



on Sunday



**Modi and Trudeau will seek reset in ties on the sidelines of G-7 summit**  
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**Pakistan opposes move to hold events linked to G-20 in J&K**  
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**Chinese President to attend Hong Kong handover celebration**  
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**Harmanpreet stars as India goes 2-0 up against Sri Lanka**  
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**IN BRIEF**



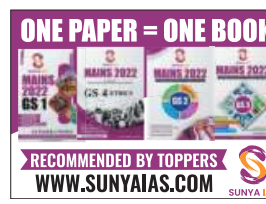
**Over 10 lakh applicants await ration cards in Delhi**  
NEW DELHI  
The applications for ration cards of 10.08 lakh persons in the national capital are still pending, according to data as of May 31. The number of pending applications has increased by 50% in the past one year. The government is yet to issue 3.1 lakh ration cards to applicants.

STATES PAGE 3

**Arrest on Nepal border helps bust illegal club**

NEW DELHI  
The chance arrest of two Chinese nationals on the India-Nepal border in Bihar by the Sashastra Seema Bal earlier this month led the Uttar Pradesh police to a sprawling club run illegally by a Chinese national in a village on the outskirts of Delhi. The club functioned under the radar without any obstruction for the past two years in Greater Noida.

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## 16 rebels asked to reply to notice by tomorrow

Shiv Sena's national executive rallies behind Uddhav

ALOK DESHPANDE  
MUMBAI

The national executive meeting of the Shiv Sena on Saturday passed six resolutions giving absolute right to Maharashtra Chief Minister and party president Uddhav Thackeray to take action against the rebels to bring the revolt within the party under control.

The national executive barred any individual or group from using the name of the party's founder, the late Bal Thackeray, after reports that the rebel MLAs would name their group as Shiv Sena (Balasaheb Thackeray).  
The office of Deputy Speaker Narhari Zirwal on Saturday confirmed issue of disqualification notice to 16 rebel MLAs, seeking a reply within 48 hours. But the Shinde group tried to move a no-confidence motion against Mr. Zirwal, though the Assembly is not in session. It was rejected as the notice was from an unknown email id.

The rebels remained firm, saying they wanted to stay with the Sena, but the party should ally with the BJP and not the Congress or the Nationalist Congress Party.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 7



**State of flux:** Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray leaving the Sena Bhavan in Mumbai after a meeting. •PTI

## Ban orders in Mumbai as MLAs' offices attacked

STAFF REPORTER  
MUMBAI

The political crisis in Maharashtra is now spilling on to the streets. On Saturday, Shiv Sena workers vandalised the offices of a few rebel MLAs in Maharashtra.

Considering the tensions and possible aggressive reaction from Sena workers, Mumbai Police on Saturday imposed Section 144 of the Code of Criminal Procedure in the city, banning gatherings of five or more people at one location.

The 38 rebel MLAs in Guwahati wrote to Assam's Chief Minister, Home Minister and the Director General of Police on Saturday for police protection for their families. The letter signed by the 38 MLAs said the security provided to them at their homes and to their families as per protocol had been unlawfully withdrawn, as an act of revenge.

Maharashtra Home Minister Dilip Walse-Patil rejected the charge that their security had been removed.

## Teesta, former IPS officer detained

Action comes a day after SC order in 2002 riots case

THE HINDU BUREAU  
AHMEDABAD/MUMBAI

Ahmedabad Police on Saturday arrested former Indian Police Service (IPS) officer and whistle-blower R.B. Sreekumar and detained Mumbai-based social activist Teesta Setalvad, after filing a first information report (FIR) accusing them of forgery and criminal conspiracy and other offences under the Indian Penal Code. Dismissed and jailed IPS officer Sanjiv Bhatt is also named in the FIR.

The police crackdown came a day after the Supreme Court upheld the



**New turn:** Activist Teesta Setalvad being detained by Gujarat Police in Mumbai on Saturday. •PTI

clean chit given to then Gujarat Chief Minister Narendra Modi and others in the 2002 riots case, endorsing the report of the Special Investiga-

tion Team (SIT), which had filed a closure report against Mr. Modi and others.

The court dismissed the allegations of a "larger con-

spiracy" behind the communal riots in 2002 and rejected the petition filed by Zakiya Jafri, widow of former Congress MP Ehsan Jafri, who was killed along with 69 others in the Gulberg Society massacre in Ahmedabad in 2002.

The 10-page FIR provides details of alleged forgery and cites observations from the Supreme Court verdict. "At the end of the day, it appears to us that a coalesced effort of the disgruntled officials of the State of Gujarat along with others was to create sensation by making revelations which were false to their own knowledge," the court noted.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 7

## Scientists warn of Zika spread

1,520 clinical samples collected from 1,475 patients in country

BINDU SHAJAN  
PERAPPADAN  
NEW DELHI

Scientists at the National Institute of Virology (NIV), Pune, have raised an alarm about the spread of the Zika virus, along with dengue and chikungunya, in several States and Union Territories where it has never been reported earlier, establishing local transmission in India.

Scientists have called for urgent strengthening of surveillance, after the circulation of Zika virus was detected in Delhi, Jharkhand, Rajasthan, Punjab, and Telangana in 2021, in addition to Kerala, Maharashtra, and Uttar Pradesh.

Previously, sporadic cases were reported from Gujarat (2016-17), Tamil Nadu (2017), Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan (2018). The researchers also found co-infection of Zika, dengue and chikungunya, which, they said, was another concern in many

places. There was a need to be aware and take preventive measures, they added.

The Zika virus (ZIKV), a vector-borne flavivirus, is transmitted by the bite of infected *Aedes* mosquitoes, mainly *Aedes aegypti* and *Aedes albopictus*.

**Countrywide study**

For their study, a total of 1,520 clinical samples – serum (1,253), plasma (99), whole blood (120), and urine (48) – were collected from 1,475 patients across 16 viral research and diagnostic laboratories (VRDLs) in Delhi, Kerala, Punjab, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Madhya Pradesh, West Bengal, Bihar, Odisha, Telangana, Assam, Jharkhand, and Bihar. The samples were transferred to the apex laboratory at the Indian Council of Medical Research-National Institute of Virology (ICMR-NIV), Pune, for molecular diagnosis, serology,

and genomic analysis.

"In 2021, Zika virus outbreaks were reported in Kerala (May-July), Maharashtra (July), and Uttar Pradesh (October) and since these outbreaks were reported from distant locations and over a period of six months, we conducted a retrospective screening of dengue and chikungunya negative clinical samples (stored with VRDLs) from May to October 2021 to understand the extent of the spread of the virus," said Nivedita Gupta, head of virology at ICMR, who co-ordinated the study.

The research said retrospective surveillance for ZIKV demonstrated its silent spread to almost all parts of India with a predominance of the more recent 2018 Rajasthan strain. The scientists said the development of reliable tests and validating the utility of serology-based tests would help in augmenting diagnostic capabilities.

**Coin dive**



**Swim and sink:** People searching for coins thrown by devotees in the polluted Yamuna in New Delhi on Saturday. •R.V. MOORTHY

## Airfares sting, no 'low-cost' flight in skies now

But despite jump in ticket rates by up to 50%, airlines flew the highest number of passengers in May

JAGRITI CHANDRA  
NEW DELHI

With the rise in aviation turbine fuel (ATF) prices, domestic and international airfares have witnessed a surge by up to 50% in the past few months, according to data from online portals.

