 Entrepreneurs in the year 2023-24. Millions of youths have been provided with employment opportunities with these moves.
- The cabinet Sub-committee approved projects worth Rs. 1,27,675 crores in the state. This will further generate 1,62,500 employment opportunities.

- A Memorandum of Understanding is sign with 7 companies for producing Green Hydrogen. Rs. 2,76,300 crore of investment in this program will generate 64,000 employment opportunities.
- Export Policy of Maharashtra - 2023 and integrated sustainable Textile policy for the state is announced.
- New Information Technology Enabled Services Policy approved. This will attract Rs. 95,000 crore of investment.
- Maharashtra Industry, Trade and Investment Facilitation Cell (MAITRI), will enable 119 facilities for industries providing ease of access and faster services.
- 6 Logistic Parks will be installed in Maharashtra.
- Maharashtra is leading in defence manufacturing. Maharashtra is the first-ever state in the country to create a defence and aerospace policy. A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) worth Rs. 1358 crore in the defence manufacturing sector was signed at the Defence Expo.

VIKASIT BHARAT

VIKASIT MAHARASHTRA

Directorate General of Information and Public Relations, Government of Maharashtra | www.mahasamvad.in | MaharashtraDIGIPR | MahoDIGIPR

NEW DELHI MUNICIPAL COUNCIL PALIKA KENDRA: NEW DELHI CIVIL ENGG. ESTT.-II VACANCY CIRCULAR

The New Delhi Municipal Council proposes to fill-up 02 posts of Chief Engineer (Civil) on deputation basis initially for a period of 01 year in the Pay Scale of Rs. 1,31,100 - 2,16,600 level 13A in revised 7th CPC pay matrix. The eligibility criteria & other terms and conditions for the post may be downloaded from NDMC website i.e. www.ndmc.gov.in.

The last date for receipt of applications completed in all respect is **05.04.2024.**

Sd/-
Director (Personnel)

पंडित दीनदयाल उपाध्याय शेखावाटी विश्वविद्यालय, सीकर
Pandit Deendayal Upadaya Shekhawati University, Sikar
वेबसाईट: www.shekhawati.ac.in ई-मेल reg.shekhawati@gmail.com
क्रमांक: 22946-47 दिनांक: 10.03.2024

ADVERTISEMENT NO. 03/2024

Vacancies for Non-Teaching Staff (Clerical)

Online application are invited for vacant Non-Teaching posts of Clerical Staff-29 Posts in the University. Online application form, Qualifications and other details will be available on the University Website www.shekhawati.ac.in from 11th March, 2024. Last date for online submission of application forms is 10th April, 2024 till 11:59 PM Midnight.

Registrar

पंडित दीनदयाल उपाध्याय शेखावाटी विश्वविद्यालय, सीकर
Pandit Deendayal Upadaya Shekhawati University, Sikar
वेबसाईट: www.shekhawati.ac.in ई-मेल reg.shekhawati@gmail.com
क्रमांक: 22944-45 दिनांक: 10.03.2024

ADVERTISEMENT NO. 02/2024

Vacancies for Various Non-Teaching Staff (Officers)

Online application are invited for various vacant Non-Teaching posts of Controller of Examination - 01 Post, Deputy Registrar- 01 Post and Assistant Registrar- 02 Posts in the University. Online application form, Qualifications and other details will be available on the University Website www.shekhawati.ac.in from 11th March, 2024. Last date for online submission of application forms is 10th April, 2024 till 11:59 PM Midnight.

Registrar

पंडित दीनदयाल उपाध्याय शेखावाटी विश्वविद्यालय, सीकर
Pandit Deendayal Upadaya Shekhawati University, Sikar
वेबसाईट: www.shekhawati.ac.in ई-मेल reg.shekhawati@gmail.com
क्रमांक: 22942-43 दिनांक: 10.03.2024

ADVERTISEMENT NO. 01/2024

Vacancies for Various Teaching Posts

Online application are invited for various vacant teaching posts of Professor - 05 Posts, Associate Professor-10 Posts, Assistant Professor -15 Posts, Assistant Librarian-01 Post and Assistant Director-Physical Education- 01 Post in the University. Online application form, Qualifications and other details will be available on the University Website www.shekhawati.ac.in from 11th March, 2024. Last date for online submission of application forms is 10th April, 2024 till 11:59 PM Midnight.

Registrar

Join Magazine Group @ ₹60/m WhatsApp To 8969469464 Join Epaper Group @ ₹30/m WhatsApp To 8969469464



Not law, nor duty

Indians are being lured into fighting another country's war

The death of a second Indian in the Russia-Ukraine conflict, which the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) confirmed, is proof of the toll the situation is taking on Indians who have been lured into working with the Russian military. The story of dozens of Indians stuck at the frontlines of the war – it was broken in a series of reports by *The Hindu* – prompted government agencies to crack down on recruiters in India this week, with the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) raiding visa recruiters across India and filing cases against them for human trafficking and for duping people into travelling to Russia where they were coerced into dangerous jobs. Many of them were duped by online video advertisements that promised “safe jobs” with the military far from the frontlines, even indicating more lucrative jobs in the neighbouring European Schengen States. The MEA has now issued advisories and statements with appeals not to be “swayed” by such offers. After videos emerged of Indians stationed in areas seeing live action along the front between Russia and Ukraine in recently occupied territories, the government and India's Embassy in Moscow also said they are working with the Russian Army for early discharges to bring the Indians home.

The government's actions are much delayed and cold comfort to the families of the two men, from Surat and from Hyderabad, whose bodies are yet to be repatriated. Others have been seriously injured. What is most surprising is that the government has only spoken about the dangers of the Russian offers for military jobs now, when it is clear that the online ads and recruitments have been taking place for months. The government seems to have been made aware of the problem only after a Member of Parliament from Hyderabad wrote to the MEA in January, asking for assistance in bringing some of his constituents back. Since then, officials have given vague accounts of the numbers of those (“about 20”) who may have already travelled to danger zones. Now, after the CBI raids, they have identified at least 35 men. Accounts from those in Russia put the number at well over 100. The government needs to explain why it has not been able to make the case to bring back all the men more forcefully with the Russian authorities, despite good relations with Moscow. It has also dodged questions on why it has simultaneously green-lighted a massive recruitment drive to Israel, another conflict zone. A more structured, transparent and humane approach will be required to make it clear, domestically, and to partners abroad, that Indian lives matter. The priority is to bring them home safely, but also to ensure that others are not put in harm's way, driven by the difficult economic situation back home.

Crisis of time

Rapid growth, such as Bengaluru's, and short-termism cannot coexist

The Karnataka water crisis has affected more than 7,000 villages, 1,100 wards, and 220 talukas thus far. The problem encompasses Mandya and Mysuru districts, where a major Cauvery river watershed and the Krishnaraja Sagar dam are located, and both important sources of water to Bengaluru. While the capital has hogged the headlines, the effects of the crisis are wider. Reports have suggested that the distal cause is the ‘insufficient’ rainfall last year, following the surplus in 2022, and the resulting under-replenishment of the Cauvery. Erratic rainfall is not new to Karnataka. A Coffee Agro-forestry Network (CAFNET) project, a decade ago, assessed 60 years of data and found the rainy season over Kodagu had shrunk by two weeks in three decades while annual rainfall seemed to undulate in a 12-14-year cycle. Yet, the crisis now has come as a surprise thanks to Bengaluru's lack of preparation, a travesty for being one of India's wealthiest urban municipalities and home to many research institutions. Bengaluru consumes roughly 1,400 million litres a day each from the Cauvery and groundwater reserves. The groundwater recharge rate is much lower while the Cauvery's was compromised by last year's ‘deficient’ rain. These are deficits only relative to Bengaluru's demand. The situation is worse further away from the city's centre. This is ironic because these areas do not receive piped water from the Cauvery and depend on groundwater and water tankers, whereas the city was engineered for centuries until the 19th to move away from water from distant sources and towards its surfeit of lakes. Seasonal lakes have since dwindled, while perennial lakes have been strangled by concretisation and sewage.

Climate change is a crisis of time. It precipitates non-linear changes that lead to disproportionate, and sometimes irreversible, outcomes, forcing underprepared governments to mount rapid responses to forces that have been festering for decades. Even if the erratic rainfall is unrelated to climate change, the phenomenon only promises more unpredictability. In this regard, Bengaluru, and most Indian cities, will achieve little when they mount stopgap measures in the event of a crisis and drop the long-term view once the crisis has ended. Rapid growth, such as Bengaluru has had this century, and short-termism cannot coexist. There is a need for bipartisan solutions that transcend the change in government every five years; a circular water economy that maximises the utility of every litre, reducing the city's dependence on external sources; and, not to forget, a clean and healthy Cauvery.

Electoral bonds, the State Bank and the art of evasion

In a landmark judgment on February 15, 2024, a five-judge Bench of the Supreme Court of India declared the electoral bond scheme unconstitutional. This was a scheme which opened the floodgates of unlimited anonymous funding of political parties and consolidated the role of big money in the Indian political system.

Directive and response

To give “logical and complete effect” to its ruling, the top court put a stop to the issuance of electoral bonds, and gave the State Bank of India, or the SBI (the bank that was authorised to issue and encash the bonds), 21 days to disclose two sets of information to the Election Commission of India (ECI) to put up on its website. The first was details of the electoral bonds purchased since April 12, 2019, which would “include the date of purchase of each Electoral Bond, the name of the purchaser of the bond and the denomination of the Electoral Bond purchased”. The second was on details of electoral bonds redeemed by political parties for the same time frame. The Court ruled: “SBI must disclose details of each Electoral Bond encashed by political parties which shall include the date of encashment and the denomination of the Electoral Bond”.

Just two days before the expiry of the deadline laid down by the Court, the SBI filed an affidavit recording its inability to decode, compare and disclose the requisite data in the prescribed time period. The bank claimed that to protect donors' anonymity, details of purchase of bonds and of redemption were decoupled and stored in separate silos, and there was no central database. Further, it stated that some details such as the number of bonds were stored digitally, while others, such as the name of purchaser and KYC details, were stored physically. In order to



Anjali Bhardwaj

is a transparency activist associated with the National Campaign for Peoples' Right to Information (NCPRI) and the Satark Nagrik Sangathan (SNS)



Amrita Johri

is a transparency activist associated with the National Campaign for Peoples' Right to Information (NCPRI) and the Satark Nagrik Sangathan (SNS)

The voter needs to know the sources of financial contributions to parties well before she casts her vote in the general election

provide donor information, the date of issue of each bond would have to be checked and matched against the date of purchase by a particular donor. This information would then have to be matched against the bond redemption information – which makes up the second silo. According to the SBI, to re-match them would be a task requiring a significant amount of effort. Therefore, it sought an additional four months to comply with the Court's directions to submit the information.

The bank's affidavit

The absurdity of the SBI's request is best appreciated by examining the submissions made by the bank in its affidavit.

The affidavit states that since April 2019, a total of 22,217 electoral bonds were used to make donations to various political parties. Donor details were kept in a sealed cover at the designated branches of the SBI where the bonds could be transacted, and all such sealed covers were deposited in the main branch of the SBI in Mumbai. Further, at the time of redemption by political parties, the original bonds and the pay-in slips were stored in a sealed cover and also sent to the Mumbai branch.

Thus, it can be noted that the names of all purchasers of electoral bonds and the details of encashment of all bonds, including the name of the political party redeeming the bond, date and denomination of bond encashed are readily available at a single location, albeit in sealed covers. Further, since the date of issue and denomination of all electoral bonds are digitally recorded, this would also be accessible at the SBI's main branch in Mumbai. Surely, opening the sealed covers and matching the information would not be a herculean task!

The claim of the SBI, the largest public sector

bank in India, which serves 50 crore customers, that it needs four months to match purchaser and redeemer information for 22,217 electoral bonds is baffling.

It is not surprising, therefore, that the SBI's non-compliance with the directions of the Supreme Court is fuelling public suspicion that the bank is attempting to evade revealing donor identities before the general election 2024 is held.

The centrality of the voter's right to know

In its judgment, the Court held that the voter's right to information includes the right to know financial contributions to a political party because of its influence on electoral politics and on governmental decisions. The Court noted that contributions made by companies are purely business transactions made with the intent of securing benefits in return. That 94% of the electoral bonds, in value terms, were of the denomination of ₹1 crore is an indication of the quantum of corporate funding. The Court ruled that information about sources of political party funding would enable voters to assess if there is a correlation between policy making and financial contributions, and empower people to track quid pro quo.

Once again, it is up to the Supreme Court to call out the SBI's delaying tactics and uphold the voter's constitutional right to know under Article 19(1)(a). It needs to ensure that the timelines defined in the judgment for disclosing details of electoral bonds are adhered to, and voters are armed with this crucial information when they cast their vote in the general election. The Bench that was led by the Chief Justice of India had noted in its judgment that “information about funding to a political party is essential for a voter to exercise their freedom to vote in an effective manner.”

France's exceptional women, their imprint on diplomacy

March 4, 2024 will be a day to remember. It marks the inscription in the French Constitution, of the “freedom of women to voluntarily terminate a pregnancy”, making France the first country in the world to enshrine it as a constitutional right, 49 years after abortion became legal. At a moment when women's rights are under threat in many regions of the world, this decision also sends out a universal message of solidarity to women across the globe.

Groundbreaking work

To understand the history of women's rights in France, particularly the right to bodily autonomy, one has to go back to the year 1949 when French feminist icon Simone de Beauvoir published *The Second Sex*.

In the second volume of this very long book, which opens with the infamous statement-turned-feminist motto, “One is not born, but rather becomes, a woman”, Beauvoir dedicates an entire section to abortion in the chapter on motherhood. In this groundbreaking philosophical work, where she marries feminist thoughts with existential theories, the writer lays the theoretical groundwork for pro-choice advocacy. While challenging the reductionist image of a woman as a mother and caretaker, she champions women's right to the freedom of choice, which is essential to existentialism. According to her, “if a woman is to take charge of her biological destiny, if she is to give life on her terms, then she needs, in addition to contraception, a free, safe and legal abortion service available to her.”

