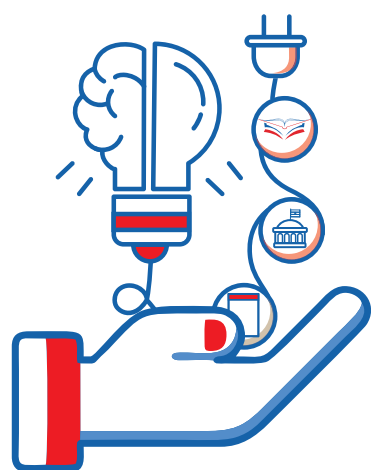




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136 AIR		238 AIR		257 AIR		313 AIR		517 AIR		541 AIR		551 AIR	
अर्पित कुमार ऑल इंडिया GS टेस्ट, निबंध टेस्ट, मेन्स 365 अम्यास, लक्ष्य, इंटरव्यू, CSAT टेस्ट, एथिक्स केस स्टडीज, मासिक करंट अफेयर्स कक्षाएं		विपिन दुबे ऑल इंडिया GS टेस्ट, अम्यास		मनीषा धावें ऑल इंडिया GS टेस्ट अम्यास, इंटरव्यू		मयंक दुबे ऑल इंडिया GS टेस्ट अम्यास, इंटरव्यू		देवेश पाराशर ऑल इंडिया GS टेस्ट, अम्यास, PT 365, दर्शनशास्त्र टेस्ट, निबंध टेस्ट, इंटरव्यू		शिवम अग्रवाल ऑल इंडिया GS टेस्ट अम्यास, इंटरव्यू		मोहन मंगवा अम्यास, इंटरव्यू	
555 AIR		556 AIR		563 AIR		596 AIR		616 AIR		619 AIR		633 AIR	
ईश्वर लाल गुर्जर ऑल इंडिया GS टेस्ट, अम्यास, PT 365, निबंध टेस्ट, इंटरव्यू		शुभम रघुवंशी लक्ष्य, अम्यास, इंटरव्यू		अजित सिंह खदा ऑल इंडिया GS टेस्ट		के परीक्षित ऑल इंडिया GS टेस्ट, एथिक्स केस स्टडीज		रवि गंगवार ऑल इंडिया GS टेस्ट, इंटरव्यू		मानु प्रताप सिंह ऑल इंडिया GS टेस्ट, लक्ष्य, इंटरव्यू		मैत्रेय कुमार शुक्ला अम्यास, इंटरव्यू	
642 AIR		697 AIR		747 AIR		758 AIR		776 AIR		793 AIR		798 AIR	
शशांक चौहान अम्यास, लक्ष्य, इंटरव्यू, CSAT टेस्ट		प्रीतेश सिंह राजपूत अम्यास, इंटरव्यू		नीरज धाकड़ ऑल इंडिया GS टेस्ट लक्ष्य, इंटरव्यू		सोफिया सिद्दीकी ऑल इंडिया GS टेस्ट अम्यास, लक्ष्य, इंटरव्यू		पटेल दीप राजेशकुमार इंटरव्यू		अशोक सोनी ऑल इंडिया GS टेस्ट, मेन्स 365, अम्यास, एथिक्स केस स्टडीज		विनोद कुमार मीना ऑल इंडिया GS टेस्ट लक्ष्य, अम्यास	
816 AIR		850 AIR		854 AIR		856 AIR		885 AIR		913 AIR		916 AIR	
पवन कुमार इंटरव्यू		भारती साहू ऑल इंडिया GS टेस्ट लक्ष्य, अम्यास		सचिन गुर्जर अम्यास		रजनीश पटेल ऑल इंडिया GS टेस्ट, अम्यास, लक्ष्य, इंटरव्यू		पूरन प्रकाश ऑल इंडिया GS टेस्ट, अम्यास, निबंध टेस्ट, एथिक्स केस स्टडीज		पायल ग्वालवंशी इंटरव्यू		नीलेश इंटरव्यू	
929 AIR		941 AIR		952 AIR		954 AIR		961 AIR		962 AIR		964 AIR	
प्रेम सिंह मीणा ऑल इंडिया GS टेस्ट लक्ष्य		प्रद्युमन कुमार इंटरव्यू		संदीप कुमार मीणा ऑल इंडिया GS टेस्ट, अम्यास, निबंध टेस्ट, इंटरव्यू		कर्मवीर नरवदिया ऑल इंडिया GS टेस्ट		अभिषेक मीणा ऑल इंडिया GS टेस्ट, लक्ष्य, अम्यास		सचिन कुमार ऑल इंडिया GS टेस्ट इंटरव्यू		नीरज सोंगारा ऑल इंडिया GS टेस्ट लक्ष्य, अम्यास	