A ticket for New Delhi to Mumbai booked on Saturday for a flight within the next 15 days will cost a traveller ₹8,576 as compared to ₹5,675 in January this year – an increase of 51%. Similarly, a flight ticket for Bengaluru to New Delhi within the same booking window will cost ₹9,674, which is a 38% increase from ₹6,984 five months ago. And, a Mumbai to Varanasi air ticket is up by 47% to ₹8,565 as compared to ₹5,810 in January.

Data from travel portal ixigo shows that airfares were

**Climbing high**

The increase in the cost of aviation turbine fuel has compelled airlines around the world to raise airfares



Route	FARE (₹)		
	June 2022	Jan. 2022	% Change
New Delhi- Mumbai	8,576	5,675	+51%
Bengaluru- New Delhi	9,764	6,984	+38%
Mumbai- Varanasi	8,565	5,810	+47%
New Delhi- Pune	7,846	5,603	+40%

\*BOOKED FOR TRAVEL WITHIN THE NEXT 15 DAYS

higher by 27% to 50% on various domestic routes even in the month of May.

"Fares right now are the highest we have seen on the domestic side post-COVID," says Manan Bajoria, VP, Growth Marketing & Analytics, ixigo.

Yet, airlines in May flew the highest number of passengers since the pandemic at 1.20 crore passengers.

International flights which returned to their pre-COVID-19 levels from March 27 are also costlier as compared with 2019 rates. A Mumbai-

New York one-way fare in May 2022 was ₹70,296, a steep rise from ₹33,265 in May 2019. "However, despite rising airfares, interest in international travel this summer is strong due to pent-up demand with international travel resuming fully after two years. Southeast Asia, Middle East & Europe are the top summer destinations this year," says Mr. Bajoria.

**'No other go'**

Recently, SpiceJet's chairman and managing director Ajay Singh said airlines were left with no choice but to immediately raise fares, and that a minimum of 10-15% increase was required to ensure sustainable operations. He attributed this to a 120% increase in ATF prices since June 2021 as well as the weakening rupee, as a significant

chunk of airline costs is dollar-denominated. Fuel, he said, accounted for more than 50% of the airline's operating costs, higher from earlier levels of 30%-40%.

Vistara's CEO Vinod Kannan too has said that an increase in airfares was "inevitable". IndiGo also called for raising the upper limit of the fare bands imposed by the government for bookings 15 days before departure.

The International Air Transport Association (IATA), in its latest global outlook, says fare hike will not deter travellers because of the massive pent-up demand for travel after a gap of two years as well as savings accumulated during the pandemic, but the price insensitivity could fade in 2023 as consumers have filled their travel deficit.

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# Suspension of DDA officials dents morale of JJ cluster residents

Action over 'substandard' work leaves slum rehab project beneficiaries in a fix

MUNEEF KHAN  
NEW DELHI

Days after the Delhi Development Authority (DDA) suspended two of its assistant engineers over "substandard" work at the urban body's in situ slum rehabilitation project at Kalkaji Extension, the residents of Bhoomiheen Camp (JJ cluster), who have been allotted flats in the project, remain worried about the quality of their future homes.

According to a senior DDA official and other sources, the suspensions came on the directions of Lieutenant-Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena following his inspection of the site on June 11. Sources said the L-G found the work done in the flats to be "substandard and incomplete".

## Long wait

The news about the suspensions and the "substandard" quality of the flats has left the residents of the JJ cluster in a fix about what to do next. While a number of allottees told *The Hindu* that they have waited too long and would accept what comes their way, some beneficiaries said they were, in fact, reconsidering the option to move in.

Sapan Shah, 59, a beneficiary of the slum rehab project, said the recent developments have killed all his excitement about moving into the newly built homes.

"They should have looked into the quality of the houses beforehand or at least at the planning stage. Now the time has passed. We are paying out of our pocket for these homes. We don't have a choice now, we must adjust to what we get," said Mr. Shah, who has been residing



**Shattered hopes:** Broken windows at the DDA's slum rehabilitation project (right) at Kalkaji Extension. ■ R.V. MOORTHY



at the JJ cluster since 1982.

Sharing a similar view, Parimal Mandal, a resident who runs a small shop at the camp, said since 2011, when the project was first conceived, the families at the JJ cluster have undergone multiple surveys to prove their eligibility and over 50% of them have received allotment-cum-demand letters so far.

## ₹1.42 lakh per flat

According to the DDA, the flats will be allotted upon the payment of ₹1,42,000 per allottee, which includes ₹30,000 as maintenance charge for a period of five years.

Under the project, the DDA has constructed 3,024 flats – each of which have two rooms, a washroom, a kitchen and a balcony – for slightly over 2,800 households at the JJ cluster.

In February, the DDA conducted the first draw of lots in which allotment letters were issued to 673 households. Last week, the DDA conducted a second draw of lots for 903 eligible house-

holds.

At the project site, visited by *The Hindu*, broken windowpanes and incomplete fittings were spotted outside multiple flats, which measure slightly over 25 square metres, while the interiors of a sample flat were complete and intact.

"One has to understand that the people living in this [Bhoomiheen] camp are very hesitant and economically weak. Such developments lead to major worries. For them, it is about having proper housing and they now fear that they may face more problems after moving into the flats," said a resident, adding that he is having second thoughts about paying for the flat.

## 'Residents misled'

Reacting to the concerns raised by the JJ cluster residents, the senior DDA official denied that the work was substandard and said the beneficiaries were being misled with rumours about the construction quality. On the incomplete fittings, the official said there were only a

few flats where they were yet to be installed.

"During the L-G's visit, he first inspected the sample flat and was quite satisfied with it. Upon inspecting the other flats, he noticed that some fittings such as switches and other facilities had not been installed. The officials tried to explain that they will be installed once the homes are allotted, but the L-G was unhappy with the condition of the flats," said the official.

All JJ cluster beneficiaries will be allotted the flats this year itself, said the official, adding that the project is likely to be inaugurated by a dignitary from the Union government.

"We are going to start issuing the possession letters from next week and we have also reduced the paperwork for the beneficiaries to avoid any hassle. Once they make the payment, vacate their homes in the slum cluster and get a demolition slip, the entire cluster will be removed and the land will be utilised by the DDA," said the official.

# AAP MLAs facing extortion threats: Singh

'Caller demanded ₹5 lakh to ₹10 lakh from legislators of Burari, Ambedkar Nagar'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Highlighting the deteriorating law and order situation in Delhi, the Aam Aadmi Party on Saturday said its legislators have been receiving extortion threats from gangsters since June 20.

AAP Rajya Sabha MP Sanjay Singh said a caller identifying himself as Vicky Brar alias Vicky Cobra has made calls to the party's Burari MLA Sanjeev Jha and Ambedkar Nagar MLA Ajay Dutt demanding ₹5 lakh to ₹10 lakh as protection money. At the press conference, Mr. Singh also played an audio recording of the extortion call in which the caller said he was an associate of incarcerated gangster Neeraj Bawana.

"We are not afraid of such threats but scared about what the common man goes through when MLAs are not safe," Mr. Jha said.



AAP MP Sanjay Singh

"It is surprising that AAP, which used to oppose security cover to political leaders, is today very anxious to get it for its leaders. People want to know that if AAP MLAs are honest and working in public interest then from whom are they facing threats," he said.