She strongly criticises the hypocrisy of her times where innumerable women resort to abortion, yet have to do it clandestinely. Though abortion was largely practised during Beauvoir's times, a woman could be sentenced to up to five years of imprisonment. The absence of the right to abortion is part of the larger institutional oppression against women, which results from patriarchy. She states, “Free, safe and legal abortion should be available to every woman. The alternative to a legal abortion is a backstreet abortion, which often has dire consequences for women, such as haemorrhaging, septicemia, and death itself”. Her statement recalls the poignant autobiographical account by Nobel



Thierry Mathou

is the Ambassador of France to India

Prize winner for Literature Annie Ernaux in *L'Événement* where she narrates the story of her illegal abortion back in 1963. When *The Second Sex* was published in 1949, the text was an immediate success and translated into dozens of languages across the world, paving the way for the legalisation of abortion in France. In line with her philosophical beliefs, Beauvoir was living in an open relationship with French philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre, whom she never married nor had children with. Consequently, she was subjected to criticisms for her disruptive ideas and way of life.

A powerful petition

In 1971, Beauvoir penned the “Manifesto of the 343”, signed by 343 eminent women who opened up to publicly claim that they had had an abortion. The petition, published in the French social democratic magazine *Le Nouvel Observateur*, starts with this powerful statement, “One million women in France have abortions every year. Condemned to secrecy, they do so in dangerous conditions, while under medical supervision, this is one of the simplest procedures. Society is silencing these millions of women. I declare that I am one of them. I declare that I have had an abortion. Just as we demand free access to contraception, we demand the freedom to have an abortion.” This act of civil disobedience, laying bare the hypocrisy of a system while exposing themselves to potential prosecution, was instrumental in the adoption of the Veil law four years later, which decriminalised abortion for French women. It was named after the then Health Minister and women's rights icon Simone Veil.

The Second Sex remains, until today, a foundational book for modern feminism. It was first translated into Hindi in 1991, by Indian feminist and novelist, Prabha Khaitan, as *Stree Upekshita*, which translates literally as “The Neglecting of Women”. Well-versed in western and Indian philosophy, Khaitan had written extensively on existentialism. Nevertheless, there were several omissions and simplifications in the translation.

This is the reason why national award winning Hindi publisher Vani Prakashan decided to commission a new translation in 2022, with

There is great potential for France and India to further women's rights across the world

Monica Singh translating it directly from French. The first of the two volumes was recently released last month during the New Delhi World Book Fair, giving Hindi readers full and faithful access to the text.

This speaks of the long-lasting influence of Beauvoir and the esteem with which she is held by feminists worldwide. The fact that abortion has now become a fundamental right, enshrined in the French Constitution, owes much to Beauvoir.

This historic decision is also an occasion to remember another iconic champion of women's rights in Europe, Simone Veil, the revered French politician who survived the Nazi death camp at Auschwitz. She defied institutional sexism to push through the law legalising abortion in France in 1975 when she was Minister of Public Health, and became the first female leader of the European Parliament. Laid to rest at the Pantheon, she is among the eminent figures who still inspires all those who fight for women's rights all over the world. We hope that Simone Veil and Simone de Beauvoir feel proud of how France has carried forward their legacy.

A feminist foreign policy

The heritage of these exceptional women is reflected today in our work as diplomats: France champions a feminist foreign policy, with a dedicated strategy that seeks to mainstream the promotion of gender equality and the rights of women and girls in all its bilateral undertakings, development assistance, and advocacy in multilateral bodies. In 2021, France co-chaired the Generation Equality Forum, which was the most important international feminist event since the Beijing World Conference on Women in 1995, in partnership with civil society and young people.

India has historically made strong international commitments in favour of women's rights, including efforts to implement Sustainable Development Goal 5 (Gender equality), joining the 2019 Biarritz Partnership for Gender Equality, and, recently, gaining membership in the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women. I believe there is strong potential for France and India to do more together to further women's rights around the world.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Resignation of EC, impact

The resignation of the Election Commissioner (Page 1, March 10) will now focus on the nature and extent of the ‘working relationship’ between the government of the day and the Election Commission of India. Regardless of the degree of freedom the Election Commission enjoys under the present regime, it is essential that those who are entrusted with the responsibility of holding elections must realise that every citizen of this country wants an absolutely transparent electoral process at every stage. How fair the all-important Lok Sabha election is going to be ensured in these turbulent times remains to be seen.

A. Venkatasubramanian, Tiruchi, Tamil Nadu

Savagery on campus

The ‘Ground Zero’ page report (“Wires, belts and the death of a student”, March 9) was distressing to read. Irrespective of the political fallout of the issue and the CBI inquiry, we, as a society, need to ponder over the following. The distressing descriptions of the level of brutality that some students exhibited towards a fellow student make us wonder where we have gone wrong in raising the ‘next generation’. Such brutality is seen in times of war, where hatred is indoctrinated in the minds of the warring parties. But to treat a fellow student so mercilessly for alleged ‘misbehaviour’ is beyond comprehension. Or, is it that the boy's tormentors were under the influence of substances that destroy

rational thought? If this is the case, then drug peddling on campuses needs to be looked into. A government which is striving to bring in foreign varisities might well rethink how conducive an environment Kerala's politics-ridden campuses provide for foreign entry. This incident might well turn out to be a dampener to the government's efforts in that direction. The only solution is to allow the investigative agencies to conduct a fair inquiry and mete out the severest punishment to the guilty. Only then can India's most literate State show itself to be ranking somewhere in the humanity index.

Sharada Sivaram, Emakulam, Kerala

I am an 80-year-old reader

and the report made me ill. I could not eat. Are we educating students or are we raising barbarians?

M.S. Nair, Palakkad, Kerala

The tragic incident is a stark reminder of the urgent need to root out this ‘tradition’ or ‘campus ritual’. Ragging, often dismissed as harmless fun, can have serious consequences, as this case demonstrates. It not only affects the physical and mental well-being of students but also undermines the very essence of a healthy academic environment. It is imperative for educational institutions to take strict measures to prevent ragging. This includes implementing anti-ragging policies, raising

awareness about its consequences, and providing support systems for victims and survivors. Additionally, students must be encouraged to report incidents of ragging without fear of reprisal.

Anita George, Thevara, Kerala

It is disheartening to witness the recurrence of incidents related to ragging, despite so-called preventive measures being in place. It is crucial for educational institutions to foster a safe and inclusive environment that promotes learning and mutual respect.

Krishna R. Nair, Thevara, Kerala

I write this letter as professor and chairman of the department of biochemistry and

microbiology in a college of science and technology in Kerala. The case is shocking, and is one that shames humanity and corrodes the values and purpose of education. Even more baffling is the vice-chancellor, dean and faculty members turning a blind eye. The existing University Grant Commission's ‘Regulations on Curbing the Menace of Ragging’ lack teeth. Stringent sections under the Indian Penal Code must be invoked against the perpetrators of such brutal crimes, which must serve as a deterrent to others.

Dr. Biju C. Mathew, Thiruvananthapuram

Letters emailed to letters@thehindu.co.in must carry the full postal address and the full name or the name with initials.

We need limits on election campaign spending

During the run up to the general elections to Lok Sabha of 2004, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)-led government put out advertisements with the tag line 'India Shining.' The campaign led to a controversy over the use of public money. Reports state that an estimated ₹150 crore was spent for this campaign, arguably one of the biggest government-sponsored advertisement campaigns until then. Over the past two decades, this trend has caught up with both Central and State governments spending a lot on advertisements before elections to the Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assemblies.



Rangarajan R.
is a former IAS officer and author of 'Polity Simplified'. He trains civil-service aspirants at 'Officers IAS Academy'. Views are personal

Limits on spending

In a democratic country, it is essential for a government to spread awareness about its schemes and policies. In the first few decades in independent India, this was primarily done through public meetings. In the last three decades, awareness has been spread through advertisements on print and electronic media, which have a wide reach. However, at present, government advertisements published or broadcast before elections tend to be campaigns of the ruling party and establish personality cults. According to the Information and Broadcasting Ministry, the Central government had spent ₹3,020 crore on advertisements between 2018-19 and 2022-23. It must be noted that the amount spent was significantly higher at ₹1,179 crore during the election year of 2018-19 as against ₹408 crore in 2022-23. This expenditure is likely to rise in 2023-24 as the general elections are due in April-May. The Supreme Court through its orders in May 2015 and March 2016 laid down guidelines for the regulation of government advertisements. Even then, ruling governments have an advantage before elections when it comes to publishing advertisements that disturb the level playing field.

A famous quote from *Hamlet* goes, 'more honoured in the

breach than in the observance'. That is meant for customs and laws that are better off being ignored than being followed. In the Indian electoral context, however, it has become a norm to breach the limits on election expenditure. In fact, this breach is considered as one of the essential traits for winning an election.

The election expenditure limit for candidates is ₹95 lakh per Lok Sabha constituency in larger States and ₹75 lakh in smaller States. It is an open secret that candidates of all major political parties breach this limit by a wide margin even when we do not consider the illegal distribution of cash and gifts to voters. In States notorious for this corrupt electoral practice, the official limit is not even a fraction of the actual election expenditure.

In India, there are no limits on the expenditure of political parties during elections. The official expenditure declared by the BJP and Congress for the 2019 elections was ₹1,264 crore and ₹820 crore, respectively. However, a report by the Centre for Media Studies (CMS) states that political parties spent about ₹50,000 crore during the elections with the BJP spending about 50% of this amount and the Congress about 20%. The report suggests that 35% of this money was spent on campaigns, while 25% was distributed amongst voters illegally. Most of this funding comes from corporate houses and businessmen. This creates an unholy nexus between donors and elected representatives.

The elections in other large democracies such as the U.S. and U.K. have also become costly affairs. However, it is the opaque nature of most of the donations coupled with the distribution of cash for votes that weakens the process of free and fair elections in India. The Supreme Court has struck down the electoral bonds scheme that will remove opacity in legal donations. But this is akin to putting a band-aid on a bullet wound as the majority of the

funding continues to be in unaccounted cash.

Towards a level playing field

The Indrajit Gupta Committee (1998) and the Law Commission report (1999) advocated state funding of elections. This means that the government will contribute money to political parties or candidates for them to contest elections. The feasibility and mechanism for implementing this measure is doubtful in the present context. It requires consensus among all the political parties and discipline in following the norms of such state funding.

Nevertheless, the issue of the burgeoning cost of elections can be sidestepped only at our own peril. The CMS pegs the likely expenditure during the 2024 general elections at ₹1 lakh crore. In this regard, certain practicable steps for creating a level playing field and ensuring free and fair elections can be implemented if there is political will. These are based on the report, 'Proposed Electoral Reforms', submitted by the Election Commission of India in 2016. First, government advertisements should be banned six months prior to any general election. Second, the law must be amended to state that a party's 'financial assistance' to its candidate should also be within the limits of election expenditure prescribed for a candidate. Third, there should be a ceiling on expenditure by parties. This may be kept at not more than the expenditure ceiling limit provided for a candidate multiplied by the number of candidates of the party contesting the election. Finally, additional judges can be appointed in High Courts for speedy disposal of election-related cases that would act as a deterrent against the violation of norms.

These reforms would require bipartisan political support to be effected. However, unless they are implemented, the massive expenses of election spectacles will be borne by us, 'We the people'.

The jobs crisis spells trouble for Jagan

Protesters have been demanding to know why his promises remain unkept

STATE OF PLAY

P. Sujatha Varma
pothuri.varma@thehindu.co.in

In December 2018, Y. S. Jagan Mohan Reddy, who was in the Opposition then, said that there were 2.3 lakh government jobs in the State, which he would fill immediately if voted to power. He empathised with the "woeful plight" of the thousands of young people, who, he said, had been let down by the Telugu Desam Party (TDP) government which had released a DSC (District Selection Committee) notification to fill 7,000 teacher posts against the 23,000 vacant posts in the State. Mr. Reddy promised to end their wait and release a 'mega DSC' filling all the vacant posts, if elected. He also assured them that he would release a job calendar on the first day of January every year.

None of this happened. As a result, Mr. Reddy faces the wrath of the unemployed youth in the State ahead of the elections. Besides, there is growing disillusionment from other quarters. For instance, Mr. Reddy has not restored the Old Pension Scheme, which he had promised to do, while campaigning for the 2019 elections.

After a series of protests by student and youth organisations for the promised job calendar and DSC notification, the YSR Congress government recently announced a DSC to recruit 6,100 teachers in State-run schools. This sparked anger. Young people took to the streets calling the 'mega DSC' a "grand betrayal and a sham". They said that the government released the notification just before the elections knowing fully well that the recruitment process cannot be



completed before the code of conduct comes into effect.

The Periodic Labour Force Survey, conducted by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, shows that Andhra Pradesh had the highest unemployment rate (24%) among graduates between July 2022 and June 2023. The job crisis has provided an opportunity to the Opposition parties to attack the government. TDP leaders say there is growing frustration among young job-seekers, who are forced to leave the State in search of employment opportunities.

Mr. Reddy's sister, who is president of the Andhra Pradesh Congress, launched a scathing attack on him for "taking the youth of the State for a ride". She recalled how former Chief Minister Y.S. Rajasekhara Reddy, or YSR, who was her father, had released a mega DSC to recruit 52,000 teachers in the State. She said that her brother claimed to be YSR's successor but had failed to follow in his footsteps. The Congress went on a 'Chalo Secretariat' protest, which was foiled by the police. Nevertheless, it has managed to grab public attention by highlighting the problem.

Aspirants of jobs in the police department are also upset; they say Mr. Reddy has not fulfilled his promise of filling the 26,000 vacant posts by notifying 6,500 posts annually on Police Commemoration Day.

Following their protest, the government released a notification for 6,511 posts. The written exam to recruit 6,100 constables and 411 sub-inspectors was held on February 22, 2023, but the aspirants are still waiting to be called for the physical exam.