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Text & Context

THE HINDU

NEWS IN NUMBERS

Indian tourists who visited Singapore from January to March

2.45 in lakh. The city had received 2.9 lakh tourists during January-March 2019. The Singapore tourism board has focussed on family and film tourism to improve arrivals. PTI

Iraqi citizens repatriated from Syrian camp

700 Iraqis, predominantly women and children, linked to the Islamic State group arrived at a camp near Iraq's city of Mosul. Iraq announced they will undergo a rehabilitation program. AP

Arrests made as protests continue in U.S. campuses

275 These protestors were arrested on Saturday from Universities including, Indiana University, Arizona State University, and Washington University in St. Louis. AP

Volume of India's first commercial crude storage in the works

2.5 in million tonnes. Indian Strategic Petroleum Reserves Ltd, an SPV created by the government, has invited bids for constructing 2.5 million tonnes of underground storage in Karnataka. PTI

Aid needed to alleviate El Nino dry spell in Zimbabwe

2 in billion dollars. Zimbabwe President Emmerson Mnangagwa declared the drought a national disaster. A dry spell induced by El Nino is wreaking havoc across southern Africa. AFP
COMPILED BY THE HINDU DATA TEAM

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Why are unclassified forests 'missing'?

What does the Forest (Conservation) Act Amendment (FCAA) 2023 mandate with respect to unclassified forests? What was the criticism against the amended Act? Have all States submitted their State Expert Committee reports as per the Supreme Court directives?

EXPLAINER

Prakriti Srivastava
Krithika Sampath
Prerna Singh Bindra

The story so far:

In compliance with a February 19, 2024, Supreme Court order, the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEFCC) uploaded the various State Expert Committee (SEC) reports on its website earlier in April. This interim order was in response to a public interest litigation challenging the constitutionality of the Forest (Conservation) Act Amendment (FCAA) 2023. A key concern in the petition was that the status of unclassified forests, which were to be identified by the SEC reports, wasn't known or if they had been identified at all.

What does the FCAA stipulate?

With the enactment of FCAA, unclassified forests – which have legal protection under the landmark *T.N. Godavarman Thirumalpad* (1996) case – would lose this protection, leading to their inevitable diversion. The SEC reports were to be prepared in pursuance of the order, which specified that 'forests' as per their dictionary meaning and all categories of forests irrespective of ownership and notification status would be included under the ambit of the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980. As a result, unclassified forests, also known as deemed forests, would require the Central government's approval in case a project proponent sought to divert that land for non-forest use. Unclassified or deemed forests may belong to forests, revenue, railways and other government entities, community forests or those under private ownership, but are not notified.

Have these forests been identified?

The status of the reports were unknown from 1996 until they shot back into prominence when the MoEFCC told a Joint Parliamentary Committee that the



Needs protection: Wild gaurs grazing in a forest area under Munnar wildlife division in Idukki. FILE PHOTO

SECs had identified unclassified forests that had been taken on record. This was in response to criticism that the proposed law undermined the *Godavarman* judgment and would exclude all unclassified forest land from its purview. The MoEFCC had assured the Committee that "the amended Act would be applicable" to the SEC-identified unclassified forests. However, in response to an RTI application filed on January 17, the MoEFCC said it "did not have the requisite reports".

While the MoEFCC has now uploaded the SEC reports on its website, they reveal a grim picture: no State has provided verifiable data on the identification, status, and location of unclassified forests. In fact, seven States and Union Territories – Goa, Haryana, Jammu & Kashmir, Ladakh, Lakshadweep, Tamil Nadu, and West Bengal – appear not to have constituted the SEC at all. Twenty-three

States have shared their reports but only 17 are in line with the Court's directives.

Many States have said the one month provided by the top court was too short and "the nature of work voluminous", and as a result haven't undertaken physical cadastral surveys nor demarcation of unclassified forest lands.

What do the reports say?

Only nine States have provided the extent of unclassified forests. Most states and UTs only shared the extent of different types of forest areas specified in the order: under government ownership, either with forest or revenue and in a few cases under other government departments.