**'Lawlessness' in Capital**  
Mr. Singh said law and order in Delhi came under the ambit of the Ministry of Home Affairs and accused Union Home Minister Amit Shah of doing little to control "lawlessness" in the Capital.

The AAP leader said the city had been witness to "several incidents of gang wars" over the last couple of weeks, and killings and attempts to murder on the premises of courts. He said that the party's MLAs had so far received 24 extortion calls from gangsters, threatening them and their family members.

"On June 20, three-time elected AAP MLA Sanjeev Jha received a phone call and was asked for ₹10 lakh by 12 p.m. the next day and was told that if he did not adhere to the threat, his life as well as that of his family will be under threat. On June 22, our Ambedkar Nagar MLA Ajay Dutt received a call and was asked for ₹5 lakh," Mr. Singh said.

"When Sanjeev Jha received the extortion call from an unknown person, we met the Delhi Police Commissioner and filed an FIR in the matter and were informed that the case would be sent to the Special Cell. Despite this, another AAP MLA received an extortion call from the same person," the MP said. The threats were issued to both MLAs via WhatsApp from the same phone number, he added.

(With inputs from PTI)

A senior police officer said separate FIRs have been registered in connection with the calls received by the two MLAs and the Delhi Police's Special Cell is probing the cases.

**'Ploy to get VIP security'**  
Reacting to the allegations, Bharatiya Janata Party's Delhi spokesperson Praveen Shankar Kapoor said Delhi Police should act on the complaints but added that it seemed like a "ploy by AAP" to get VIP security for its MLAs.

## In good company



Homeless people relaxing in front of a mural at Jantar Mantar on Saturday. ■ R.V. MOORTHY

## Owners without PUC certificate to face action

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI

The Delhi government on Saturday asked vehicle owners to obtain a valid pollution under control (PUC) certificate to avoid penal actions, including disqualification of their driving licence for three months, in a move to control pollution.

In a public notice, the State Transport Department said it would issue challans to the owners of those vehicles whose PUC certificate has expired. The challan will be issued under Section 190 (2) of the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988, which states that failure to possess a PUC certificate may lead to imprisonment up to three months or fine up to ₹10,000 or both.

The notice said all registered owners with vehicles over a year old from the date of registration should get their vehicles checked and obtain a valid PUC certificate. To curb vehicular pollution, the Delhi government has already banned the entry of medium and heavy goods vehicles into the Capital from October to February, officials said.

On June 15, the Delhi government had written to its neighbouring States, including Haryana and Uttar Pradesh, urging them to allow only BS VI-compliant buses to enter the Capital from October 1 to help control pollution in the city.

# Expedite TOD project at Karkardooma: L-G

Saxena instructs MCD to make all services requiring public interface IT-enabled

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

Lieutenant-Governor V.K. Saxena has asked the Delhi Development Authority and NBCC to complete the Capital's first transit-oriented development (TOD) project at Karkardooma before the deadline, the Raj Niwas said on Saturday.

This development comes after Mr. Saxena's visit to the project site in east Delhi, during which he took stock of the work's progress, while directing the agencies to stick to "uncompromising structural safety" and take steps to fully integrate the upcom-



L-G Vinai Kumar Saxena

ing complex with the neighbourhood.

**Deadline: Sept. 2026**  
Spread across 25.47 hectares with a minimum green area of 30%, the project took off

in September 2021; it is scheduled for completion by September 2026.

The TOD is an urban planning concept that involves mixed-use development, which includes residential, business and leisure spaces within walking proximity of each other, along with existing and upcoming public transport infrastructure.

According to Raj Niwas, the project's residential component comprising EWS housing and high-rise residential apartments is expected to be completed by the middle of 2023 and 2024, respectively.

The L-G has also instructed the Municipal Corporation of Delhi to make all services that require public interface IT-enabled and online by July 31, according to an official statement on Saturday.

Mr. Saxena said services like property tax, advertisement, building plan sanction, layout approval, licenses, conversion and parking charges were so far being carried out in a piecemeal manner. He added that the move will ensure effective and timely delivery, "minimise inconvenience and harassment of people" and curtail inefficiency and corruption.

## Police staff injured during scuffle; 10 held

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

A beat officer sustained injuries while trying to intervene in a scuffle between women protesters and the female staff at a wine shop in south Delhi's Tigri. Ten persons have been arrested in the case, the Delhi police said on Saturday.

The incident occurred on Thursday night over the opening of the wine shop in the area. The 10 offenders were arrested on Friday, the police added.

DCP (South) Benita Mary Jaiker said on reaching the location, the police found that a few women were protesting against the shop's opening. A heated argument broke out between the protesters and the female staff deployed at the shop.

When the police tried to intervene to pacify the protesters, both the parties became aggressive and manhandled a beat officer and tore his uniform, the DCP said. The situation was later brought under control and the injured officer was taken to AIIMS.

# MCD to rejuvenate 20 ponds across the city

STP water will be channelised to ponds

STAFF REPORTER  
NEW DELHI

The Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) on Saturday said it will rejuvenate 20 ponds in the Capital, as part of its first phase under the Mission Amrit Sarovar project.

The civic body, under the project, aims to rejuvenate water bodies located in the city's Dwarka, Narela and Ghazipur areas, among others, by March 31, 2023. It will also develop footpaths

around the periphery along with the installation of gazebos, sheds and benches for recreational purposes.

Launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in April 2022, Mission Amrit Sarovar is aimed at rejuvenating 75 water bodies in each district of the country.

"Sewage treatment plants (STP) will be installed near these ponds or the water from nearby STPs will be channelised to them," the civic body's statement read.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI

The Delhi Jal Board said on Saturday said water supply will be partially hit in north, north-west and west Delhi as clear water production has been affected at water treatment plants in Haiderpur and Bawana.

It appealed to people to make judicious use of water. "Delhi Jal Board is endeavoring to rationalise the water supply. However, water will be available at low pressure till the situation improves. Therefore, public is requested to make judicious use of water," it said.

The board also asked people to contact its Central Control Room on 1916, 23527679, 23634469 for water-related problems and demand of tankers.

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• JANAKPURI B-1/2, Main Najafgarh Road, Opp. Metro Pillar 543  
• NOIDA, Nirula's Sec-2, Near Metro Station, Sec-15, Noida, UP  
• LAJPAT NAGAR, 49, Main Ring Road, Adj. Haldi Ram, Near Moolchand Crossing

OPEN 7 DAYS

UNIT TERRITORY OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR  
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER JAL SHAKTI MECH. G.W.D. DIVISION JAMMU

SHORT TERM NOTICE INVITING e-TENDER  
E-NIT NO GWD/46 OF 2022-23 DATED: 20.06.2022

On behalf of the Lt. Governor, UT of J&K, the Executive Engineer Jal Shakti Mech. Ground Water Drilling Division Jammu invites tenders by e-tendering mode from reputed and registered firms with PHE/IFC Deptt., J&K Govt. as a Drilling Agency who have sufficient experience in the field of drilling and are well equipped with drilling rigs suitable for ODEX method.