There are a few posts of librarians in the College Education wing and a few posts in the Women and Child Welfare Department which are waiting to be filled through the Andhra Pradesh Public Service Commission. Aspirants say the Commission did not issue the notification even after the posts were sanctioned by the Finance Department.

Vexed with the government's apathy, members of the Andhra Pradesh Unemployed Joint Action Committee have embarked on a State-wide yatra to console the unemployed youth. They have been visiting universities and libraries to speak to the youth about the existing job scenario and to ask them to share their experiences so they can convey these to the government. They have also been insisting that the number of posts in the DSC be increased to fill the 2.32 lakh vacant posts in various government departments; that the age limit of candidates seeking jobs in the general category be increased to 47 years; and that changes be made in the date of either the DSC exam or the Group-I prelims test, as both are scheduled on March 17. They have also demanded the withdrawal of cases booked against job-seekers for participating in agitations.

On its part, the government claims that it has provided 6,38,087 jobs in its tenure. But the climate of discontent spells trouble for Mr. Reddy who has made more promises that he can fulfil.

A possible solution for Bengaluru's water crisis

Rainwater harvesting could make a dent on the freshwater needs of the city, but it pales in comparison to wastewater

DATA POINT

Rashmi Kulranjan & Shashank Palur

As Bengaluru grows further outwards and faster than it can cope, water supply is one of the first casualties. Attempting to piece together the puzzle - where Bengaluru's water comes from, where it is stored, who consumes it, where the wastewater goes - is an essential first step to reduce the city's vulnerability to floods and drought. We zoom into four different aspects to do this.

The city's population increased from 8.7 million in 2011 to about 12.6 million in 2021 (projected). Most of the growth has been in the periphery (Maps 1 and 2).

We estimate that the total demand for freshwater is approximately 2,632 million litres per day (MLD), which is higher than what is officially supplied through the Cauvery and through groundwater sources. Water from Cauvery that is used for the city's needs has increased from 940 MLD to 1,460 MLD in the same period which, after subtracting losses, only serves half the demand. In addition, Bengaluru consumes an estimated 1,392 MLD of groundwater. This is worrying because groundwater recharge rates remain significantly lower than extraction rates.

Bengaluru recorded an above-average rainfall in 2022 while 2023 ended in a deficit. As the rainfall levels dropped, so did the groundwater level, and the periphery was impacted the most (Map 3).

As the water table drops, these areas now face borewell failures. Moreover, as shown in Map 4, many areas in the periphery don't yet have access to piped supply.

Bengaluru was not always dependent on pipelines or borewells. Most of its water bodies were originally 'tanks', rainwater harvesting structures constructed mainly to serve irrigation and livestock. The undulating terrain of the city al-

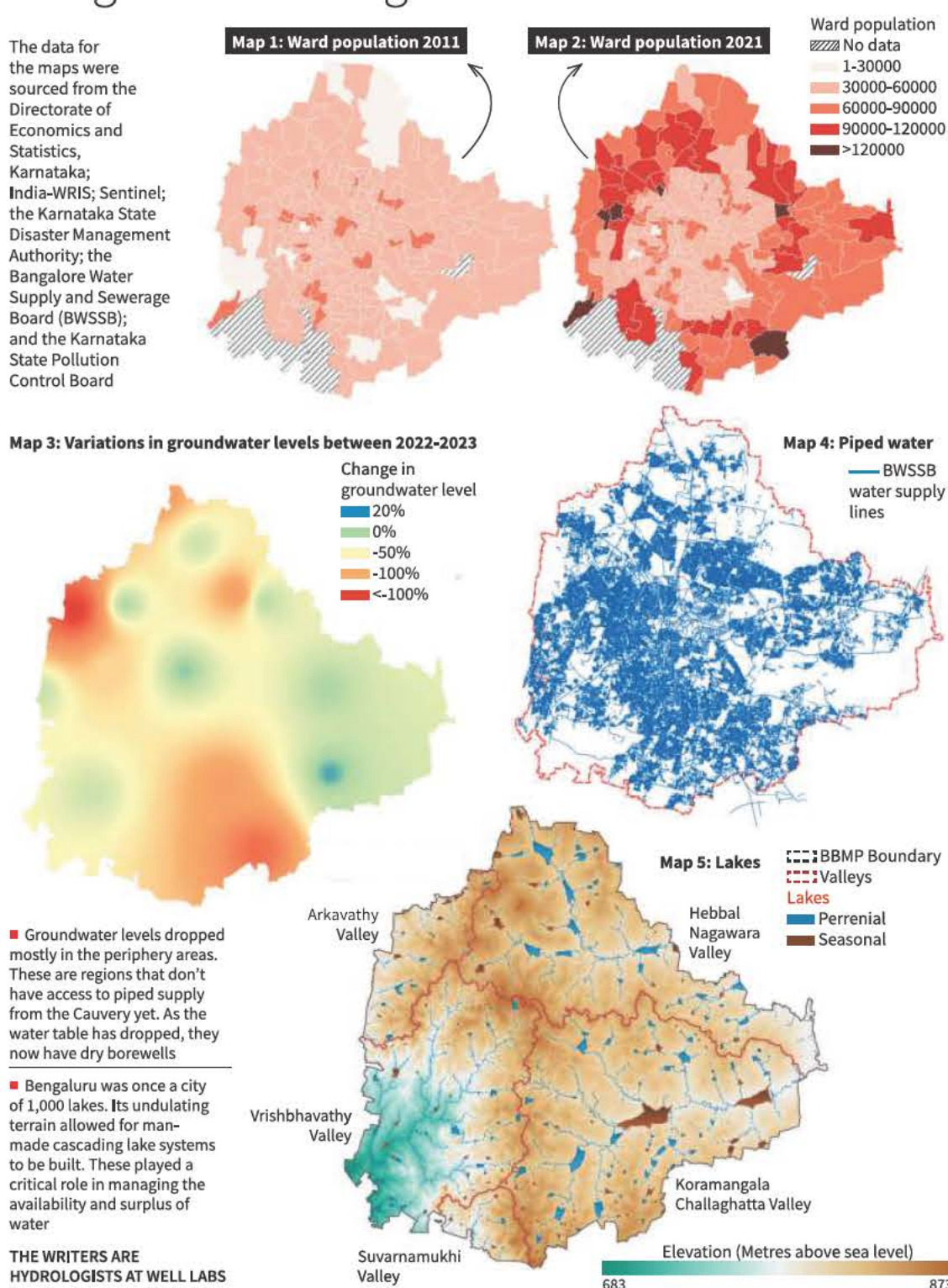
lowed for man-made cascading lake systems, which played a critical role in water supply. When piped water supply was introduced, lakes began to lose importance. Today, with rapid urbanisation, lakes have either been directly encroached upon or are drying out as the connections between them are lost. This has not only resulted in a more parched city but also aggravated the risk of flooding. The lakes and storm water drains have also become a dumping ground for sewage from the buildings around them and in their catchment, affecting the possibility of them being used to capture rainwater or storm water.

The maximum volume available to be held in lakes is about 41,600 million litres, but through a model we developed, we estimate that about 1,000 million litres of sewage is released into lakes every day making it unsuitable for use as a source of water. In Map 5 (for Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike alone), we differentiate between perennial and seasonal lakes. Most of the water bodies in the city were once seasonal, meaning they captured and stored rainfall. The ones that are left are now largely perennial as a result of sewage entering them and keeping them full throughout the year.

Rainwater harvesting could make a dent on the freshwater needs of the city but it pales in comparison to wastewater. Currently, only one third of the city's wastewater is redirected for external reuse, which means it is taken to Kolar, Chikkaballapur, and Devanahalli where it is used to replenish both groundwater and surface water sources. The remaining water flows into lakes and runs off land to join rivers downstream. This means the huge quantum of wastewater generated in the city is an untapped resource. Once treated to the required quality, wastewater can significantly mitigate freshwater consumption and can be crucial in making the city water resilient during low rainfall years.

Bengaluru bursting at the seams

The data for the maps were sourced from the Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Karnataka; India-WRIS; Sentinel; the Karnataka State Disaster Management Authority; the Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSSB); and the Karnataka State Pollution Control Board



FROM THE ARCHIVES

The *Hindu*

FIFTY YEARS AGO MARCH 11, 1974

Poor nations' inestimable gift to the rich

United Nations, March 10: The UN Secretary-General, Kurt Waldheim says that deprived of immigrant doctors and nurses from developing countries, "Large segments of the hospital systems of the United States and the United Kingdom would collapse."

In a new report on the "Brain Drain", he adds that the United States, Britain and Canada, as the Chief recipients of such medical personnel, are actually "receiving a gift from the developing countries" worth hundreds of millions of dollars a year. He explains these countries get people trained to perform "critically important medical service" without having to pay for their training, because they have already been educated back home.

"It costs about \$50,000 to train a physician in the United States" he points out. "Some 7,000 foreign physicians were admitted to the United States in 1972."

At that rate, it would have cost \$350 million to turn out the American doctors that would have been needed had the foreigners not come in.

Dr. Waldheim suggests some guidelines for stopping the brain drain: the developing countries should check immigration and tax nationals who insist on studying abroad after being educated at Government expense. The developing nations also should be compensated by the developed countries for the trained personnel they supply.

Dr. Waldheim's report, prepared at the request of the General Assembly with the help of a group of experts, will come up in the UN Committee on Science and Technology and Development, which begins a 19-day session here to-morrow.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO MARCH 11, 1924

Devil dancers at Wembley

London, March 10: In the Commons to-day Lient-Colonel James drew attention to attempts at Darjeeling to recruit a troupe of Lama Devil dancers to perform at the Wembley Exhibition. He declared that the proposal was arousing strong religious resentment and suggested that steps should be taken to see that religious susceptibilities were not outraged by the engagement of the troupe. Professor Richards replied that he was enquiring of the Government of India of this matter.

Text & Context

THE HINDU

NEWS IN NUMBERS

The worth of Indian equities bought by FPIs in March

6,139 in ₹ crore. Foreign Portfolio Investors are turning steady buyers so far this month, driven by market resilience, economic growth and decline in U.S. bond yields. PTI

Combined market valuation of seven of top-10 valued firms

71,301 in ₹ crore. The market valuation of seven of the top-10 valued firms climbed in the holiday-shortened last week, with Airtel emerging as the lead gainer. PTI

The share of India's population requiring assistive technologies

18 in percentage. India's growing need for Assistive Technologies (ATs) to cope with disabilities and chronic illnesses was highlighted by Dr R. K. Srivastava, former director general of health services at the Health Ministry. PTI

Number of cases settled in first National Lok Adalat of 2024

1.13 in crore. The National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) successfully organised the first National Lok Adalat of 2024 in the taluks, districts and high courts of 34 States and Union Territories. PTI

Number of children kidnapped in Nigeria's school abduction

15 Armed men raided a boarding school in northwestern Nigeria, kidnapping sleeping children just 48 hours after another incident where nearly 300 students were taken hostage. AP
COMPILED BY THE HINDU DATA TEAM

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

Introducing a new toll collection system

How will the recently proposed highway tolling system work? Will it be based on the U.S.'s Global Positioning System? Will it be mandatory for all vehicles to fit an on-board unit device? What about the FASTags collection system?

EXPLAINER

Jagriti Chandra

The story so far:

Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari said in Parliament in February that the government plans to implement a new highway toll collection system based on the global navigation satellite system before the model code of conduct for the 2024 election kicks in.

What is the new proposed highway tolling system?

The global navigation satellite system is a term used to refer to any satellite-based navigation system, including the United States' Global Positioning System (GPS). It uses a large constellation of satellites to provide more accurate location and navigation information to users globally as compared to the GPS alone.

An official of the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways explained that its implementation will involve an On-Board Unit (OBU), or a tracking device, fitted inside a vehicle whose location can be mapped using GAGAN, the Indian satellite navigation system with an approximate accuracy of 10 metres. The co-ordinates of the entire length of the country's national highways will have to be logged with the help of digital image processing, and software will be used to assign the toll rate on a particular highway, calculate the toll amount for a vehicle as per the distance travelled by it and then deduct it from a wallet linked to the OBU. The system will additionally have gantries, or arches mounted with CCTV cameras, at various points on a highway for enforcement purposes. These will capture an image of the vehicle's high security registration plate and cross verify if a road user is trying to trick the system by either removing the tracking device or travelling without an OBU onboard.

The Ministry official further explained that the aim of the technology is to



A complete overhaul: Toll collection on the Bengaluru-Mysuru Expressway in 2023. FILE PHOTO

provide users the benefit of paying toll only for the actual distance travelled on a highway, or pay-as-you-use. The government also hopes that it will eventually allow barrier-free movement.

What are some of the challenges?

One of the major challenges posed by this technology is that of recovering the toll amount if a road user fails to clear his payment after completing a journey on a highway, for instance, if the digital wallet linked with the OBU is empty.

Because there are no barriers involved that can stop a non-compliant vehicle, there are other issues such as when a

vehicle travels on a highway without an OBU device linked or the OBU device is deliberately switched off to avoid payment or if a car's OBU is installed on a truck to pay less toll. Gantry-mounted Automatic Number-Plate Recognition (ANPR)-based systems for capturing violations have to be set up on highways across India. However, no such infrastructure exists in the country today.

Further, the success of an ANPR system depends on the quality of the licence plates, which are currently limited to a few cities and States. The government will also have to amend the National Highways Fee (Determination of Rates and

Collection) Rules in order to provide for the recovery of unpaid toll, define offences as well as require the necessity of an OBU in vehicles.

How does it safeguard privacy?

In response to a question on how the government plans to safeguard privacy of vehicle users, the Ministry official said that firstly, it had decided to use the GAGAN satellite system and not GPS, which is owned by the U.S., to ensure data security within the country. The official added that although the concept was still a work in progress, the Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023 passed in Parliament last year will address privacy concerns. The law had received flak from civil society for the widening of exemptions granted to government agencies that may facilitate increased state surveillance.

Will FASTags be discontinued?