Also, almost no State or UT specified the geographic locations of forests. Any identifying geographical information of forest land, where given, is only of reserve or protected forests, which isn't useful because this information is already

available with Forest Departments. The SEC reports also question the veracity of the reports of the Forest Survey of India, the only government agency to survey and assess forests. For example Gujarat, whose SEC report says its unclassified forests cover 192.24 sq. km while the Survey has reported it as significantly higher at 4,577 sq. km (1995-1999).

The treatment of SECs without on-ground verification is likely to have resulted in the large-scale destruction of forests – which ought to have been identified, demarcated, and protected 27 years ago. But with no baseline data from 1996-1997, we have no idea how much unclassified forest has been lost. For example, Kerala's SEC didn't include the Pallivasal unreserve, an ecologically fragile area in Munnar; this area was also devastated during the 2018 floods.

What would be the effects of FCAA?

The loss of such forests is likely to be a recurring theme in all States, and needs to be investigated. It is also clear the reports were hastily put together, using incomplete and unverified data collected from readily available records, and submitted to the Supreme Court in order to fulfil their obligations.

The *Godavarman* order of the SC was to be implemented in letter and spirit. The failure to do this is a lost opportunity to achieve the requirements of the Indian Forest Policy, which envisages 33.3% forest cover in plains and 66.6% in the hills. Promulgating the FCAA without examining the SEC reports displays a lack of diligence on the MoEFCC's part and will have consequences for India's ecosystems and ecological security. Those responsible need to be held to account, and the national government needs to take ameliorative action to re-identify, retrieve, and protect forest areas as per the 1996 judgment.

Prakriti Srivastava is an IFS (retd.) officer who has served as DIG (wildlife) in the MoEFCC. Prerna Singh Bindra is former member, National Board for Wildlife. Krithika Sampath is a researcher from the University of Michigan.

THE GIST

With the enactment of FCAA, unclassified forests – which have legal protection under the landmark *T.N. Godavarman Thirumalpad* (1996) case – would lose this protection, leading to their inevitable diversion.

No State has provided verifiable data on the identification, status, and location of unclassified forests. In fact, seven States and Union Territories appear not to have constituted the SEC at all. Twenty-three States have shared their reports but only 17 are in line with the Court's directives.

It is clear that the reports were hastily put together, using incomplete and unverified data collected from readily available records.

Why is Venice charging an entry fee for tourists?

How have local residents' associations responded to the move? Is overcrowding a significant issue in the city?

Atanu Biswas

The story so far:

On April 25, Venice, a city in Italy, to control overtourism, introduced an entry fee for visitors who are coming in to visit the city.

What is the Venice access fee?

Day-trippers coming to the city between 8.30 am and 4 pm are now required to pay €5. Overnight visitors are not charged, nor are residents, commuters, students, or children under 14. As part of a trial period, the entrance fee, which can be paid online and is only necessary to enter Venice's historic centre, is applicable on 29 peak days from April 25 to July 14. Transgressors risk fines ranging from €50 to €300.

What has been the response?

Some locals consider it a "joke," arguing

that it could turn Venice into a 'theme park'. A number of residents' associations have protested, claiming that it is a political ploy that most likely won't stop tourists from visiting St. Mark's Square and the Rialto Bridge. On its first day, 5,500 individuals purchased tickets, bringing in €27,500, which may just be enough to cover operating costs.

It's a "first-of-its-kind experiment," according to Venice Mayor Luigi Brugnaro, to lessen overcrowding, promote longer stays, and enhance the quality of life for locals in one of the most popular tourist destinations in the world. It's an effort to find a new equilibrium between residents and visitors. It would also aid in gathering basic data and controlling visitor flows. But some have also brought up privacy-related issues.

Is overcrowding an issue in Venice?

The introduction of the tourist tax comes after Venice just managed to avoid being

included on UNESCO's danger list last year due to the harm that overtourism was causing to its fragile ecosystem. Due to mass tourism, Venice's main island, which was once the heart of a powerful maritime republic, has lost more than 1,20,000 residents since the early 1950s. The population shrank to fifty thousand. With 3.2 million overnight guests in the historic centre in 2022 and over 30 million day-trippers annually, the city experiences congestion when the number of day-trippers approaches 30,000-40,000. It is thought that day-trippers contribute very little to the local economy.

What about sustainability?