Name of the Work	Name of the Division	Cost of Tender Document/Tender Fee(In Rs)	Qty.	Estimated cost (value of work) (in Rs.)	Earnest Money (In Rs)	Validity of Rates
Deep Drilling of 125 mm dia Bore Holes by using ODEX method including providing, installation, testing, commissioning of MarkII Hand Pumps and construction of platforms at 54 Nos Locations in Block Udhampur and Tikri of District Udhampur on Turnkey Basis (EPC) under District Capex Budget 2022-23 (PRI DDC & BDC Grants)	Jal Shakti Mech. Ground Water Drilling Division Jammu	2000.00 (Non-Refundable) Deposited in Govt. treasury through e-challan under the receipt head 0215 in favour of the Executive Engineer, Jal Shakti Mech. GWD Div. Jammu payable at Jammu mentioning name of work	54 Nos	Rs. 146.49 lacs	@ 2% of the quoted rates in shape of Fresh CDR/PDR pledged to Executive Engineer PHE (M) GWD Division	31st March 2023

1. The complete bidding process shall be online.  
2. Bid documents can be seen and downloaded from the website http://jktenders.gov.in from 20.06.2022 to 01.07.2022.

Sd/-  
Executive Engineer  
Jal Shakti Mech. G.W.D. Division, Jammu  
DIP/J-3769/22

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON

See Section 82 Cr. P. C.

Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused person namely Rinku s/o Jaipal R/o U.P Colony Rama Vihar, Begampur Delhi has committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence under case FIR No. 609/14 U/s 392/34. has been registered at P.S. South Rohini, Delhi and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest there upon issued that the said, Rinku cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said, Rinku has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant).

Proclamation is hereby made that the said accused, Rinku FIR No.609/14 U/S 392/34 required to appear before this court to answer the said complaint on or before 03.09.2022

By Order,  
Vacant Court  
Room No.-208, Rohini Courts, Delhi  
DP/1565/RD/2022

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF A PERSON ACCUSED

SEE SECTION U/S 82 Cr. P.c.

Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused Rakesh, S/o Aneg Pal, R/o H.No. A-83, Gupta Colony Shahbad Dairy, Delhi has committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence in case FIR No. 362/18 u/s 323 IPC at P.S. Shahbad Dairy, Delhi, and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest there upon issued that the said accused Rakesh cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said accused Rakesh has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant). Proclamation is hereby made that the said accused Rakesh of case FIR No. 362/18 u/s 323 IPC, at P.S. Shahbad Dairy, Delhi is required to appear before this Court to answer the said complaint on or before 30.08.2022.

By Order  
SH. GAGANDEEP SINGH  
Special Judge (NDPS), North  
Room No.207, Second floor,  
District Court Rohini, Delhi  
DP/1924/ON/2022-(Court Matter)

Government of Jammu & Kashmir  
DIRECTORATE OF FLORICULTURE SRINAGAR KASHMIR  
Tel:0194-2474234 Fax -2482032 email- kashflori@rediffmail.com

Subject :- Extension No.01

In view of no response, the last date for submission of bids invited vide this office e-Tender Notice No.09 of 2022 dated.31.05.2022 for supply of Sheep Manure (Decomposed)is hereby extended as per the details given below:-

1. Period of downloading of bidding document	23/06/2022 from 02:00 PM to 05/07/2022 upto 02:00 PM
2. Bid submission Start Date	23/06/2022 from 03:00 PM
3. Bid submission End Date	05/07/2022 upto 02:00 PM
4. Date & time of Opening of Tenders (Online)	07/07/2022 at 04:00 PM

Other terms and conditions shall remain same as laid down in the aforesaid Tender Notice.

By Order  
Sd/-  
Accounts Officer  
(Member Secretary)  
DIPK-4740/22

**Timings**  
**DELHI**

SUNDAY, JUN. 26	RISE 05:26	SET 19:23
	RISE 03:06	SET 17:11
MONDAY, JUN. 27	RISE 05:26	SET 19:23
	RISE 03:45	SET 18:07
TUESDAY, JUN. 28	RISE 05:27	SET 19:24
	RISE 04:28	SET 19:01

**Delhi Weather**

	max	min
Delhi City	40	24
Safdarjang	40	24
Palam	41	27

**Delhi Palam Today**  
39°C A comfortable morning and hot and humid day with partly cloudy sky. Thunderclouds may develop at some places.

**Delhi Palam Tomorrow**  
40°C A dry weather to prevail. Day will be hot and uneasy moderate winds. Night will be slight warm.

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**THE HINDU**  
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# Over 10 lakh applicants waiting for ration cards in Delhi

According to data, there has been a 50% increase in pending ration card applications over the past year in the national capital

**NIKHIL M BABU**  
NEW DELHI  
Thirty-four-year-old Santosh, a domestic help and mother of two in Delhi, applied for a ration card in 2019 following the death of her husband. Three years and over 20 trips to government offices later, she is in a fix: there is no certainty when the document will be finally issued to her.

"I often can't afford to buy milk and chicken for my children. Sometimes, we eat just roti and pickle," says Ms. Santosh, who lives in a one-room house in Jagdamba Camp, a slum cluster in south Delhi.

Over 10.08 lakh persons in the Capital are facing the same predicament as their applications are still pending, according to data as of May 31 accessed by *The Hindu*.

The number of pending applications has increased by 50% in the past one year, the data show. At present,

ration card holders in the city can secure up to 40 kg of foodgrains for free every month for their family.

Subsidised foodgrains are provided under the Central government's Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) and a cap is set on the number of beneficiaries based on the population of each State. The Delhi government, which is yet to issue 3.1 lakh ration cards to applicants, has repeatedly urged the Centre to raise its limit of 72.77 lakh beneficiaries, officials say.

**Struggle to survive**  
Ms. Santosh, who earns ₹3,000 a month working as a help in two houses, says she is struggling to make ends meet amid a rise in food prices. Her only other source of income is the widow pension of ₹2,500.

She says if she gets a ration card, she can buy milk and meat more frequently for her children with her



A woman avails of free foodgrains using her ration card in New Delhi. ■ FILE PHOTO

savings. "Whenever I visit the government office, I am told that my application is on the waiting list. I'm tired of going there," she says.

Sushila Devi, 30, another resident of Jagdamba Camp,

fishes out a shabby piece of paper from a worn-out plastic bag – the receipt of her ration card application from 2020.

Ms. Devi says her family is still reeling from the effects

of the COVID-19 pandemic. "I earn about ₹5,000-₹6,000 a month working as a help in three houses. My husband is a daily wage worker. Since the pandemic, his wages have dropped."

She says they pay ₹3,000 per month as rent for their one-room house and cannot afford to provide milk every day for their three-year-old daughter.

"A hunger survey we conducted revealed that children were not getting sufficient quantities of milk or dal due to the effects of the pandemic," says Anjali Bhardwaj, a food rights activist and member of the Delhi Roti Roti Adhikar Abhiyaan.

### 'Start own scheme'

The Delhi government distributes foodgrains allocated by the Centre under the TPDS, but several States run their own ration distribution schemes, she says.

Other States are also writ-

ing to the Centre to raise the cap on beneficiaries.

"If the Central government is not raising the cap, what is stopping the Delhi government from starting its own public distribution system and issuing ration cards?" says Ms. Bhardwaj.

The number of pending applications in Delhi, 10.08 lakh, is an underestimate as applications are declined in many cases citing the huge backlog, she says.

"The Delhi government is not giving priority to resolve this problem. It is spending a lot of money on other projects such as installing national flags across the city to score political brownie points," she says.