The new tolling system will co-exist with the FASTag-based toll collection as the government has not yet taken a decision on whether OBUs will be made mandatory for all vehicles or only for new vehicles. Minister Gadkari has been speaking about implementing satellite-based toll collection since 2020, even though radio frequency identification based FASTags for toll collection was rolled out from 2016 and made mandatory only from February 16, 2021. Over the years a robust compliance has been achieved. By December 2023, 98.9% of vehicles passing through toll fee plazas at national highways were FASTag compliant. Toll collection increased 1.5 times from ₹17,942 crore in 2016-2017 to ₹27,744 crore in 2020-2021 at National Highway fee plazas due to a multitude of factors, which included rising number of vehicles as well as revision in tolls and adoption of FASTags. However, officials say that the global navigation satellite system involves lower operational cost as compared to FASTags due to absence of toll plazas and less number of entities in the toll collection process.

THE GIST

Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari said in Parliament last week that the government plans to implement a new highway toll collection system based on the global navigation satellite system.

Its implementation will involve an On-Board Unit (OBU), or a tracking device, fitted inside a vehicle whose location can be mapped using GAGAN, the Indian satellite navigation system with an approximate accuracy of 10 metres.

The new tolling system will co-exist with the FASTag-based toll collection as the government has not yet taken a decision on whether OBUs will be made mandatory for all vehicles or only for new vehicles.

Why did the EU impose a €1.8 billion fine on Apple?

What was Spotify's complaint against the company? How did Apple violate anti-trust provisions?

Nabeel Ahmed

The story so far:

On March 5, the European Commission imposed its first anti-trust penalty against Apple for unfairly favouring Apple Music over its rivals. The €1.8 billion (\$1.95 billion) anti-trust fine concludes the commission's nearly four-year long investigation following a complaint from Spotify accusing the company of purposely not disclosing to customers alternative options to pay for their streaming music subscriptions.

What did the commission find?

The EU's anti-trust regulator found that Apple unfairly favoured its own music streaming service by banning rivals like Spotify from telling users, and failing to include links, about cheaper subscription options available outside of the App Store. Apple charges up to 30% commission on purchases made through its App Store. It won't receive this fee if the user makes

the payment directly on the app's website. The regulator noted that Apple muzzled music streaming apps from informing iOS users about alternative and cheaper music subscription services available on their websites.

What is the significance of the fine?

While having a dominant market position is not illegal in the EU, the penalty in this case highlights the bloc's seriousness in handling corporations that abuse their dominant market positions. This is also one of the biggest fines levied against a major tech company in the EU. Further, under the provisions of the EU's anti-trust laws, the fine exposes Apple against companies affected by anti-competitive behaviour. This means that anyone affected by Apple's anti-competitive behaviour in this case may bring the matter before the courts of the EU states and seek damages. This decision comes at a time when Apple is overhauling its app marketplace to comply with Europe's Digital Markets Act (DMA) to allow

third-party apps on iOS devices.

Which law did Apple violate?

The regulator concluded that Apple's anti-steering provisions, that include Apple not allowing app developers to steer users towards alternative payment options, amounted to "unfair trading" conditions, in breach of provisions under the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU). The regulator found Apple to have violated Article 102 of the TFEU and Article 54 of the European Economic Area Agreement that prohibit the abuse of a dominant position. The fine comes months after the EU implemented the DMA to put an end to unfair practices by tech companies that act as "gatekeepers" in the online space. Apple will now be barred from applying anti-steering provisions on any iOS apps under the bloc's competition reforms, as it has been designated a gatekeeper. Companies in the EU risk fines of up to 10% of their global turnover for anti-trust violations. In the event of repeated

violations, the fine can be extended up to 20%. In a sharp response to the fine, Apple released a statement in which it attacked the EU, claiming enforcers failed to uncover "any credible evidence of consumer harm, and ignored the realities of the market that is thriving, competitive, and growing fast." Apple further said that there was "no evidence of anti-competitive behaviour", and that the investigations did not yield a viable theory explaining how it thwarted competition in a thriving market. The iPhone maker said that though it respects the Commission's decision, the facts do not support it [the ruling], and as such Apple will be appealing the decision.

Which other companies are facing anti-trust investigations?

In December last year, Apple offered to let rivals access its tap-and-go mobile payments system used for mobile wallets in a bid to settle EU anti-trust charges. The investigation charged Apple with curbing rival's access to its tap-and-go technology, Near-Field Communication (NFC), making it difficult for them to develop rival services on Apple devices. A long-running investigation into Google found that the company gave its own shopping recommendations an illegal advantage over rivals in search results. In December 2022, the European Commission informed Meta that they believe the company has breached EU anti-trust rules by distorting competition in the market for online classified ads.

THE GIST

On March 5, the European Commission imposed its first anti-trust penalty against Apple for unfairly favouring Apple Music over its rivals.

The regulator concluded that Apple's anti-steering provisions, that include Apple not allowing app developers to steer users towards alternative payment options, amounted to "unfair trading" conditions, in breach of provisions under the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.

A long-running investigation into Google found that the company gave its own shopping recommendations an illegal advantage over rivals in search results.

CACHE



REUTERS

What are the factors pushing Bitcoin to a new all-time high?

What was behind the crypto asset's sudden surge in price? What does the new all-time high price mean for the sector? Will Bitcoin's price keep rising? What is meant by Bitcoin halving? And is it a good idea to invest in cryptocurrencies?

Sahana Venugopal

The story so far:

On March 5, Bitcoin, the largest cryptocurrency by market capitalisation, broke its previous price record to hit a new all-time high of \$69,170.63, according to the CoinMarketCap live tracker. The last high was \$68,789.63, which Bitcoin achieved in November 2021. After this event in 2021, the coin crashed to multi-year lows and the crypto market was battered by company collapses and regulatory hits.

What are the factors behind Bitcoin's rise in price?

Multiple factors could have contributed to Bitcoin's price gains this year.

The market is recovering from the shock of Russia's invasion of Ukraine that started in 2022, as well as the collapse of cryptocurrencies LUNA/UST and the subsequent fall of trading platforms such as FTX that same year.

In addition to a market recovery, the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), known for taking strong legal action against crypto companies, approved the first spot exchange traded funds (ETFs) for Bitcoin. This move told cautious investors as well as financial

institutions that the regulatory landscape was perhaps beginning to open up, and it encouraged more traditional investors to explore the world of blockchain-based assets. According to CoinShares' Digital Asset Fund Flows weekly report released on Monday, Bitcoin alone saw \$1.73 billion in inflows. The total inflows came to \$1.84 billion across digital asset investment products in general, showing just how dominant Bitcoin is.

Furthermore, Bitcoin investors and traders are preparing for the Bitcoin halving event predicted for this April. Many investors and analysts believe this engineered scarcity mechanism will help drive up the price of the cryptocurrency. This sense of expectation and hype usually encourages investors to buy more Bitcoin, and can help push prices up.

What is the Bitcoin halving?

The Bitcoin halving takes place about every four years and sees the crypto mining reward cut in half. While this may sound like a loss rather than a cause for price rises, there is more to the process.

Bitcoin miners use advanced computer equipment and enter an energy-intensive race in order to digitally "mine" their coins. This means they get some Bitcoin as a reward for helping the blockchain grow by processing other users'

transactions. While the mining reward is currently 6.25 BTC, this will be halved around April so that fewer coins are introduced into the crypto economy.

Bitcoin has a maximum supply of 21 million BTC, and more than 19 million coins are already in circulation. The halving tightens this process so that the coins will continue to be released at slower and slower rates, likely extending into the next century as well.

The Bitcoin halving is meant to automatically keep the asset scarce, based on mathematics principles. This is unlike paper money, which can be printed on the basis of human decisions.

What should new crypto investors know?

The dangers of volatility cannot be stressed enough.

New investors who are buying Bitcoin or other blockchain-based assets must know just how quickly they can lose their hard-earned money.

For instance, Bitcoin hit a daily high of \$69,170.63 on March 5, while the 24-hour low was \$59,323.91 – roughly a \$10,000 difference. This means looking away from your device for even just a few minutes can drastically change your fortune. When Bitcoin reaches new high prices, many speculators usually sell their assets

to exit the market with what they have, or they buy the assets at a profit again after prices fall.

What is the market like for the second largest cryptocurrency?

Bitcoin's market cap is more than \$1 trillion this week, making it the leading crypto. Second in line is Ethereum, with a currency called Ether (or ETH for short). However, Ethereum's market cap was less than \$500 billion this week.

While Bitcoin's origin and founder (or founders) are largely a mystery, Ethereum has a relatively more corporate structure, though developers worldwide are free to participate in its ecosystem that is known for enabling self-executing commands called smart contracts. People can also establish their own crypto tokens using Ethereum's underlying infrastructure, or build other blockchain services.

Ether used to be digitally mined like Bitcoin, but the platform has switched to the less energy-hungry 'proof-of-stake' model as it continues to grow.

Ether prices tend to echo those of Bitcoin, so ETH also enjoyed a lift this week as Bitcoin hit its all-time high. Ether crossed the \$3,900 threshold, but it is yet to beat its all-time high price of \$4,891.70 from November 16, 2021, as per CoinMarketCap.

THE DAILY QUIZ

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

Last week, the cricketing world witnessed four players appearing in their 100th Test on successive days. A quiz about players who have played 100 or more Test matches

Soorya Prakash. N

QUESTION 1

Who was the first ever player to appear in 100 Test matches?

QUESTION 2

Who is the only player to have played his entire career consecutively without missing any Tests?

QUESTION 3

Who is the only player to have led his country in more than 100 Test matches?

QUESTION 4

Who is the only player to have scored a century in each innings in his 100th Test?

QUESTION 5

Who are the two players to have scored a double century in their 100th Test?

QUESTION 6

Among the 80 players to have played 100 Test matches, there is an interesting connection between Kapil Dev and Sachin Tendulkar and Shane Warne and Graeme Smith. What is it?

QUESTION 7

These two players played not only their first and 100th Test matches against the same opponent but also at the same ground. Name them.



Visual question:

These two players have achieved something unique in their batting record. Identify the players and the feat. THE HINDU ARCHIVES

Questions and Answers to the March 8 edition of the daily quiz:

1. This political leader is a two-time Chief Minister and was the face of her party in this north India State. **Ans: Vasundhara Raje**

2. The first woman Prime Minister of the first self-governing country in the world to grant women the right to vote came to power in this year. **Ans: Jenny Shipley; 1997**

3. In 2022, Francia Márquez became the first person of the African-Colombian community to become the Vice-President of this country. **Ans: Colombia**

4. Ellen Johnson Sirleaf was the first female President of Ghana. True or False. **Ans: False, she was the head of Liberia**

5. The current Prime Minister and the leader of the largest Opposition party are both women in this country. **Ans: Italy**

Visual: Identify this leader. **Ans: Sucheta Kripalani, Uttar Pradesh**
Early Birds: Raju A.Gopal | Prashant Nain | Jagrati Shukla | Rajmohan. V | Animesh Mohan



KNOW YOUR ENGLISH

His ingenious idea helped the company

I found myself in a pickle because I could not solve the problem even though I said I could

S. Upendran

What is the meaning and origin of 'in a pickle'? (C. Narayanan, Chennai) This is an idiom which is not heard often nowadays. When you say you are in a pickle, what you are suggesting is that you are in big trouble; as there is no immediate solution to the problem, you will continue to be in the unpleasant or sticky situation for some time to come. Other variants of the expression are 'be in a right pickle' and 'be in a pretty pickle'.

I was in a pickle when the university decided to stop funding my project.

Several explanations have been put forward regarding the origin of the idiom. The following is one of them. As Indians, when we hear the word pickle, what comes to mind immediately is the fruit we use to make them – mango, lime, tomato, etc. In the past, for most Europeans, it was a vegetable – primarily, the cucumber. What is of interest to note is that it is neither the fruit nor the vegetable that the word 'pickle' refers to. According to scholars, the Dutch word 'pekel', from which we get our modern 'pickle', referred to the brine or the salty solution in which the vegetable/fruit was immersed for a considerable period of time. In most cases, the brine consisted of vinegar, salt, sugar, and water, and it was this which helped preserve the vegetable and give it a sour taste. So, when you say you are in a pickle, what you are suggesting is, like the vegetable, you are floating around in a bottle of brine – not a very pleasant place to be!

What is the difference between 'ingenious' and 'ingenuous'? (Prakash Chaudhary, Jodhpur)

The second syllable in 'ingenious' rhymes with 'bean', 'dean' and 'seen'; while in the case of 'ingenuous', it rhymes with 'pen', 'ten' and 'hen'. The words are pronounced 'in-JEAN-i-es' and 'in-JEN-yu-es' respectively; both words have the stress on the second syllable.

'Ingenious' comes from the Latin 'ingeniosus' meaning 'clever, gifted with genius'; it is mostly used nowadays to describe someone who comes up with clever ideas and is capable of inventing things. This creative talent that the individual has is inborn. The word can be used with things as well. For example, when you talk about someone's ingenious plan, what you are suggesting is that the plan is brilliant.

Shoba is ingenious when it comes to finding reasons to postpone things.

The word 'ingenuous' comes from the Latin 'ingenuus' meaning 'frank, candid'. An 'ingenuous' individual is a trusting person; he speaks his mind, and never attempts to hide anything. Being childlike in his approach to life, he is incapable of deceit. The word carries with it the sense that the person is rather naive.

upendrankye@gmail.com

Word of the day

Assuage:

cause to be more favourably inclined; gain the good will of; satisfy (thirst); provide physical relief, as from pain

Synonyms: conciliate, pacify, placate, appease, quench, allay, relieve, alleviate

Usage: *I couldn't do anything to assuage his grief.*

Pronunciation: bit.ly/assuagepro

International Phonetic Alphabet: /ə'sweɪʒ/

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

MONEYWISE



Why the secrecy around nomination?

COVERNOTE

Many investments do not reflect the name of the nominee on the document. Imagine the many situations that this can give rise to, none of them joyful

K. Nitva Kalvani

We have got to a point where we have so many passwords that we can't remember them. We need password managers or at least, a little black book with passwords! Google, meanwhile, is force-moving us to a passkey regime involving fingerprint and face recognition promising to end memory and risk-related ills.