Venice has been making an effort to re-establish a more sustainable relationship with tourists. The insistence from UNESCO and other environmentalists' eventually forced the authority to forbid big cruise ships from

passing through the Giudecca canal and past St. Mark's Square. A positive spillover effect of the Venice entry tax would be the reducing of the rapidly increasing number of unauthorised Airbnbs within the city. People operating illegal rentals will need to register legitimately (and pay tax) since anyone staying overnight will have to disclose where they are staying.

What about other popular spots?

Overtourism is a problem in many other European cities, including Amsterdam, Barcelona, and London. Tens of thousands of Spanish citizens recently protested in the Canary Islands, demanding a cap on the number of tourists allowed to visit the archipelago. Seville's main Plaza de España also requires a fee to enter.

The small admission price might just be the beginning. The Italian town of Bagnoregio levied a fee on visitors in 2018 to collect funds for its rescue since portions of the town are collapsing and it was successful. The most visited place in Wales is the town of Portmeirion in north Wales, which is one of the few British towns which charges for admission.

Can India follow suit?

Similarly, India which is home to a large number of tourist spots can definitely earn a lot from tourism while simultaneously deterring insignificant revenue-generating tourists.

THE GIST

Day-trippers coming to the city between 8.30 am and 4 pm are now required to pay €5. Overnight visitors are not charged.

Overtourism is a problem in many other cities, including Amsterdam, Barcelona, and London.

The introduction of the tourist tax comes after Venice just managed to avoid being included on UNESCO's danger list last year due to the harm that overtourism was causing to its fragile ecosystem.

KEYWORD



GETTY IMAGES

The paradox of thrift: does a rise in savings cause a fall in investment?

Keynesian economists argue that a rise in individuals' savings, by reducing the amount of money that is spent on final goods and services, can in effect cause a significant fall in overall savings and investment

Prashanth Perumal

The paradox of savings, also known as the paradox of thrift, refers to the theory that a rise in the savings rate of individuals can surprisingly cause a fall rather than a rise in the overall savings in an economy. This is in contrast to the general belief that a rise in individuals' savings rates will cause a rise in the overall savings in the economy. So even though savings may be good for an individual household, it is believed that it may not be good for the wider economy. The idea is part of the under-consumption theories of the business cycle which attribute economic downturns to weak consumption and high savings.

Origins of the theory
The concept was popularised by British economist John Maynard Keynes in his 1936 book *The General Theory of Employment, Interest, and Money*. Prior to Keynes, it was discussed by economists William T. Foster and Waddill Catchings in works such as *Business without a Buyer* and *The Dilemma of Thrift*.

Keynesian economists believe that

higher savings is bad for the wider economy, and that boosting consumer spending is the way to grow an economy. They argue that savings are invested by capitalists with the ultimate aim of selling their output in the form of final goods and services to consumers. So, if consumers fail to spend enough money on the output that capitalists bring to the market to sell, it can cause losses to capitalists and discourage further investment. On the other hand, a rise in consumer demand for final goods and services is expected to encourage people to save more and invest.

So, Keynesian economists argue that a rise in individuals' savings, by reducing the amount of money that is spent on final goods and services, can in effect cause a significant fall in overall savings and investment. In fact, many economists today believe that fluctuations in consumer spending are the primary reason behind the business cycle. They recommend that the government should take various measures, including increasing government spending, to put more money in the hands of consumers during economic downturns. Basically, in the Keynesian view of the economy, the primary challenge that fiscal and

monetary authorities need to solve is how to get people to spend enough money on final goods and services to justify the costs that capitalists incur to produce these goods and services.

Criticisms of the idea

Critics of the idea argue that saving more is not bad for the economy and that a fall in consumer spending does not actually cause a fall in investment. In fact, they argue that a fall in consumer spending leads to a rise in savings and investment. This is simply because any money that people don't spend on consumer goods or hoard under their beds has to go towards their savings, which in turn gets invested.

A rise in savings, they further note, causes an increase in entrepreneurial demand from capitalists for various factors of production. So, lower consumer demand for final goods and services gets offset by higher demand for factors of production, and hence there is no drop in aggregate demand in the economy as a result of higher savings.

Secondly, critics argue that it is not really true that a drop in consumer spending will lead to a drop in investment owing to a lack in consumer demand for

the final goods and services produced by businesses. Instead, they argue, a drop in consumer spending will simply cause a change in the way capitalists allocate their savings across time. In other words, these economists note that there won't be any adverse consequences due to lower consumer spending.