Currently, a new beneficiary is added when vacancies arise owing to the deletion of names in ration cards. Last year, there were only around 20,000 deletion of names, data show.

At this rate, it will take 50 years for the 10.08 lakh peo-

ple on the waiting list to be added as beneficiaries.

Officials say the Centre can raise the cap for Delhi only after the 2021 Census. "It will take at least two to three years for the cap to be raised after the new Census," says a government official.

### No sign of hope

Samjhana Bisht, 26, the mother of a nine-month-old, says she applied for a ration card over a year ago.

"I used to work as a house help before I had my child. My husband has been out of work for the past one year. Buying diapers itself costs around ₹500-₹600 a month. Getting a ration card would really help us," she says.

Ms. Bisht says she has made multiple trips to the government office. "Last time, the officer showed me a stack of applications and said all of them are pending. He said he had no idea when I would get my ration card."

## A different performance



**Celebrating music:** Union Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs and Culture Arjun Ram Meghwal performing during the last day of the five-day Jyotirgamaya Festival, organised as a part of the World Music Day celebrations, at the Sangeet Natak Akademi in New Delhi on Saturday. ■ PTI

## Counting for 3 LS, 7 Assembly seats today

By-elections for these seats across five States, Delhi were held on June 23

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA**  
NEW DELHI

The fate of Tripura Chief Minister Manik Saha among others will be decided on Sunday when the counting of the votes takes place in three Lok Sabha and seven Assembly seats spread across five States and Delhi where the bypolls were held on June 23.

The counting will begin at 8 a.m. under security cover. At first, the postal ballots will be counted and then the EVMs will be opened.

**Tripura highest number**  
Tripura has the highest number of four seats – Agartala, Jubarajnar, Surma and Town Bardowali. Dr. Saha, contesting from Town Bardowali, needs to win to continue as the Chief Minister. He is a Rajya Sabha member who was sworn in last month after the sudden resignation by the then CM Biplab Deb. Polling in Tripura was the

highest at 76.62%.

Lok Sabha by-election were held in Rampur and Azamgarh constituencies in Uttar Pradesh and Sangrur seat in Punjab. The other constituencies where the Assembly bypolls were held were Rajinder Nagar in Delhi, Mandar in Jharkhand's Ranchi district and Atmakuru in Andhra Pradesh.

The bypolls in Uttar Pradesh were necessitated by the resignations of Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav and party leader Azam Khan from the Azamgarh and the Rampur seats respectively. Both leaders quit as the Lok Sabha members following their election to the State Assembly in the elections held earlier this year.

In Rampur, the BJP fielded Ghanshyam Singh Lodhi, who recently joined the party. Asim Raja, handpicked by Mr. Khan is the SP candidate. The Mayawati-led BSP is not contesting from Rampur.

The Azamgarh seat saw a triangular contest among the BJP's Dinesh Lal Yadav 'Nirahua', a Bhojpuri actor-singer; the SP's Dharmendra Yadav and the BSP's Shah Alam, also known as Guddu Jamali.

### Sangrur bypoll

In Sangrur, the bypoll was necessitated following the resignation of Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann from the Lok Sabha after he was elected as an MLA in the Assembly elections earlier this year. The ruling Aam Aadmi Party in Punjab is facing its first test of popularity after its impressive performance in the Assembly polls. The bypolls were held at a time when AAP was facing the Opposition heat over the law and order situation in the State and the killing of singer Sidhu Moosewala.

The by-election in Jharkhand was necessitated after the disqualification of Band-

hu Turkey as an MLA in the wake of his conviction in a corruption case. The Congress has fielded his daughter, Shilpi Neha Tirkey, as the common candidate of the ruling JMM-led coalition, while the BJP has nominated former MLA Gangotri Kujur.

Independent candidate Dev Kumar Dhan, backed by Asaduddin Owaisi's All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen, is also in the fray.

In Delhi's Rajinder Nagar, AAP's Durgesh Pathak is likely to have a close contest with the BJP's Rajesh Bhatia. The Congress' nominee is Prem Lata.

The by-election in Andhra Pradesh is being held to fill the vacancy caused due to the death of Industries Minister Mekapati Goutham Reddy in February. His younger brother Vikram Reddy is the ruling YSR Congress candidate and is locked in a contest with the BJP's G. Bharat Kumar Yadav.

## Himachal Pradesh govt. assures jobs to 'Agniveers'

It did not clarify the proposed posts

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA**  
SHIMLA

The Himachal Pradesh government on Saturday announced jobs to 'Agniveers' after their four-year stint in the armed forces, according to a press note.

The decision was taken during a Cabinet meeting headed by Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur.

However, the government did not clarify the posts where the young ex-servicemen would be accommodated.

When asked, Mr. Thakur's press secretary Rajesh said, "The modalities will be finalised soon."

## Nupur Sharma again skips Kolkata Police summons

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA**  
KOLKATA

Substituted BJP leader Nupur Sharma on Saturday again skipped summons issued by Kolkata Police in connection with her inflammatory comments on Prophet Mohammad that triggered widespread violence in parts of West Bengal, an officer said on Saturday. Ms. Sharma, in an email, cited apprehensions of possible assault on her if she visits Kolkata and sought four weeks' time to appear before the police.

## MLAs look for ways to delay Bengaluru civic body polls

They do not want 'diversions' ahead of Assembly elections

**K.V. ADITYA BHARDWAJ**  
BENGALURU

With the draft of the newly delimited 243 wards notified earlier this week, Bengaluru appears to have moved one step closer to holding the civic polls. However, MLAs cutting across party lines, are keen to see that civic polls are not held before the 2023 Assembly elections. They are reportedly strategising ways to derail the poll calendar despite the Supreme Court setting a deadline of eight weeks from May 20, sources said.

Congress MLAs, who have come down heavily on the delimitation draft, are mulling over challenging it legally and if this is done, it is likely to delay the polls. On Saturday, Janata Dal (Secular) leader and former Chief Minister H.D. Kumaraswamy also raised strong objections to the manner in which delimitation was done.

Two former Congress councillors approached the High Court of Karnataka seeking timely elections, which eventually led to the recent

Supreme Court directive. The two former councillors were supported by former councillors cutting across party lines, including BJP, sources said. However, what former councillors are seeking is in stark contrast to what MLAs want. MLAs, cutting across party lines, do not want to go for civic polls now, just months before the Assembly elections. "We are already in the Assembly election mode and holding civic polls now will distract us for three months," explained a Congress MLA.

ment has worked towards providing land to them on a large scale by running a campaign. We have to not only make a self-reliant India, but also a self-reliant State and self-reliant districts. The campaign for self-reliant villages will also have to be taken forward."

He said around 2.5 crore people residing in U.P. villages will get these certificates by October next year. The CM said while 34 lakh people have already benefited from the scheme, a survey of land by drones in 1,10,300 revenue villages of the State will be completed by August, expediting distribution of certificates to more people, a release said.



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### Podcast

■ An inter-generational podcast of women of different age groups engaged in difficult but important conversations. The final episode of this five-part series features a doctor sharing her experience of sexual harassment at the workplace. This series from *The Hindu* is brought to you by BSCPL Infrastructure Ltd.