Gone are the days when the daughter-in-law of the family, after an exacting probation period no doubt, was given the key bunch signifying that she is the trustee of family jewels and finances!

Today, we leave behind assets through various legal means like wills, settlement deeds, nominations and such. Many don't get organised enough to do it or die an untimely death, leaving family members grappling with the issue and, frequently, with each other.

This need not be so as such decisions can be recorded on the go as and when investments are made.

Even as there are moves to make us aware of nominations, there are equivocal initiatives from authorities and we saw some of that in the previous instalments of CoverNote. This time around let us look at another dimension of the initiative that negates the intention.

Issues with nomination

Almost all financial investments can be nominated and the nomination registered. Some, and this is puzzling, don't give you an acknowledgment or reference number for the nomination. Moreover, on the face of the instrument, say a passbook or bond, they may state whether a nomination has been made or not. Some even give a registration reference number.

Only some mention the name of the nominee.

There is logic in this because once printed, it reflects a validity, albeit of the status on that day. The point being a nomination can be changed, multiple times even.

Ascertaining nominee

Yet, imagine the runaround to ascertain the nominee of various investments after somebody has passed away.

Why can't the family member who is not nominated but is in possession of the instrument/ information simply suppress it so that, never mind that he isn't going to get the money, he can prevent someone else from getting it! Some centralisation of such a record would be great. While we wait for simplification and standardisation to solve this pain point, guess we have to maintain a meticulously updated notebook listing investments/ assets and to whom each is nominated. Very retro! But if it works, it works!

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



Right strategy: Overall, responsible credit management is important to handle credit-card debt. GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCK

How to avoid falling into credit-card debt?

Spending too much can be risky, especially if you are unsure of future cash flows; you should be responsible with expenses by making conscious choices about purchases to avoid debt

MANAGING DEBT

Rohit Chhibbar

Credit cards, if not used responsibly, can easily and quickly lead to a debt spiral. Not paying credit-card outstanding can become financially draining, as you keep accumulating interest on the balance as well as new purchases, making credit-card debt larger with each day.

While unforeseen emergencies can sometimes lead to unmanageable debt, in many cases overspending and irresponsible usage lead to such an insurmountable debt. Hence, it is important to manage credit cards wisely. Here are some ways to avoid credit-card debt.

Affordable purchases

Credit cards, with 40-to-50-day interest-free period, offer you the convenience of buying now and paying later. However, what comes with this benefit is the temptation to overspend. Spending too much can be risky, especially if you are unsure of future cash flow. You should be responsible with expenses by making conscious choices about purchases to avoid falling into debt. Prioritise needs over wants. Avoid using the card for impulse purchases or luxuries beyond means.

Pay bills on time

Missed or late payments are one of the primary reasons why people fall into credit-card debt. When

Missed or late payments are one of the primary reasons why people fall into credit-card debt; when you miss payments, issuers levy high interest rates, fees

you miss payments, credit card issuers levy high interest rates and late fees, which can quickly accumulate. Furthermore, paying only the minimum amount due every month is also not advisable. It means carrying the balance month to month and accumulating interest charges on the balance as well as on any new purchases. Paying the entire balance each month on time is the best way to avoid credit card debt.

Avoid cash withdrawal

Credit cards also give the facility to withdraw cash from an ATM, up to a limit. However, cash withdrawals from credit cards can quickly lead to debt for two reasons.

One, cash withdrawals do not qualify for the interest-free period, which means interest will be applicable from the day of withdrawal. And, two, when you withdraw cash, new transactions become ineligible for the interest-free period, which means you will incur interest charges with each purchase. Cash withdrawals can quickly lead to debt accumulation and, hence, must be avoided.

When you have multiple cards with varied billing cycles, you can plan expenses to optimally use interest-free period; use a card offering more interest-free days

Credit cards can offer an interest-free period of up to 50 days. When you have multiple cards with varied billing cycles, you can plan expenses to make optimum use of the interest-free period. The purchases you make at the beginning of the billing cycle would get more interest-free days as opposed to those made later. Hence, when you have to make a big-ticket purchase, you can use a card that offers more interest-free days. This will help manage monthly cash flow with ease and avoid debt.

EMI facility

Many credit cards offer Equated Monthly Instalment (EMI) options for big-ticket purchases. When facing difficulty making an expensive purchase, you can choose the EMI option and repay the amount in manageable instalments. Additionally, if you have already made such a purchase and are struggling to pay the credit-card bill, you can convert the outstanding balance into EMIs by contacting the card issuer. Opting for EMIs allows you to pay a larger chunk of debt in smaller and more affordable amounts. Ho-

wever, before opting for the option, check the interest rate, processing fee and related charges.

Limit number of cards

Managing multiple accounts or payments could lead to missed payments and debt accumulation. Also, with each additional card, the temptation to overspend increases, eventually leading to the accumulation of charges and card debt. Also, there are higher chances of losing track of spends and payments. Therefore, limit the number of cards you have to what you can manage.

Review statement

You should regularly check credit-card statements; it will help you understand spending pattern and the categories on which you spend the most. Sometimes, wrong debits can also raise card dues, which should be rectified at the earliest. Regularly reviewing your statements will help manage cards smartly and avoid falling in debt.

Overall, responsible credit management is important to handle such debt.

By implementing practices such as creating a realistic budget, monitoring financial health and paying bills on time and smartly, you can effectively manage finances without debt burden. For those already struggling with debt, balance transfer at a lower interest rate or a personal loan can be an approach to clear the debt burden.

(The writer is Head of Credit Cards Business, Paisabazaar)

Discerning side pocket

THINKINVESTOR

In 2018, SEBI allowed bond funds to move corporate bonds to a distinct account if the bonds held by them did not pay timely interest or suffered credit downgrade; this account is 'side pocket'

Venkatesh Bangaruswamy

Recently, an asset management company (AMC) sent a notice to unit holders of one of its funds mentioning the fund was creating a provision for a segregated portfolio. Such a portfolio is referred to as a side pocket. In this article, we explain a side pocket. We also discuss other risks associated with bond funds and how bank deposits moderate these risks.

Credit risk

To understand segregated portfolio, consider the risks bond funds are exposed to. Investment in government bonds exposes a fund to interest-rate and reinvestment risks. We will ignore reinvestment risk for this discussion. Interest-rate risk is the risk that bond prices will decline when the bond market expects interest rates to rise. In addition, investments in corporate bonds carry credit risk.

This risk is not just about defaults. It includes a rise in investors' perception of the bond-issuer's credit risk, which could lead to a decline in corporate bond prices. A perception that credit risk has risen can arise because of a failure by the company to pay interest on time or a credit-rating downgrade.

In 2018, SEBI allowed bond funds to move corporate bonds to a separate account if the bond held by the funds failed to pay interest on time or suffered a credit downgrade. This separate account is called a segregated portfolio. The concept comes from hedge funds that also invest in private equity. Being an illiquid investment, private equity is kept in a separate account called a side pocket while the main account carried all the liquid investments of the hedge fund. A segregated portfolio is a side pocket.

That said, it is important to understand that investing in bond funds are different from investing in bonds. If you buy a bond and hold it till maturity, you will receive the bond's par value regardless of the interest-rate changes. That means direct investment in bonds does not carry interest-rate risk. Investment in bond funds do.

Conclusion

Bond funds generate returns from interest income and capital appreciation but carry interest-rate risk and reinvestment risk. Bond funds that invest in corporate bonds also carry credit risk.

Investing directly in government bonds eliminates interest-rate risk but exposes you to reinvestment risk. Cumulative fixed deposits and recurring deposits with banks do not have interest risk and reinvestment risk. They carry credit risk, but that risk is lower than what bond funds are exposed to.

(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)	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	11.05-18.75	10,884-12,902	2,177-2,580	Up to 2% (min Rs 1,000 and 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)
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	10.75-13.50	10,809-11,505	2,162-2,301	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	Nil
IDFC First Bank	10.75 onwards	10,809 onwards	2,162 onwards	Up to 3.5%
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 (Min. Rs 2,500, Max. 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	8.75 - 12.10	10,319 - 11,148	Up to Rs 2,000
Canara Bank	8.70 - 12.70	10,307 - 11,300	0.25% (Rs. 1,000 - Rs. 5,000)
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
IDBI Bank	8.80 - 9.60	10,331 - 10,525	Rs 2,500
Bank of Maharashtra*	8.70 - 13.00	10,307 - 11,377	Nil
Indian Overseas Bank**	8.85 - 12.00	10,343 - 11,122	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
South Indian Bank	8.75 onwards	10,319 onwards	1% (Max: Rs 10,000)
IDFC First Bank	9.50 onwards	10,501 onwards	Up to Rs 10,000
City Union Bank	14.35 - 14.85	11,725 - 11,586	1.25% (Min: Rs 1,000)

*0.25% interest rate concession for existing housing loan borrowers and corporate salary account holders.
**0.50% interest rate concession to borrowers with credit scores of 750 and above. Interest rate concession of 0.20% to borrowers for financing Electric 4 Wheelers. 0.20% concession to existing Housing Loan Borrowers.

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

NOT ANYTIME SOON

I will retire when I feel not good enough to play the sport: Rohit



R.V. MOORTHY

Rohit Sharma opened up on his retirement plans following India's series win against England. "If one day if I wake up and feel I am not good enough to play the sport, I will just talk it out and let them know about it... I feel I am playing the best cricket now," Rohit Sharma said on Jio Cinema.

INTROSPECTION NEEDED

We just get lost with this term Bazball, says Hussain



R.V. MOORTHY

Miffed at England's 4-1 shellacking by India, Nasser Hussain has advised the team's batters to work on individual performances and eschew their obsession with Bazball. "We just get lost with this term Bazball. The team, the management does not like the term and they need to look at their performances," Hussain wrote for Sky Sports.

BEING GENUINE

Vaughan calls for a dose of honesty after England's series loss



R.V. MOORTHY

Michael Vaughan fears not all England players have fully adapted to the existing team culture. "After a humbling series defeat in India, I believe that a dose of honesty is important for this England team... victories are what keep the fun bus on the road, not talking about how much fun you are having," Vaughan wrote for Daily Telegraph.

IPL BECKONS

KKR ropes in Salt after Roy pulls out due to personal reasons



FILE PHOTO

Kolkata Knight Riders has brought in Englishman Phil Salt as a replacement for compatriot Jason Roy who pulled out of the IPL due to personal reasons. This will be Salt's second season in the IPL, having played for Delhi Capitals last season. The 27-year-old has been bought at his reserve price of ₹ 1.5 crore.

Capitals survive Richa's heroics to snatch a thriller against RCB

The Delhi side rides on Jemimah and Capsey's 97-run partnership to post 181; the RCB wicketkeeper-batter's 29-ball 51 just fails to take her team past the finish line as Lanning & Co. prevail by a solitary run; Shreyanka's four-for goes in vain

WPL SEASON 2

Lavanva L
NEW DELHI

A superior fielding effort and sheer resilience saw home side Delhi Capitals seal a heart-stopping one-run win against Royal Challengers Bangalore at the Arun Jaitley Stadium here on Sunday.

Needing 182 to win, RCB lost skipper Smriti Mandhana early. Ellyse Perry and Sophie Molineux's 80-run stand consolidated the chase. A dramatic 11th over saw Alice Capsey first drop Perry at long off. Shikha Pandey and Taniya Bhatia made sure Capsey and DC didn't pay a heavy price, running out the Aussie all-rounder off the last ball of the same over.

After Arundhati Reddy dismissed Molineux, the onus fell on Sophie Devine and Richa Ghosh's shoulders. With 40 needed off the last 18, Marizanne Kapp dismissed Devine off the first ball of the 18th.

It boiled down to Richa with 17 needed off the last over. Richa creamed the ball over Jess Jonassen's head for a six. Disha Kasat was run out with no contribution to the scoreboard off the third ball after Richa's second-ball dot. After a nervy couple of runs, Richa got the maximum over the longest side of boundary to bring up her fifty. With two runs needed off



In her element: Jemimah's breezy half-century propelled Capitals to a challenging total. R.V. MOORTHY

the last ball, Jonassen went full with Richa just managing to get the ball to backward point. Some sharp work from Jonassen saw her first smash the stumps at the non-strikers and do the same at the other end. Review showed Richa well short of the crease, sending DC into the playoffs.

Inconsolable

Richa was inconsolable at the end of it all, with Meg Lanning, Jemimah Rodrigues and others going up to comfort her. "This will sting but the sun will rise tomorrow and she'll get over it," Perry said after the game.

Earlier, Lanning opted to bat with the Capitals starting off cautiously.

SCOREBOARD

DELHI CAPITALS
Meg Lanning lbw b Shreyanka 29 (26b, 5x4), Shafali Verma c Molineux b Asha 23 (18b, 3x4, 1x6), Jemimah Rodrigues b Shreyanka 58 (36b, 8x4, 1x6), Alice Capsey b Shreyanka 48 (32b, 8x4), Marizanne Kapp (not out) 12 (6b, 1x6), Jess Jonassen st Richa b Shreyanka 1 (2b), Radha Yadav (not out) 1 (1b); Extras (lb-1, w-7, nb-1): 9; Total (for five wkts. in 20 overs): 181.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-54 (Shafali, 6.2 overs), 2-60 (Lanning, 7.4), 3-157 (Jemimah, 17.5), 4-176 (Capsey, 19.1), 5-179 (Jonassen, 19.4).

RCB BOWLING
Renuka 3-0-31-0, Shradha 3-0-26-0, Molineux 4-0-45-0, Asha 4-0-29-1, Shreyanka 4-0-26-4, Wareham 2-0-23-0.