When people spend less on consumer goods and save more, they note, this will cause capitalists to invest a greater amount of available savings to satisfy consumer demand in the more distant future. So, longer-term business projects which were earlier unviable due to people's preference to consume goods and services in the near future rather than in the distant future suddenly become viable.

Now, the greater time allowed for capitalists to bring finished products to the market is a major reason why economic output is much higher in an advanced economy, these economists point out.

Put another way, the critics argue that capitalists in a free economy will effectively reallocate higher savings in accordance with the greater preference that consumers show for goods in the distant future than in the near future.

THE DAILY QUIZ

A quiz on all things jazz on the occasion of International Jazz Day celebrated on April 30

V.V. Ramanan

QUESTION 1
Which famous American jazz musician and composer mooted the idea of having an International Jazz Day and when was it first observed?

QUESTION 2
Which African city is the Global Host for 2024 and will anchor International Jazz Day programmes around the world?

QUESTION 3
Characterised by heavy mode modulation and few chord changes, which type of jazz had its pioneers in Miles Davis and John Coltrane?

QUESTION 4
Bird, the 1988 biographical film directed and produced by Clint Eastwood, is about which famous jazz musician?

QUESTION 5
What is the claim to fame of 'Livery Stable Blues' released in February 1917?

QUESTION 6
Which acclaimed jazz musicians were nicknamed 'High Priest of Bop' and 'King of the Clarinet'?

QUESTION 7
Whose autobiography is titled *Lady Sings the Blues* that was adapted into a movie in 1972, starring Diana Ross?



Visual question:
Identify this legendary singer dubbed the 'the Lady of Swing' and also famous for improvised scat solos. AP

Questions and Answers to the previous day's daily quiz: 1. This country has won the Thomas Cup the most number of times. **Ans: Indonesia**
2. The only European/non-Asian country to have won the Thomas Cup. **Ans: Denmark**
3. India hosted the Cup only once here. **Ans: In 2014 in New Delhi**
4. This country has won the Uber Cup the most number of times. **Ans: China**
5. The only non-Asian country to have won the Uber Cup so far. **Ans: The U.S.**
6. The number of times India has qualified for the semi-finals in the Uber Cup. **Ans: Three times**
Visual: Identify this Indian athlete. **Ans: K. Srikanth**
Early Birds: Varghese Joseph| Saheni George| Sadhan Kumar Panda| M. Suresh Kumar| Abhay Krishan



FROM THE ARCHIVES

Know your English

K. Subramanian

"In limbo (Dr. K. V. K. Veereswaran, Dindigul)."
" 'In limbo' is an idiom which means 'in an intermediate or uncertain state; neglected.'
The proposal has been in limbo for several years.
According to early Christian theology, good people born before Christ and unbaptised children born after Christ were sent after their death to the border of Hell called Limbo. Their souls, it was believed, would reach Heaven during the second coming of Christ."
"Umbrella organisation (G. Chandramouli, Mysore)."
" 'Umbrella organisation' is 'a controlling agency for a group of related companies, groups, projects, etc.'
UNESCO is an umbrella organisation."
"Familiar with, familiar to (Sabir Kr. Dey, Basudevpur, West Bengal)."
" 'Familiar with' also means 'knowing a thing well or in detail'.
I am familiar with this subject. I am not familiar with this route.
'Familiar to' means 'well known.'
This area must be familiar to you.
'Familiar with' also means 'friendly and informal'.
I am on familiar terms with him."
"Latitudinarian (T. R. R. Iyengar, Madurai)."
"One of the meanings of latitude is 'freedom to do, say, etc. what one likes.' A latitudinarian is one who allows latitude, especially in religion. He pays little attention to dogma and orthodoxy.
Orthodox people dislike him as he is a latitudinarian."
"Samey (K. Puranik, Bombay)."
" 'Samey' means 'lacking in variety, monotonous, dull.' This is a colloquial word. It is from 'same'.
His paintings are samey. I don't like them.
Her plays are samey."
"Steal as a noun (Girija Joshi, Varanasi)."
"Steal is used as a noun in colloquial American English. It has two meanings. One is 'an act or instance of stealing or theft'. The other is 'an expectedly easy task or bargain'.
At ₹200, this camera is a steal."
"Not do a hand's turn (K. Sasidaran, Kozhikode)."
" 'Not do a hand's turn' means 'not do any work'.
He does not do a hand's turn at home. He just eats and sleeps."
"Evident, obvious (P. D. Moorthy, Madras)."
"Both mean 'clear, plain'. You say that something is evident when it can be inferred from indications.
It is evident that he has stolen them.
'Obvious' is from Latin 'obvium' which means 'on the road.' What is on the road is unmistakably clear.
It is obvious that he is the thief.
Evident means 'plain,' 'obvious' means 'unmistakably plain.'
Published in The Hindu on October 22, 1991.