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ASST. PROF. Tuluva Vellal Mudaliar Good looking Girl 34 Uthirattathi, Meenam, Ph.D(Physics), Family Seeks Alliance from First and Unmarried Bachelor Brideregroom Aged 34-36 Yrs. Employed, Caste no bar. Contact: After 7 PM; 7550245659

TAMIL

HASTHAM 34/154 fair MCA Upper mid class Seeks Mudaliar / pillai professionally Qualified Groom 8220757159

TAMIL

VELLALA, Pooram 36yrs Ht:163cm Weight:62kg, Scientist (PhD) Working in IISc Bangalore, Seeks Suitable groom. Contact: 9442485544

TAMIL

NADAR 29YRS, Uthradam, M.A., B.Ed., Remarriagee seeks suitable Employed Groom preferably Hindu / Christian. Ct. 88256 51440

TAMIL

MUDALIAR 24/163 Fair, Very Beautiful, BDS-Doing Business Family, 30Cr, Property, CNB, 7299576644, 7299576666

TAMIL

LOOKING FOR Brideregroom for the girl studying MS in US aged 23. 899250457

TAMIL

27. FAIR, B.Tech, M. S. in US, working in Chennai, Affluent, Seeks suitablegroom CNB. 9489935653

TAMIL

MUDHALIYAR 25M.B.B.S., Own schools Colleges Chennai, (Caste No Bar) Richfamily seeks Groom: 7305491610

TAMIL

37 YRS Iyer girl divorcee, no kids, seeks well educated working groom age gap upto 5 yrs, clean habits same community, except Koundinya gotra, Chennai only Ct. 9940332928

TAMIL

PROPOSAL INVITED from well to do Nadar Christian family for a girl, fair, beautiful, well to do, well educated, God fearing aged 32 working in a foreign Embassy as a Senior Manager in Chennai Contract: 9840129930.

TAMIL

RC NADAR 29 B.E., SWE 14 LPA, seeks RC Nadar B.E. Bride Groom with good job Contact: 7708469824

TAMIL

HINDU SC/AD 28yrs/160cm BE., ECE Chennai seeks Professionally qualified groom below 32 yrs. Ct: 9710843632

TAMIL

MUDALIAR 33/ 152 PG Doctor/Thiruvallur seeks PG Doctors/ Business family/ Highly qualified groom between 33-36 yrs. CNB. Ct: 984202884

URDU

SEEKING PRACTICING SMU with no Dargah practices, never-married brideregroom, 36 yrs or below / 170cm or above, BE / B.Tech / MCA, IT professional, working abroad or in Tamil Nadu / Bangalore for my employed, MCA, MPHil educated, never-married, pious, upright by nature, 1987 born / 165cm good-looking daughter. Please write to: 90037 31213 or farhatnabab@yahoo.com

URDU

SMU GIRL 27/165 B.Tech Team Lead MNC Chennai Seeks Suitable Alliance Contact: 9442141520 / kbevgum823@gmail.com

URDU

SMU PARENTS Seeks Alliance PG Doctor, CA Grooms for Daughter 27, Slim, Fair MS, Ophthal Working 9444024991

URDU

SMU, Practicing Muslim hijabi girl, 25/168, Doctor working in UK, origin Andhra Pradesh, born & brought up in Saudi seeks a professional brideregroom residing or willing to relocate to UK, must be a practicing muslim. 8500630745 (WhatsApp).

URDU

# Sterlite plant sale could impact investor confidence in Tamil Nadu

While environmentalists are calling Vedanta's plan a marketing gimmick and a way to gain national attention, industrialists feel it is a wake-up call for the State government

SANGEETHA KANDAVEL  
SUDHAKAR P.

Four years after the Tamil Nadu government shut Sterlite Copper on charges of pollution following several legal battles, a unit of the Vedanta Group announced in an advertisement last week that the Thoothukudi plant was up for sale.

While environmentalists and those who have been against the operation of the plant called this move a "marketing gimmick" and a "strategy to get national attention", industries and micro, small and medium enterprises that rely on copper (a key raw material) are worried that this would further impact businesses in the State.

When operational, Sterlite Copper met approximately 40% of India's demand for copper and contributed around ₹2,500 crore to the exchequer. The Thoothukudi plant has an installed capacity of 4,00,000 metric tonnes per annum (MTPA) at the integrated copper smelter and refinery, with a capacity for another 4,00,000 MTPA.

Apart from copper, Sterlite was the only domestic supplier of phosphoric acid, with a capacity of 220,000 metric tonnes. The acid is a key raw material for fertilizers. This particular plant was also the largest supplier of sulphuric acid in Tamil Nadu, which is used in the detergent and chemical industries. After the closure of this plant on May 28, 2018, the prices of all these raw materials shot up.

Data provided by Hitesh Avachat, Associate Director, Care Ratings, show that India is importing copper at a historically higher price, close to around \$9,600 per tonne,

50% more than the average prices when India was a net exporter (around \$6,500 per tonne).

Forex fluctuations further add to the pain of the Indian copper market. He explains, "If we look at the end-use consumption pattern, more than one-third of the copper goes into the electrical segment. What we have observed in the last four years is the wait time for raw material import has increased from a week to almost a month. This means these companies must invest more in their working capital (to keep a higher inventory of copper). This also results in a significant impact on profitability, owing to the inventory carry cost," he said.

In the last three years, industries in the Coimbatore region have been affected badly by the increase in raw material prices, especially that of copper, said M.V. Ramesh Babu, president, Coimbatore District Small Industries Association (CODISSIA). "We were thinking that the plant would open some day. This announcement has come as a surprise," he said.

**'Restart company'**  
"The Supreme Court should allow the company to restart. The Centre and the State governments should support industries but at the same time ensure that they follow stringent pollution-control norms," he said.

Ar. M. Arun, president of the Southern India Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SICCI), said that if there had been any issue in its operation or the treatment of its effluents, the company should have been mandated to rectify the deviations and continue the operations. "Shutting down a plant does not



**Strong dissent:** The Tamil Nadu government shut the Sterlite Copper smelter at Thoothukudi on May 28, 2018, following legal battles and vehement protests. After the closure of the plant (below), the prices of several raw materials shot up. • N. RAJESH

solve the problem. Having shut down the plant, and not allowing any step to be taken, would naturally force the owners to think of what measures they have to take. This plant's impact on its owners, The Vedanta Group, is minuscule and does not matter much. If the plant is sold, the new owners would have to look into cleaning up any pollution that's been reported upon, before restarting production."

Mr. Arun also pointed out that India has now become a net importer of copper from financial year 2018-19 after the closure of the plant. Imports will continue to rise as domestic demand will double from 1 million metric tonnes to 2 million metric tonnes. He further said several sectors that need copper would all be impacted by



copper shortage, import dependence and the corresponding rise in input costs.

**Industries move out**  
After the closure of the plant, many other industries and ancillary units (that depend on raw materials from Sterlite Copper) have moved out of Tamil Nadu. An industrialist said some of the units

were in a wait and watch mode but now with this decision of Sterlite Copper, they would also move out of the State. One of the proprietors of a unit that moved out said,

"After Sterlite closed, we started procuring raw materials from other States and it did not make any economic sense. And then the COVID-19 pandemic hurt our

businesses further. So we moved our unit closer to the source of raw materials," he said.

Gunasingh Chelladurai, Director, Bell Group of Companies, and president, Tirunelveli District Chamber of Commerce and Industry, said he had purchased 20 acres of land in Telangana for starting his chemical indus-

try. "Since starting a chemical industry in Thoothukudi is not advisable in the present scenario, we decided to go to Telangana," he said.