ROYAL CHALLENGERS
Smriti Mandhana lbw b Capsey 5 (7b, 1x4), Sophie Molineux c Jemimah b Arundhati 33 (30b, 5x4), Ellyse Perry run out 49 (32b, 7x4, 1x6), Sophie Devine c Arundhati b Kapp 26 (16b, 1x4, 2x6), Richa Ghosh run out 51 (29b, 4x4, 3x6), Georgia Wareham c Radha b Shikha 12 (6b, 2x4), Disha Kasat run out 0 (0b), Shreyanka Patil (not out) 0 (0b); Extras (w-4): 4; Total (for seven

wkts. in 20 overs): 180.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-9 (Smriti, 1.3), 2-89 (Perry, 10.6), 3-93 (Molineux, 11.5), 4-142 (Devine, 17.1), 5-165 (Wareham, 18.6), 6-172 (Disha, 19.3), 7-180 (Richa, 19.6).

CAPITALS BOWLING
Kapp 4-0-30-1, Capsey 1-0-5-1, Shikha 4-0-34-1, Jonassen 3-0-39-0, Radha 4-0-36-0, Arundhati 3-0-24-1, Titas 1-0-12-0.

Toss: Delhi Capitals.
PoM: Jemimah
Delhi Capitals won by one run.
Monday's match: Gujarat Giants vs. UP Warriorz, 7.30 p.m.

With the openers falling soon after the PowerPlay, Alice Capsey and Jemimah took over the baton and frustrated the RCB bowlers

no end, stitching a 97-run stand which helped the side to a competitive total. No total is safe at the Kotla, but if there was a

team to defend one when the chasing side was going hammer and tongs, it was a fielding side as relentless as Capitals.

Test cricket is hard, you need each other to succeed: Dravid

Press Trust of India
DHARAMSHALA

India coach Rahul Dravid underlined the importance of staying together and functioning as a unit to be triumphant in the tough world of Test cricket while delivering a motivational dressing room speech after India registered a memorable 4-1 series win over England.

"Series like this have to be earned and this is tough. Test cricket is hard at times. It's hard in terms of your skill. It's hard physically, as you've seen, it's hard mentally," Dravid said in a video posted on BCCLiv.

"But it's great satisfaction at the end of it. The satisfaction that you get winning a series like this coming from one behind to be able to win four. I think it's just phenomenal," he added.

As key players like Virat Kohli and Mohammed Shami and K.L. Rahul, who played only the opener, were unavailable, India found heroes in some young names in the series.

The Indian coach was a chuffed man after some of those young names emerged in flying colours from the series. "For a lot

India-England Test series in numbers



R.V. MOORTHY

Batting	Inns	Runs	HS	Avg	100s/50s
Jaiswal	9	712	214*	89.00	2/3
Gill	9	452	110	56.50	2/2
Crawley	10	407	79	40.70	0/4
Rohit	9	400	131	44.44	2/1
Duckett	10	343	153	34.30	1/0

Bowling	Inns	Wkts	BBi	SR	5W
Ashwin	10	26	5/51	36.11	2
Hartley	9	22	7/62	68.36	1
Bumrah	8	19	6/45	32.78	1
Kuldeep	8	19	5/72	36.05	1
Jadeja	8	19	5/41	46.26	1

of you young guys, especially coming into this group, you are going to need each other to succeed. Whether you're a batsman or bowler or whatever you are, your success is tied in with other people's success.

"All of you are invested in each other's success. And that's really important going forward. It's not about your success, but it's about how you can help other people succeed, which will also help you succeed," he said.

Henry and Sears rattle Aussies

Agence France-Presse
CHRISTCHURCH

New Zealand's Matt Henry (two for 37) and debutant Ben Sears (two for 22) cleaned out the top four

Australian batsmen on Sunday to leave the visitors on 77 for four and facing an uphill task in their chase of 279 to win the second Test in Christchurch.

The scores: New Zealand 162 & 372 in 108.2 overs (Rachin Ravindra 82, Daryl Mitchell 58, Kane Williamson 51, Scott Kuggelejin 44, Cummins 4/62, Lyon 3/49) vs Australia 256 & 77/4 in 24 overs (M. Marsh batting 27).

Bagan brush past EBFC, climb to top of the table

ISL-10

Amitabha Das Sharma
KOLKATA

Mohun Bagan SG beat its traditional rival East Bengal by a comfortable 3-1 margin in the return derby of ISL at the Salt Lake Stadium on Sunday, to reach the top of the current standings with 36 points from 17 matches.

East Bengal regretted captain Cleiton Silva's inability to score from the spot in the 14th minute as Bagan goalkeeper Vishal Kaith judged it right to keep EBFC waiting for the break.

Bagan turned things around on its side from this point and doubled its resolve to find the lead in the 27th minute when Jason Cummings tapped home a rebound following a Dimitri Petratos effort that was blocked by the EBFC custo-



Bragging rights retained: East Bengal could not match Mohun Bagan's might. FOCUS SPORTS/ISL

dian Prabhsukhan Gill. Bagan maintained the intensity of the attacks and doubled the lead in the 37th minute when Petratos set up Liston Colaco with a nice pass for the latter to slot home.

MBSG made it 3-0 from an injury-time penalty that was converted by Petratos himself. This virtually sealed the

match for Bagan even though EBFC made a valiant effort after the break and pulled one back through Saul Crespo, who scored a world-class goal in the 53rd minute.

The result:

East Bengal 1 (Saul Crespo 53) lost to Mohun Bagan SG 3 (Jason Cummings 27, Liston Colaco 37, Dimitri Petratos 45+3-pen).

Arsenal stays at the top after Liverpool holds Man City

Agence France-Presse
LIVERPOOL

A thrilling draw at Anfield between Liverpool and Manchester City on Sunday means that Arsenal stays on top of the Premier League after Kai Havertz spared Aaron Ramsdale's blushes with a crucial late strike in Saturday's 2-1 win against Brentford.

John Stones had given City the lead in the first half before Alexis Mac Allister pulled Liverpool level from the spot in the second half. The result leaves Arsenal and Liverpool on 64 points with the Gunners ahead on goal difference. City is third on 63.

Mikel Arteta's side was just minutes away from a damaging draw after Gunners keeper Ramsdale gifted an equaliser to Yoane Wissa. Declan Rice put Arsenal ahead early in the first half, but Ramsdale waited too long to clear just



Bullet header: Havertz nods home Arsenal's winner. GETTY IMAGES

before the interval and Wissa took advantage to block the ball into the net.

Havertz ensured Arsenal would not miss its chance to climb into first place with a bullet header.

The results: Premier League: Aston Villa 0 lost to Tottenham 4 (Maddison 50, Johnson 53, Son 90+1, Werner 90+4); Brighton 1 (Omobamidele 29-og) bt Nottingham Forest 0; West Ham 2 (Paqueta 46, Ings 90+1) drew with Burnley 2 (Fofana 11,

Mavropanos 45+1-og); Liverpool 1 (Mac Allister 50-pen) drew with Man City 1 (Stones 23).

Serie A: AC Milan 1 (Pulisic 40) bt Empoli 0.

On Saturday: Premier League: Arsenal 2 (Rice 19, Havertz 86) bt Brentford 1 (Wissa 45+4). **LaLiga:** Girona 2 (Portu 13, Savinho 87) bt Osasuna 0; Granada 2 (Uzuni 21-pen, 45+3) lost to Real Sociedad 3 (Umar 33, Le Normand 80, Silva 85); Cadiz 2 (Juanmi 24, 64) bt Atletico Madrid 0. **Serie A:** Bologna 0 lost to Inter Milan 1 (Bisseck 37).

Satwik-Chirag pair wins French Open title



Easing past: Satwiksairaj and Chirag beat Chinese Taipei's Lee and Yang in the summit clash. FILE PHOTO

BADMINTON

Press Trust of India
PARIS

Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty continued their love affair with Paris, lifting the French Open badminton crown for the second time with a dominating straight game win over Chinese Taipei's Lee Jhe-Huei and Yang Po-Hsun in the men's doubles final here on Sunday.

The World No. 1 Indian pair had finished runners-up in the French Open in 2019 before winning the title in 2022.

The Asian Games champions outwitted Lee and Yang 21-11, 21-17 in 37 minutes to regain the Super 750 tournament crown and also win their first triumph.

The Indian duo had beaten South Korea's Seo Seung Jae and Kang Min Hyuk 21-13, 21-16 in the semifinals on Saturday.

INBRIEF



Parantap and Kruthik put Karnataka on top against UP

Karnataka made a strong start to its Col. C.K. Nayudu (U-23) Trophy final against Uttar Pradesh, raking up 325 runs for the loss of five wickets on day one in Bengaluru on Sunday.

The scores: Karnataka 325 for five in 90 overs (MacNeil H. Noronha 68, Prakar Chaturvedi 33, KV. Anesh 43, Yashovardhan Parantap 84 batting, Kruthik Krishna 58 batting) vs. Uttar Pradesh.

Bangladesh downs India, wins SAFF U-16 Women's C'ship

India fell short of a title conquest, losing to Bangladesh 2-3 in the penalty shoot-out during the SAFF U-16 Women's Championship final in Kathmandu on Sunday. Both the teams were tied at 1-1 after the regulation time. Anushka Kumari found the net in the fourth minute for India. Shveta Rani's own goal in the 70th helped Bangladesh get back into the game and eventually clinch the crown.

Rubina and Manish make do with mixed team pistol silver

Rubina Francis and Manish Narwal were beaten to the gold 16-12 by the Chinese duo of Li Min and Yang Chao in the P6 mixed team air pistol event of the WSPS Para shooting World Cup at the Dr. Karni Singh Range in New Delhi on Sunday.

The results: P6 mixed team air pistol: 1. China (Li Min, Yang Chao) 16 (562); 2. India (Rubina Francis, Manish Narwal) 12 (570 EWR); 3. India-2 (Bhakti Sharma, Rudransh Khandelwal) 16 (559).

R10 mixed team air rifle: 1. China (Zhong Yixin, Dong Chao) 16 (627.9 WR); 2. India-2 (Mona Agarwal, Aadithya Giri) 4 (622.9); 3. Ukraine (Iryna Shchetnik, Andrii Doroshenko) 16 (622.30); 4. India (Avani Lekhara, Swaroop Unhalkar) 4 (619.5).

R11 mixed team air rifle: 1. Brazil (Jessica Michalack, Bruno Kiefer) 16 (622.7); 2. USA (Madison Champion, Ben Hays) 6 (627.4); 3. India (Pavani Banoth, Satya Rayala) 17 (601.0).

LIVE TELECAST

Ranji Trophy: (final), day 2, Jio Cinema App, 9.30 a.m.

PVL: Sony Sports Ten 1 (SD & HD) & LV, 6.30 & 8.30 p.m.

WPL: Sports 18-1 (SD & HD) & Jio Cinema App, 7.30 p.m.

ISL: Sports 18-1 (SD & HD) & Jio Cinema App, 7.30 p.m.

Premier League: SS Select 1 (SD & HD) & Hotstar, 1.30 a.m. (Tuesday)

LaLiga: Sports 18-1 (SD & HD) & Jio Cinema App, 1.30 a.m. (Tuesday)

Heroes knock out Blitz

PVL

Sports Bureau
CHENNAI

Calicut Heroes crushed Chennai Blitz 15-13, 15-13, 15-12 in their final league match of the Ru Pay-Prime Volleyball League at the Nehru Indoor Stadium here on Sunday.

Heroes thus topped the table with 12 points with a better set difference (13) and will now get an extra two points in the Super 5s beginning on Monday. Mumbai Meteors booked the final fifth spot in the Super 5s.

Setter Mohan Ukkrapan and attacker Jerome Vinith were the key players instrumental in knocking out Chennai, which failed miserably when it came to the crunch.

Calicut had players who delivered at the death. In the first set, it was skipper Jerome, and in the second it was Vikas Maan. Vikas' jump smash at 14-12 brooked no response.

Delhi Toofans beat Ahmedabad Defenders 15-11, 16-14, 15-11 to finish second in the league. Delhi will get one point in the Super 5s.

Teams qualified for Super 5s: 1. Calicut Heroes, 2. Delhi Toofans, 3. Ahmedabad Defenders, 4. Bengaluru Torpedoes, 5. Mumbai Meteors.

Steeple-chaser Ekta breaks junior national record

ATHLETICS

Sports Bureau

After taking the 5000m gold comfortably in the morning, Madhya Pradesh's Ekta Pradeep Dey broke the women's 3000m steeple chase record by a massive 19 seconds on the concluding evening of the 22nd National Federation Cup junior (under-20) athletics championships in Lucknow on Sunday.

That makes the 18-year-old, who clocked 10:10.08s, the second-fastest in the world in the under-20 age group this year, behind Kenyan Sharon Chepkemol (10:07.67s).

Incidentally, Ekta had clocked a mediocre 11:04.68 while finishing sixth in the Junior Nationals in Coimbatore in November 2023.

Meanwhile, UP's Sharuk Khan broke his own meet record in the men's 3000m steeple chase.

The results (winners only): Men: 200m: Dondapati Mrutyam (Odisha) 21.59s. 800m: Vinod Kumar Banoth (Tel) 1:51.30s. 5000m: Vinod Singh (MP) 14:22.32s. 400m hurdles: Murad Sirman (Guj) 52.31s. 3000m steeple chase: Sharuk Khan (UP)

Shardul's counter-attack bails Mumbai out of troubled waters against Vidarbha

The hosts lose six wickets for 30 runs after a solid opening stand; the all-rounder's 75 helps them to 224 before the visitors slide to 31 for three

RANJI TROPHY

Amol Karhadkar
MUMBAI

The venue may have changed. So did the opposition. But the trend of Mumbai's batting continued in the Ranji Trophy final against Vidarbha. The top-six caved in yet again before the lower order — led by the fearless Shardul Thakur — gave respectability to the total on a day dominated by bowlers.

Had it not been Shardul's counter-attacking 75, Mumbai would have struggled to put on 224 after being inserted in to bat on Day One at the Wankhede Stadium. Him and Dhawal Kulkarni, featuring in his last match for Mumbai as injured Mohit Avasthi's replacement, then left Vidarbha reeling at 31 for three at three at three.