Word of the day
Hardscrabble:
barely satisfying a lower standard
Synonyms: scrimpy, stingy, meagre
Usage: *He lived a hardscrabble life.*
Pronunciation: bit.ly/hardscrabblepro
International Phonetic Alphabet: /hɑrdʃskɹæbəl/

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CA Abhay Bhutada
Managing Director



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PAT	RoA	Disbursement	AUM	GNPA	NNPA
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Sunrisers throw up template for T20 batting

Armed with a no-fear approach and bolstered by the Impact Player rule, the 2016 champion has notched up gargantuan totals and emerged as a trailblazer



Power Play: While Head and Abhishek have gone on the attack right from the word go, Klaasen has sustained the momentum with his punishing blade. SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR, K. BHAGYA PRAKASH & K.R. DEEPAK

R. Kaushik

Two-thirds of the way into the league phase of the tournament, this edition of the IPL has already been one of plenty. Plenty of fours and sixes. Plenty of totals in excess of 200. Plenty of joy for the willow-wielders. And plenty of agony and anguish for the hapless bowlers who have been reduced to bowling machines, serfs who are only there to do the power-packed batters' bidding.

Among those wreaking the most havoc is the batting group from Sunrisers Hyderabad. The 2016 champion has been the talk of the cricketing world, defeats in its last two encounters notwithstanding. Twice this season, SRH has broken the record for the highest total in IPL history, backing up 277 for three against Mumbai Indians at home with 287 for three against Royal Challengers Bengaluru at the M. Chinnaswamy Stadium. Its unfettered approach to the Powerplay has subsequently found resonance in other teams; only the other night, Punjab Kings mounted the highest successful chase in the IPL, against Kolkata Knight Riders, sending out a strong message that there is no such thing as a 'safe' score any longer.

There is much to admire in the manner in which SRH has gone about its business. It already had a strong batting core, but the acquisition in the December auction of Travis Head, the explosive Australian opener, has lent a whole new dynamic. Head may not be the most appealing aesthetically, but what he lacks in grace and elegance, he more than makes up for with his ferocious onslaughts based on unmatched hand-eye coordination and a comprehensive understanding of what his strengths – and his limitations – are.

In a way, SRH was compelled to recalibrate its approach following a disastrous 2023 season which it finished at the bottom of the pile. Despite the resources at its command, it was timid and hesitant with the bat, and in a format where the bat is the one that rules the roost, that was a guaranteed recipe for disaster. Stung by its last-place finish, the ownership group rang in the changes. Out went West Indian legend Brian Lara, who was replaced as head coach by Daniel Vettori. With the call to divest Aiden Markram of the captaincy, SRH identified Pat Cummins, Australia's undisputed

leader, as best suited to helm their campaign. SRH pursued the quick with single-minded zeal at the auction, dishing out ₹20.50 crore to secure his services. Against that backdrop, Head was a steal at ₹6.8 crore. That it is money well spent is all too obvious.

Brutal batting tree

SRH isn't all about Head alone, of course. The devastating left-hander sits atop a brutal batting tree with Abhishek Sharma, his opening partner, and South African stumper Heinrich Klaasen as equal contributors to the carnage that hasn't spared any bowler. The franchise has invested hugely in Abhishek over the years and the young left-hander is finally beginning to repay the faith, while Klaasen's class – pardon the pun – has seldom been in doubt. He, more than anyone else, has ensured that the exceptional starts provided by the fearless Head-Abhishek combine haven't gone to waste.

There was a time when teams targeted conservative PowerPlays. They constructed their innings around keeping wickets in hand and teeing off in the last quarter, an approach that doesn't always pay off. SRH has radically transformed thought processes by going hard at the bowling from the get-go. The profusion of batting riches – the impressive Nitish Kumar Reddy has been the find of the season, Abdul Samad has embraced greater consistency in his role as finisher and Shahbaz Ahmed has come into his own – as well as the introduction of the Impact Player has allowed it to keep going hard even if a couple of wickets tumble in quick succession. The onus is no longer on beginning quietly and finishing in a frenzy; SRH has treated every over as a PowerPlay over, with spectacular results.