He noted that Vedanta's decision to sell its copper smelter is a wake-up call for the Tamil Nadu government, which is keen on attracting investments to augment employment.

**Transporters hit**

K. Nehru Prakash, president, Thoothukudi District Tiny and Small Industries Association, pointed to the number of trucks and lorries that once plied between the plant and the port. All of them were affected by the closure. The plant engaged about 1,000 trucks/tankers every day with a consistent load, providing livelihood to around 9,000 drivers and cleaners a month. It had over 650 supply and service partners and helped them generate a business of close to \$134 million every year.

After the advertisement was issued, questions have also been raised about who would buy the plant when so many people have protested here. A section of industrialists *The Hindu* spoke to said the decision of selling the plant was good because this was a black-mark in the region; if a new player comes in, people's mind and sentiments could change. And more industries would come confidently and invest here. Mr. Hitesh of Care Ratings said buying the plant with an intention to re-start seems like a reverie.

"Even after various inquiries and committees..., till date, Sterlite itself has not got any relief in terms of reopening of the plant, except for one occasion to temporarily produce oxygen during

the pandemic," he said. M. Krishnamurthy, one of the leaders of the Anti-Sterlite Protest Movement, said, "This [the advertisement] is an attempt to hoodwink the people of Thoothukudi and blackmail the governments."

"As of now, the Sterlite Copper complex is nothing but scrap. If a chemical industry wants to wind up its operations and decides to dismantle the unit, it should obtain permission from the Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board. Without following this mandatory procedure, Vedanta has issued this advertisement, which is nothing but an attempt to cheat everyone," he added.

Another source from one of the anti-Sterlite groups asked what would happen if the Supreme Court were to allow the plant to function and whether the company would sell the plant in that event. "This is a plan to push the government to act fast and create sympathy among the locals here," he said.

**Victims oppose reopening**  
Ever since the advertisement was published, none of the political parties have reacted. Almost all parties have been against reopening of the plant. The victims of the police firing also continue to oppose reopening of the plant. In response to an official email, a Sterlite Copper spokesperson refused to comment.

Some who have been associated with the company said, off the record, that four years was a long enough time to answer shareholders and stake-holders. Whether the plant is likely to reopen or to be sold, there are definite implications for the conduct of business and the confidence of investors in Tamil Nadu.

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Former Vice-President, NCFE  
Former General Secretary, LVB Retirees Organisation  
Founder- Managing Trustee - Unity Foundation.  
Time flies fast, life goes on at its own pace, but some memories can never be forgotten. They will always be in our thoughts. No longer by our side but forever in our hearts.  
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**DEATH**

**U.JOTHI KUMAR** (79), Retired Controller (Electronics), The Hindu, Chennai passed away on 25-06-2022. Address: Plot No. 628, 7th Street, Sector D, Anna Nagar Western Extension, Chennai - 600101. Cr. 9884188664

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**NORTH EASTERN RAILWAY**

**E-Tender Notice No. CWM-BW-13-2022**  
Dy. CE/Bridge Line/N.E. Railway/ Gorakhpur acting for and on behalf of the President of India invites E-Tenders for the following works:  
**SN.:1. E-Tender No.: CWM-BW-13-2022. Description of Work:** Strengthening of super structure by Re-gridding of Br. No. 478 (1x50 feet span x3 Running line girders) Semi Through Girder at KM 01/04-05 between Lucknow Junction - Aishbagh station of Barabanki-Lucknow Junction section of NE Railway. Approx Tender Value (₹): 94,65,432.50, Earnest money (₹): 1,89,300.00. Cost of tender document Nil. Completion period from the date of issue of acceptance letter - 09 (Nine) Months. Date of E-Tender opening 11:00 Hrs on 18.07.2022. Receipt of E-Tender upto 10:59 Hrs on 18.07.2022. Detailed E-tender notice, Eligibility criteria, terms & conditions are available at website : [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in)  
Dy. CE/Bridge Line Gorakhpur  
About any passenger amenity complain SMS on Mobile No. 09794845955  
DO NOT TRAVEL WITH INFLAMMABLE ARTICLE IN TRAIN

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**Mr. N SELVA KUMAR**  
**PH: 9820350726**  
[selvakumar.n@thehindu.co.in](mailto:selvakumar.n@thehindu.co.in)  
**THE HINDU**  
India's National Newspaper

**PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON**

(See Section 82 Cr.PC)  
Whereas complaint has been made by me that accused **Pritam Kumar S/o Ramdev R/o 181, NDMC Housing complex, Rohini, Sec-11, New Delhi-85** has committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence in case **CC No. 22117/2018 u/s 138 NI Act, PS Dwarka, Delhi** and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said accused **Pritam Kumar** cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said accused **Pritam Kumar** has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant).  
Proclamation is hereby made that the said accused **Pritam Kumar of CC No. 22117/2018 u/s 138 NI Act, PS Dwarka, Delhi** is required to appear before this Court to answer the said complaint on or before **29.08.2022**.  
By Order,  
**Sh. Harshal Negi**  
LD, MM, (NI Act)-05, Room No. 213,  
Second Floor, Dwarka Court, Delhi  
DP/1903/ON/2022

**KENDRIYA VIDYALAYA, AAI Rangpuri, New Delhi-37**

**Advertisement**  
Kendriya Vidyalaya, AAI Rangpuri is going to register legally authorized firms capable of providing the following materials and services in Rangpuri for the session 2022-23. The Registration application will be accepted upto 11-07-2022 till 4 PM only. Along with the application form, the registration certificate of the firm, prior experience details, GST number, and Income Tax evasion certificate, PAN card no. Service Tax, Registration and send it along with a photocopy of the tax clearance certificate. Please write clearly and carefully the name of the work indicated on the top of the envelope. Submit separate applications for each job.  
List of Items :-  
1. Printing and stationery items related to examination  
2. Goods for Sports Department  
3. School Canteen  
4. For transport service on rent  
5. School furniture  
6. Science lab supplies  
7. Internet facility to the school  
8. CA for the Vidyalaya work.  
The undersigned will have full right to invite tenders and quotations after the registration.  
PRINCIPAL  
Kendriya Vidyalaya, AAI Rangpuri

**SEARCH FOR MISSING/KIDNAPPED**

General public is hereby informed that one person namely **Suraj S/o Ailun Bind R/o H.No.310, K-Block, Hari Dal Mil, wali Gali Village Kuraini, Narela, Delhi** has been missing/kidnapped from his house since 23.04.2022. In this regard, a case **DD No. 62-A, Dated 24.04.2022** has been registered at **P.S. Narela, Delhi**. The description of the missing person is as under.  
**Age:** 24 years, **Height:** 5'5", **Complexion:** Shallow, **Face:** Round, **Build:** Medium, **Wearing:** White colour T-Shirt and White colour lower and red colour chappal in feet. Sincere efforts have been made by the local police to trace out him but no clue has come to light so far. If anyone has any information about the missing person then please inform **P.S. Narela, Delhi** at following Tel No./ e-mail: [cic@cbi.gov.in](mailto:cic@cbi.gov.in) and Website: <http://cbi.nic.in>, providing clue about the person.  
**Ph: 011-24368638, 24368641**  
**Fax No. 011-24368639**  
Sd/- S.H.O.  
Narela, Delhi  
Tel No. 27280435  
DP/1934/ON/2022