Rescue mission: It was again down to Shardul to save Mumbai's blushes. EMMANUAL YOGINI

The Mumbai essay was a remarkable session of two stints of batters' domination on either side of bowling supremacy. Prithvi Shaw's trademark cover-drives off Umesh Yadav

and Bhupen Lalwani's flicks through midwicket were a treat to the eyes as the Sunday crowd built up in anticipation of a run-feast. Yash Thakur, the first-change pacer, struck

by jaggling one away from Lalwani and forced him into an edge to captain Akshay Wadkar.

The dismissal triggered a collapse as Vidarbha picked six for 30 to leave

Mumbai reeling at 111 for six from 81 for no loss.

Harsh Dubey — the left-arm spinner who was brought in place of Akshay Wadhare — struck gold in a long spell having got rid of Prithvi Shaw, Musheer Khan and captain Ajinkya Rahane.

Umesh Yadav found Shreyas Iyer in no-man's land at the crease to be caught behind. In came Shardul and took the bowlers head on. Tushar Deshpande hung around as the duo's 42-run association helped Mumbai cross the 200-run mark.

The scores: Mumbai — 1st innings: Prithvi Shaw b Dubey 46 (63b, 5x4), Bhupen Lalwani c Wadkar b Thakur 37 (64b, 4x4), Musheer Khan lbw b Dubey 6 (12b, 1x4), Ajinkya Rahane c Shorey b Dubey 7 (35b), Shreyas Iyer c Karun b Umesh 7 (15b, 1x4), Hardik Tamore c Wadkar b Thakare 5 (41b), Shams Mulani lbw b Thakur 13 (37b, 1x6),

Shardul Thakur c Dubey b Umesh 75 (69b, 8x4, 3x6), Tanush Kotian c Wadkar b Thakur 8 (12b, 1x4), Tushar Deshpande run out 14 (34b, 2x4), Dhawal Kulkarni (not out) 0 (7b); Extras (b-2, lb-2, nb-2); 6; Total (in 64.3 overs): 224.

Fall of wickets: 1-81 (Lalwani, 19.6 overs), 2-89 (Shaw, 22.2), 3-92 (Musheer, 24.2), 4-99 (Shreyas, 27.5), 5-111 (Tamore, 37.4), 6-111 (Rahane, 38.3), 7-154 (Shams, 47.4), 8-176 (Kotian, 51.4), 9-218 (Deshpande, 62.1).

Vidarbha bowling: Umesh 13.3-2-43-2, Thakare 16-6-36-1, Dubey 20-3-62-3, Thakur 11-2-54-3, Sarvate 4-0-25-0.

Vidarbha — 1st innings: Atharva Taide (batting) 21 (46b, 2x4), Dhruv Shorey lbw b Shardul 0 (3b), Aman Mokhadde c Tamore b Kulkarni 8 (15b, 2x4), Karun Nair c Tamore b Kulkarni 0 (12b), Aditya Thakare (batting) 0 (4b); Extras (nb-2); 2; Total (for three wkts. in 13 overs): 31.

Fall of wickets: 1-1 (Shorey, 2.3), 2-20 (Mokhadde, 7.2), 3-24 (Karun, 11.3).

Mumbai bowling: Shardul 5-0-14-1, Kulkarni 6-2-9-2, Deshpande 2-0-8-0.

Toss: Vidarbha.

'We are not happy with the total we have put on board'

Amol Karhadkar
MUMBAI

Just like he came hard at the Vidarbha bowlers with the willow, Shardul Thakur minced no words at the Mumbai specialist batters after the first day's play of the Ranji Trophy final.

"We are not happy with the total that we have put on board. Certainly with the way we started of, if the top order had applied themselves, had the right attitude and approach, we could have reached 350 or even 370 with five or six wickets down at the end of the day's play," Shardul said.

From 81 for no loss, Mumbai were reduced to 111 for six before Shardul came to the rescue with a 69-ball 75. During an 108-

ball boundary-less drought before Shardul's first four, Mumbai lost captain Ajinkya Rahane and Shreyas Iyer, among others.

While Rahane has struggled right through the season with the willow, Shreyas has looked jittery ever since being excluded from the BCCI's central contracts list. Shardul stood right behind the duo.

Rough patch

"It's just a rough patch for them and in a rough patch, nothing goes your way," Shardul said, adding that the duo has been "absolute match winners for Mumbai and India". "It's time to support them rather than criticizing them. They are extremely hard workers. They put in a lot of efforts towards their batting, a lot

of thinking towards their batting. And they both of them are absolutely team players."

While he was a tad disappointed at losing out on scoring a second hundred on a trot, Shardul acknowledged veteran coach Vilas Godbole for a batting tip offered ahead of the last week's semifinal.

"The other day at BKC, I was speaking to Vilas Godbole sir and he just made out a couple of fine points at my batting. He said at times you tend to not flex your knees and try to hit the ball. He said the mindset should be to hit the ball but he said you should flex your knees and try to go towards the ball. I did it in the last two games and I am glad it has come off, he said.

Dalila beats Ku for singles title



Champion Dalila and Ku in Nagpur on Sunday. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

TENNIS

Sports Bureau

Second seed Dalila Jakupovic beat Yeonwoo Ku 6-1, 6-2 in the final of the Maha Urja \$25,000 ITF women's tennis tournament at the MSLTA Academy, Nagpur, on Sunday.

It was a double crown for the 32-year-old Dalila who had won her 23rd doubles title with Irina Maria Bara of Romania.

Dalila who converted seven of 10 break points. The champion collected ₹3,25,000 and 35 WTA points.

The runner-up got ₹1,75,000 and 22 points.

Rajnigandha Achievers win Sawai Man Singh Gold Vase

Sports Bureau

Hurr Ali and Chris Mackenzie scored five goals between them and guided Rajnigandha Achievers to a 7-4 victory over Delta Polo in the final of the Sawai Man Singh Gold Vase 10-goal polo tournament at the Jaipur polo ground here on Sunday. Hurr Ali was declared the "most valuable player". The next event will be the 14-goal Northern India Championship at the Jaipur Polo ground from Wednesday.

The results (final): Rajnigandha Achievers 7 (Hurr Ali 3, Chris Mackenzie 2, Dhruvpal Godara, Savir Mehraj Godara) bt Delta Polo (Santiago Marambio 4).

AFI's plans to excel in 2036 Olympics

M. R. Praveen Chandran
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

The Athletics Federation of India (AFI)'s brainstorming meeting to formulate a strategic plan for excelling in the 2036 Olympics identified core areas which needed attention and the necessity to create a friendly ecosystem for the athletes, coaches and other stakeholders.

The AFI has decided to streamline the calendar to ensure that the athletes will have enough domestic competitions so that they can peak at the right time before major competitions. The AFI will also see that the athletes get adequate foreign exposure.

Speaking to *The Hindu* after the conclusion of the five-day meeting, the AFI president Adile Sumariwala said there will be two point strategy starting with the junior programme — mainly the National Inter-district Junior Athletic Meet (NIDJAM) and the Elite programme.

The AFI has decided to decentralise the national camps after the Paris Olympics and at the same time will allow institutions like Railways, Army, Navy, Police and academies run by JSW and Reliance Foundation to conduct camps at their respective centres.

A fantastic weekend, says Verstappen



No starting trouble here: Verstappen backed up his Bahrain triumph with a win in Saudi. GETTY IMAGES

SAUDI ARABIAN GP

Associated Press
JEDDAH

Max Verstappen stayed firmly on course for another season of dominance in Formula One on Saturday by winning the Saudi Arabian Grand Prix.

Even after just two races, and despite turmoil at Red Bull, Verstappen seems in near-total control on the track as he aims for a fourth consecutive title this year.

"A fantastic weekend for the whole team and also for myself. I felt really good with the car," Verstappen said.

The Dutch driver won easily ahead of his teammate Sergio Perez. Ferrari's Charles Leclerc was third.

"It was a bit of a boring race because Red Bull was a bit too quick and behind we had a bit of a gap, but we took the maximum points we could today," Leclerc said.

Eighteen-year-old British driver Oliver Bearman was seventh for Ferrari in his first F1 race, one day after being called up as an emergency replacement for Carlos Sainz Jr., who needed an operation to treat appendicitis.

Oscar Piastri took fourth for McLaren, with Aston Martin's Fernando Alonso fifth and George Russell sixth for Mercedes. Behind Bearman in seventh, McLaren's Lando Norris held off Mercedes' Lewis Hamilton in a fight for eighth place. Nico Hulkenberg was 10th for Haas' first point in F1 since the Singapore GP in September.

Sehrawat, Kalkal book tickets; Ravi, Bajrang tumble out

WRESTLING

Sports Bureau
KOLKATA

Promising wrestlers Asian champion Aman Sehrawat (57kg) and National champion Sujeet Kalkal (65kg) won their respective freestyle weight classes even as Tokyo Olympic silver medalist Ravi Dahiya and bronze medalist Bajrang Punia failed to make the Indian team in the selection trials held for the upcoming Asian championships and Asian Olympic Games qualifiers at Sonapat on Sunday.

Sehrawat, who earlier defeated Ravi 14-13 in a thrilling round robin contest, recorded a convincing 10-0 win over Udit for the top spot. Ravi also lost 10-8 to Udit.

Convincing win

Kalkal got past Rohit Kumar 10-0. Earlier, Rohit posted a convincing 9-1 victory over Bajrang, who managed to overcome Ravinder 3-3 via criteria.

Former Worlds silver medalist Deepak Punia (86kg) booked his place in the Olympic qualifiers. As per the ad-hoc com-

mittee's guidelines, the winner of the trials in the Olympic weight categories will represent India in upcoming Olympic qualifiers including the Asian Olympic qualifier (April 19-21) and World Olympic qualifier (May 9-12).

The winners in non-Olympic weight categories and the second-placed wrestlers in Olympic weight categories at the trials will represent the country in the Asian championships (April 11-16) in Bishkek.

The squad: Men: Freestyle: Olympic weights: 57kg: 1. Aman Sehrawat, 2. Udit; **65kg:** 1. Sujeet Kalkal, 2. Rohit Kumar; **74kg:** 1. Jaideep, 2. Yash Tushir; **86kg:** 1. Deepak Punia, 2. Sandeep Singh; **97kg:** 1. Deepak Nehra, 2. Vicky; **125kg:** 1. Sumit Malik, 2. Anirudh.

Non-Olympic weights: 61kg: Aakash Dahiya; **70kg:** Abhimanyu; **79kg:** Parvinder; **92kg:** Vinay.

Greco Roman: Olympic weights: 60kg: 1. Sumeet, 2. Praveesh Kumar; **67kg:** 1. Ashu, 2. Vinayak Patil; **77kg:** 1. Vikash, 2. Sajjan; **87kg:** 1. Sunil Kumar, 2. Ajay; **97kg:** 1. Nitesh, 2. Narinder Cheema; **130kg:** 1. Naveen, 2. Mehar Singh.

Non-Olympic weights: 55kg: Arjun Halakurki; **63kg:** Umesh; **72kg:** Ankit Gulia; **82kg:** Rohit Dahiya.

Don't go silent into that good night, Harmanpreet

Rage does funny things to sportspeople — it can obliterate but can just as easily lead to performances of the highest quality; Harmanpreet tapped into the latter when she stormed the Kotla with her 48-ball 95 in the Women's Premier League



SPORTSPICS/WPL

Lavanya Lakshminarayanan

Over her 15-year-long (and counting) international career, rage is an emotion that has come to be associated with India captain Harmanpreet Kaur. Remember that unbeaten 171 blitzkrieg against Australia in the 2017 ODI World Cup semifinal in Derby?

When she brought up her century with a tense double, a mix-up with Deepti Sharma almost cost India a wicket. After diving to safety, it was not a century celebration one got to see. Instead, Harmanpreet hurled her helmet away and unleashed an angry tirade on Deepti.

That fire doused quickly enough, towards her partner at least, but she kept the flame fanned to decimate the bowling side, the best team in the world, to finish with an innings that saw 20 fours and seven sixes. That knock was a slap in the face to critics of Indian batting pedigree who for long, and perhaps rightly so, believed power hitting was not an Indian ability.

These embers of aggression surfaced many times over the next few years, more so after the captain's armband passed on to her. In 2023, during the three-match ODI series against Bangladesh, India drew the final game which Harmanpreet seemed to attribute to umpires favouring the host.

In an incident that brought back memories of a certain Shakib Al Hasan, Harmanpreet smashed the stumps when she was adjudged out on 14, visibly furious with the decision. During the presentation ceremony after, that seething rage came out as heavy-handed sarcasm as she reportedly called the umpires to join her and opponent captain Nigar Sultana Joty for the photo-op. This incident earned her a two-match ban, which led to the batter featuring only in the final of the Asian Games, which India ultimately won.

Australia brings out the aggressive best of Harmanpreet as captain Alyssa Healy would discover during the one-off Test in Wankhede last year. The visitor was gaining ground having erased India's 187-run first innings lead. Harmanpreet, an intelligent offie, brought herself on and took out Tahlia McGrath in her first over. She then went after Healy, who was looking set to impose herself.

A fuller ball on the stumps was hit back to her. Harmanpreet rocketed the ball

back to the striker's end but Healy was in the way. In an attempt to avert a hit, she deflected the incoming ball which ran down deep third for four, leaving invisible fumes raging behind the India captain.

The duo exchanged words, Harmanpreet claimed field obstruction but this was not validated. She got her wicket though, off the very next delivery. A rattled Healy copped a length ball onto her pads in trying to sweep and up went the umpire's finger. Three reds in the review, but Harmanpreet's eyes were a deeper scarlet.

High benchmark

Saturday's Women's Premier League fixture between Mumbai Indians and Gujarat Giants gave those watching another glimpse of this shade of Harmanpreet, that vintage angry young Punjaban, ready to pump up her teammates but also give them a mouthful should they be anything less than the best versions of themselves.