This approach comes with its attendant risks, needless to say. There will be days – or is it nights? – when the implosion will be dramatic and decisive, like against Royal Challengers Bengaluru last week. Chasing 207 for victory at home, SRH stumbled to 56 for four after five overs, its reply in a shambles with its big guns silenced. Even so, there was not even a token effort to bat out the overs, no overt bid to reduce the margin of defeat with an eye on the net run rate. Such mundane thinking has gone out the window.

Even when staring a huge loss in the face, SRH kept attacking, Cummins briefly raising visions of an unexpected victory. It eventually recovered to finish on 171 for eight, beaten by 35 runs. 'A matter of six deliveries,' is how they described their abortive chase. So simple, perhaps too much so, some might say, but how can you argue with a side that has smashed 112 sixes in nine matches to date?

Head has walked away with all the accolades, which is perhaps understandable because he is a celebrated international star who boasts hundreds in the final of the World Test Championship and the 50-over World Cup, both against India. His franchise-high 338 runs have come at an average of 42.25 and a humongous strike-rate of 211.25. He has unleashed 40 fours and 19 sixes; in effect, he has hit a boundary every 2.7 balls. Those are exceptional stats.

Perfect partner

But Abhishek hardly suffers in comparison. With 303 runs to his name, he is his team's second highest scorer. Remarkably, his strike-rate of 214.89 is more than three higher than Head's. He has hit a boundary every 2.8 balls, and while his four-count (22) is nearly half of Head's, he has hammered a whopping 27 sixes. It's no wonder then that, against Delhi Capitals, SRH ended the PowerPlay at 125 without loss, the most runs ever in the first six overs of a T20 game.

Then, there is Klaasen – 295 runs, strike-rate 185.53, just nine fours but an extraordinary 28 sixes. Admittedly, some of the grounds at this year's IPL, like at every year's IPL, haven't been the largest, but the distance these sixes have travelled would lead one to believe that no matter where, they would still have been sixes. That's an offshoot of the prep that goes in behind the scenes. There is a concerted attempt to smite the ball longer and harder, with range-hitting a fearsome, awe-inspiring and intimidating experience on the eve of a match.

The key to being a T20 destroyer is shedding the fear of getting out. That goes against the basic grain of batsmanship. Even in this world of instant gratification and the overwhelming desire to get into franchise cricket – playing for the country isn't quite the ultimate aim, as it

used to be in a more relaxed era – young kids are taught to put a price on their wicket in their formative years. To therefore bat with freedom, and without the attendant fear of being dismissed to a 'poor' stroke, calls for an equanimity and a mindset that can and must overlook the consequences of getting out. It's not as if SRH is the first team to introduce this concept, but no one has espoused it more stridently and consistently than the Cummins-inspired outfit that still has plenty of runs, and sixes, in it.

While SRH has been an extraordinary front-runner, it hasn't quite mastered the art of chasing yet. Three of its four losses have come when its has batted second, and its has chased successfully just once, which might point to a soft underbelly that other sides would have taken note of. That's an area of concern, no matter what spin the team management might seek to put on it, but one can rest assured that it will be addressed post-haste, if it already hasn't been.

Is SRH's approach capable of being emulated? Can it be the trend-setter, the trailblazer that can inspire others to follow suit? On the evidence of IPL 2024, most certainly. SRH has redefined the art of run-making, especially while batting first, in the 20-over format but for others – franchises and international teams – to follow suit will require not just a change in mindset but also bringing together resources that can facilitate that methodology. It's easier, if that's the right word, to piece a franchise team together because one can draw from so many options, from so many countries. To assemble a national side in like fashion will be a more daunting and trying exercise, with the added rider that the Impact Player hasn't yet percolated to country versus country battle.

T20 games are no longer won and lost in the PowerPlay, but the tempo is often set in the first six overs when only two fielders are allowed outside the 30-yard circle. When the run-rate is in the 15s after six overs, it's relatively easier to ride on that momentum, as SRH's largely productive middle order has showcased. Abhishek and Head starts – apologies again for the horrible pun – have been integral to the fortunes of SRH, which has unveiled a style that is certain to become a T20 template.

THE GIST

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