Saika Ishaque bore the brunt of Harmanpreet's wrath early on. With a few misfields and a missed potential run out where she made a mess of the collection, she turned to Harmanpreet who shot expletives her way and then looked away just as quickly, the gravity of the skipper's ire dawning on her. MI had not been successful in keeping Beth Mooney and Dayalan Hemalatha quiet (the pair stitched a 121-run stand) but had pulled things back enough to deny the Giants the joy of a 200-plus score.

Harmanpreet quietly walked back to the dugout. A few minutes later, Yastika Bhatia and Hayley Matthews made their way out to begin MI's chase. Harmanpreet was spotted quickly getting what looked like a cupcake down. Ashleigh Gardner's first delivery snuck past the gap between the stumps and a left-leaning Mooney to run away for four. Seconds later, there's Harmanpreet pacing about the dugout, padded, gloved and raring to go.

This brought back memories of that bullish knock in England nearly seven years ago.

"A day before I had goosebumps, I felt that something big was coming my way and I had to grab it. That day, I wasn't hungry or thirsty. I was only waiting for my chance to bat so I could go and express myself," she once said about the knock.

After a fluent start from Matthews and Yastika, two quick dismissals (of Matthews

and Nat Sciver-Brunt) saw Harmanpreet make her way to the crease. Giants slowed down the MI tempo and made Yastika and Harmanpreet work for every single run. The skipper began slowly, working her way into the feel of the pitch and the kind of spaces she could pick out.

By the end of the 14th over, MI needed a difficult 91 runs off 36 balls. The MI dugout had a few worried faces. Jhulan Goswami was seated in the rear row of the dugout, sinking into her seat just a little as the asking rate touched 15 an over.

If you're a Chronicles of Narnia fan, the wise words of Aslan, the anthropomorphized lion in the series, would perfectly fit that moment in hindsight.

"You doubt your value. Don't run from who you are," Aslan told little Lucy. Harmanpreet too decided to pay heed. She tapped into the purest form of that rage and what it could do if directed inwards.

Beast mode

Her wagon wheel is for all to see. From 20 runs off 21 balls until that point, she finished unbeaten with a 48-ball 95. There was an element of luck too. Phoebe Litchfield dropped a sitter, giving Harmanpreet a lifeline when she was on 40. Blood rushed into the cheeks of the young Australian as she realised who she had put down. And boy, would Harmanpreet go on to make her pay.

"Melie (Amelia Kerr) said she (Harmanpreet) had that look in her eye when she was battling with her at the end. She just knew what she needed to do, what she wanted to do, and executed it," Sciver-Brunt would reveal at the post-match press conference.

Over 10,000 people were there to bear testimony to a knock that paid homage to the Harmanpreet of old. No creative field setting, no on spot field changes, not even the bizarre match interruption when the sprinklers came on could stop her. An eight-minute delay followed with the super sopper getting to work. MI at that stage needed 23 off 12.

"Jhulan (Goswami, MI's bowling coach) was very annoyed. We were worried it would break the momentum since we just had two to three good overs. Melie told us that Harmanpreet was happy to get a break and get going. Even then, she was so focussed," Sciver-Brunt added.

During the course of the WPL, we've

seen many instances when Harmanpreet has slammed the bat onto the pitch, chided herself for a loose shot or an opportunity lost. In times like that, it helps to have a partner who readily sets about executing your gameplan.

In a video by the league, Jhulan and Harmanpreet broke down the chase and the latter underlined Kerr's role in the storm that was to follow.

"The first priority was to rotate the strike to get a feel of the pitch. When Amelia joined me, we were just counting the number of sixes we needed. At that stage, we had 24 balls and needed at least nine sixes from them. Even if we missed one, we had more deliveries to try," Harmanpreet explained.

Kerr managed a mix of both. She worked on bringing Harmanpreet back on strike, keeping the conversation going in the middle and even breached the fence when she got a chance to, smacking Shabnam Shakil over deep square leg for six.

Giants' batters had eased apprehensions about the challenge the wicket would pose. Harmanpreet's mentality handled the rest. As that video concluded, Jhulan said, "We still have a long way to go and for Mumbai Indians to win, we need more innings like this. 'I know, I know,'" Harmanpreet responded softly as she went in to hug Jhulan, well aware of the weight on her shoulders.

"Harman's different on game day and when it's not. When we're training or around the hotel, she's very relaxed, very involved with the group, very social. Come game day and she's a lot more focused and probably has just a bit more tunnel vision on what the task is.

"She's not often flustered about things. If she hasn't got off to a quick start, we're on the sidelines saying, 'Ooh, could you go strike a bit more...'" but as we saw today, she doesn't need to. I like to voice things when I bat, but she keeps to herself," Sciver-Brunt revealed.

Harmanpreet is a flawed hero and a private one. You won't see sides she doesn't want to show you. You won't even see her dissect her efforts in fine detail. Much of the brilliance of Harmanpreet Kaur is between her ears and the only expression of it that we are allowed to partake in is when her bat does the talking. Lucky are those who got to be part of that unforgettable conversation at the Kotla.

THE GIST

Harmanpreet's knock helped MI record the highest chase in WPL's short history

The 91 runs Mumbai Indians chased down in the last six overs are the most any team has done successfully in the final six overs (15-20) of a women's T20

Harmanpreet's unbeaten knock overtook Shafali Verma's 84 against Royal Challengers in 2023 as the highest score by an Indian in the WPL

Scientists genetically modify 'sexual' fruit fly to reproduce asexually

The findings have implications to approaches to control insect pests by releasing large numbers of males sterilised by irradiation or males bearing genomes edited to derail progeny development, and thus reduce progeny numbers

D.P. Kasbekar

The fruit fly (*Drosophila melanogaster*) has been among the favourite organisms of genetics researchers for more than a hundred years. Many years of intense research with these diminutive creatures have led to many breakthroughs in our understanding of biology and evolution. Recently, researchers from Cambridge University and the California Institute of Technology reported yet another such breakthrough. They were able to 'engineer' a sexually reproducing fruit-fly species to reproduce asexually, demonstrating the profound biological consequences of relatively minor genetic manipulation. The first study that reported this significant feat was published in July 2023; a follow-up study to it was published in the February 2024 issue of *Heredity*.

The *Drosophila* family

How was an organism that usually reproduces sexually turned into one that could reproduce asexually?

Fatherless reproduction is known as parthenogenesis.

Earlier, other researchers had collected fruit-fly-like specimens from diverse geographies and compared them in different ways with the canonical specimen and with each other, to gauge the extent of their natural diversity. The collection represented more than 1,600 *Drosophila* species.

Of these, one species, *Drosophila manglebeirai*, was found to consist only of females. The eggs produced by isolated females developed directly into female progeny without having to be fertilised by sperm from a male.

Many species (about 76%) that ordinarily reproduce sexually were found to also hatch a small fraction of eggs laid by isolated virgin females into larvae, a smaller fraction of which went on to develop into adults. The name for such species - i.e. which are arbitrarily parthenogenetic a small fraction of the time - is facultatively parthenogenetic. One of them was *Drosophila mercatorum*.

The canonical species used in research, *Drosophila melanogaster*, is however strictly sexual.

The genes for parthenogenesis

The researchers set themselves two goals. First, to identify the genes that allow unfertilised *Drosophila mercatorum* eggs to complete parthenogenetic development. Second, to modify the *Drosophila melanogaster* genome to express the corresponding genes in a way



The fruit fly has been among the favourite organisms of genetics researchers for more than a hundred years. MACROGIANTS (CC BY-SA 4.0)

that would trigger parthenogenesis. RNA sequencing is a technique that can quantitatively estimate the level to which a gene is expressed. Using this technique, the researchers identified 44 genes in *D. mercatorum* eggs that were expressed differently when they were parthenogenetic versus when they weren't.

The DNA is a ladder-like molecule. Its two rails, or strands, are made of a long series of alternating units of phosphate molecules and the sugar deoxyribose molecules. Each sugar unit is attached to one of the four chemical bases: adenine (A), cytosine (C), guanine (G), and thymine (T). The As and Cs on one strand link with the Ts and Gs on the other to form the rungs, or base-pairs, that hold the strands together.

The *Drosophila melanogaster* genome has 200,000,000 base-pairs distributed across four DNA molecules. Each molecule is the core of a chromosome. The four chromosomes together make up the genome. In all, this genome encodes about 13,600 genes.

On the other hand, the RNA molecule is comb-like. Its spine (strand) is made of alternating units of phosphate and sugar ribose molecules. Each sugar unit is attached to one of the four bases: A, C, G, and uridine (U), which make up the comb's tines.

A gene is a segment of a few thousand base-pairs of the DNA molecule. The sequence of bases on one of its strands tells every cell the sequence of amino acids it needs to string together to make a protein. To do this, the cell copies the sequence of As, Ts, Cs, and Gs in the



Many species that ordinarily reproduce sexually were found to also hatch a small fraction of eggs laid by isolated virgin females into larvae, a smaller fraction of which went on to develop into adults

DNA's protein-coding strand to a sequence of Us, As, Gs, and Cs, respectively, to form the RNA. The RNA is then sent to structures called ribosomes, which assemble the encoded protein.

Engineering asexual reproduction

The 44 genes whose expression differed between eggs of parthenogenetic and sexually-reproducing *D. mercatorum* strains had counterparts in the *D. melanogaster* genome. The researchers over- or under-expressed the counterparts to the levels in the *D. mercatorum* parthenogenetic eggs. In particular, they found that if the genome of a *D. melanogaster* specimen was modified to have two extra copies of the *polo* gene, an extra copy of the *Myc* gene, and a lower expression of the *Desat2* gene, 1.4% of the specimen's eggs were parthenogenetic and whose offspring survived to adulthood. The researchers also found that these parthenogenetically produced adult flies could also mate with male flies and produce progeny. So a strictly sexually reproducing fly was made facultatively parthenogenetic.

THE GIST

Fatherless reproduction is known as parthenogenesis. One species of fruit fly, *Drosophila manglebeirai*, was found to consist only of females. The eggs produced by isolated females developed directly into female progeny without having to be fertilised by sperm from a male

Researchers found that if the genome of a *D. melanogaster* specimen was modified to have two extra copies of the *polo* gene, an extra copy of the *Myc* gene, and a lower expression of the *Desat2* gene, 1.4% of the specimen's eggs were parthenogenetic and whose offspring survived to adulthood

Researchers also found that parthenogenetically produced adult flies could also mate with male flies and produce progeny. So a strictly sexually reproducing fly was made facultatively parthenogenetic

The polar bodies

A fly receives two sets of chromosomes, one from each parent. It transmits only one chromosome of each pair to its egg or sperm. Say a sperm has fertilised an egg. This egg will now have five sets of the genome: one in the egg's nucleus (maternal pronucleus), another in the nucleus from the sperm (paternal pronucleus), and three more nuclei called polar bodies that are sequestered in the egg's periphery.

The polar bodies are a by-product of the mechanism by which the fly transmits only one chromosome of each pair to the egg nucleus. Normally, the male and female pronuclei fuse to form the progeny nucleus, and the polar bodies are lost. If an egg is unfertilised, however, it lacks the male pronucleus and the female pronucleus is unable to initiate embryonic development on its own.

Altering the protein levels of *polo*, *Myc* and *Desat2* likely rendered polar-body sequestration and disposal inefficient. This makes one or more polar bodies available to substitute for the missing male pronucleus and start embryonic development.

These findings have implications to approaches to control insect pests by releasing large numbers of males sterilised by irradiation or males bearing genomes edited to derail progeny development, and thus reduce progeny numbers. Unwittingly, this approach will also select for facultatively parthenogenetic individuals, thus limiting its long-term effectiveness.

(D.P. Kasbekar is a retired scientist.)

BIG SHOT



The French League for Birds has estimated that more than 500 common guillemots - seabirds related to penguins and puffins - have been found dead along the French Atlantic coast since the year began. Guillemot beachings happen regularly in winter but not to the scale of the past weeks. Scientists say the birds likely died from exhaustion due to difficult conditions at sea. REUTERS

WHAT IS IT?

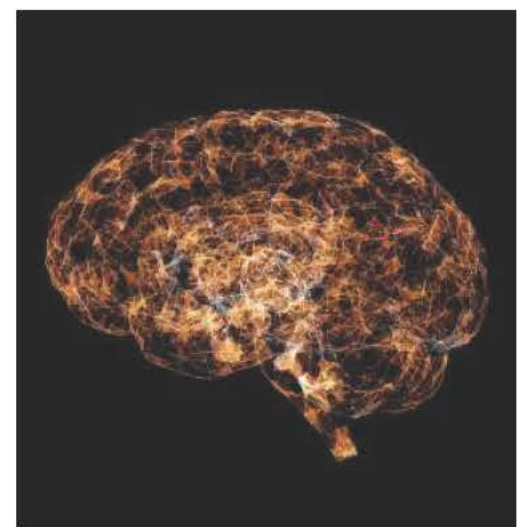
Connectome: the map of the brain

Arkatapa Basu

Just like the saying 'many drops make an ocean', billions of neurons make up the human brain, which keeps us alive and kicking. These neurons interact with each other, and these connections allow us to perform complex activities and synthesise complicated ideas. Scientists have made sense of the way this neural network functions using the concept of the connectome.

The connectome is a comprehensive map of connections - or synapses - between neurons in the brain, sort of like a cartogram for the electrical and chemical signals the neurons send and receive. A neuron's dendrites receive chemical signals and convert them into electrical information, which is then sent through the axon, the neuron's tail. At the end, based on the electrical inputs, the cell releases new chemicals into synapses, relaying the message to the next neuron.

Mapping the connectome allows scientists to understand brain function and how attention deficit hyperactivity disorder or Alzheimer's disease affect it. By charting the cellular links, they gain insights into cognitive processes - and the disorders that



The connectome is a comprehensive map of connections between neurons in the brain. GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

arise when the processes go awry - with which they can identify potential new drugs to treat such conditions.

Despite challenges posed by the brain's complexity and the vast amount of data it processes, the connectome has simplified scientists' understanding of the brain and paved the way for a clearer picture of our neurological health.

For feedback and suggestions for 'Science', please write to science@thehindu.co.in with the subject 'Daily page'