**अखिल भारतीय आयुर्विज्ञान संस्थान (एम्स), कल्याणी**  
**ALL INDIA INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL SCIENCES (AIIMS), KALYANI**  
(स्वास्थ्य एवं परिवार कल्याण मंत्रालय, भारत सरकार के तत्वावधान में एक सांविधिक निकाय)  
(A Statutory Body under the Aegis of Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, GOI)  
राष्ट्रीय राजमार्ग-34, बसन्तपुर, सागुना, कल्याणी, जिला-नदिया, पश्चिम बंगाल-741245  
NH-34 Connector, Basantapur, Saguna, Kalyani, District Nadia, West Bengal 741245  
No. 720/E-12011/6/21-(FAC) Date: 24.06.2022

**RECRUITMENT OF FACULTY POSTS (GROUP-A) IN VARIOUS DEPARTMENTS AT AIIMS, KALYANI ON DIRECT RECRUITMENT BASIS-2022**

All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), Kalyani, an Institute of National Importance is one of the new upcoming AIIMS and apex healthcare Institute under the Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Yojana (PMSSY) has been established by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Govt. of India, with the aim of correcting regional imbalance in quality tertiary level healthcare in the country, and attaining self-sufficiency in graduate, postgraduate and higher medical education and training.  
Online applications from Indian citizens/persons registered as Overseas Citizen of India (OCI) cardholder under Section 7A of the Citizenship Act, 1955 as permissible under the applicable Act/Rules are invited for the following faculty posts on **DIRECT RECRUITMENT BASIS** in Various Departments in All India Institute of Medical Sciences, Kalyani (West-Bengal).

Sl. No.	Departments	Professor		Additional Professor		Associate Professor		Assistant Professor	
		Category	Total	Category	Total	Category	Total	Category	Total
1	Anaesthesia	1-OBC	1	1-UR, 1-OBC	2	1-OBC	1	1-UR, 1-SC	2
2	Anatomy					1-EWS	1		
3	Biochemistry			1-EWS	1				
4	Burn & Plastic Surgery	1-EWS	1					1-EWS	1
5	Cardiology	1-OBC	1					1-UR	1
6	Dermatology			1-UR	1			1-OBC	1
7	Endocrinology					1-UR	1		
8	ENT			1-OBC	1	1-OBC	1		
9	Forensic Medicine and Toxicology	1-OBC	1	1-SC	1			1-OBC	1
10	Gastroenterology	1-SC	1						
11	General Medicine	1-ST	1			1-SC, 1-UR	2	1-OBC	1
12	General Surgery	1-SC	1	1-UR	1	1-ST, 1-OBC; 1-UR	3	1-OBC	1
13	Medical Oncology/ Haematology	1-OBC	1	1-UR	1	1-EWS	1	1-OBC	1
14	Microbiology	1-UR	1	1-UR, 1-OBC	2	1-SC	1		
15	Neonatology	1-UR	1	1-UR	1	1-OBC	1		
16	Nephrology	1-SC	1					1-UR	1
17	Neurology	1-OBC	1					1-ST	1
18	Nuclear Medicine							1-OBC	1
19	Obstetrics and Gynaecology	1-EWS	1					1-OBC	1
20	Ophthalmology	1-UR	1			2-UR	2		
21	Orthopaedics	1-UR	1	1-SC	1	1-OBC	1	1-EWS	1
22	Paediatric Surgery	1-OBC	1	1-OBC	1			1-UR	1
23	Paediatrics	1-SC	1	1-EWS	1			1-SC	1
24	Pathology			1-UR, 1-ST	2			1-OBC, 1-UR	2
25	Pharmacology	1-UR	1			1-UR	1	1-UR	1
26	Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation	1-ST	1						
27	Physiology			1-OBC	1	1-UR	1	1-SC, 1-OBC	2
28	Psychiatry	1-OBC	1						
29	Pulmonary Medicine	1-UR	1			1-SC	1	1-SC	1
30	Radiology	1-EWS	1	1-SC	1	1-UR	1	1-ST, 1-EWS	2
31	Radio Therapy	1-SC	1						
32	Surgical Gastroenterology							1-OBC	1
33	Surgical Oncology	1-UR	1					1-SC	1
34	Transfusion Medicine & Blood Bank	1-OBC	1	1-OBC	1				
<b>Total</b>		<b>7-UR; 5-SC; 3-EWS; 8-OBC; 2-ST</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>7-UR; 6-OBC; 3-SC; 1-ST; 2-EWS</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>7-UR; 6-OBC; 3-SC; 1-ST; 2-EWS</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>6-UR; 10-OBC; 5-SC; 2-ST; 3-EWS</b>	<b>26</b>

For details of advertisement including educational qualifications, age and eligibility criteria etc., kindly visit the Institute's website <http://www.aiimskalyani.edu.in>.

Last date of Online application.	<b>30 days</b> from the date of publication of the advertisement in Employment News/ Rojgar Samachar.
Cut-off Date for determining the Qualification & Experience and upper age limit.	Last date of receipt of the hard copies of Online Applications Form along with relevant documents as mentioned in the advertisement at AIIMS, Kalyani.
	<b>15 days</b> from the last date of receipt of online application.

The on-line of application will be made available on AIIMS, Kalyani official website i.e. <https://aiimskalyani.edu.in>. The link for submission of online applications in respect of above said posts along with other relevant information will be activated on the date of advertisement on Employment News/ Rojgar Samachar or earlier (as posted on the website).

Sd/-  
**Executive Director**  
AIIMS Kalyani



FROM PAGE ONE

## 16 rebels asked to reply to notice by tomorrow

At a virtual press conference from Guwahati as a representative of the rebel group, Deepak Kesarkar, MLA, said, "We have a majority with us and, as per the rule, we can sit as a separate group in the Assembly. We will not merge with any other party. We have not left the Shiv Sena, but we are the Shiv Sena. The decision of ours is because the Congress and the NCP were weakening the party in Maharashtra."

Asked about the reasons behind the rebel MLAs' prolonged stay in Guwahati and their decision to not return to Maharashtra, Mr. Kesarkar said that it was not safe to return. "Law and order in the State is getting problematic. A number of offices

of our MLAs have been attacked. It is extremely sad to see that the State government is not taking action against this, especially against the man who is instigating the mob," he said.

Earlier, the Shiv Sena's national executive passed six resolutions in a bid to strengthen Mr. Thackeray's control over the organisation as the revolt has threatened to dethrone him from the position as the party's head.

"The Shiv Sena has remained loyal to the ideology of Hindutva and will remain so in future. It never betrayed Maharashtra's sovereignty and the pride of the Marathi-speaking population and will never do so," said the resolution.

## Teesta, former IPS officer detained

"The falsity of their claims had been fully exposed by the SIT after a thorough investigation," the court noted and added that allegations were made by Ms. Jafri solely on the basis of the "ultra-sensational revelation" by Mr. Sreekumar, Mr. Bhatt, and former Gujarat Minister Haren Pandya.

The police have booked the former police officers and Ms. Setalvad under Sections 468, 471, 194, 211, 218, and 120-B of the IPC.

After filing the FIR at the Detection of Crime Branch, the police picked up Mr. Sreekumar, a former senior police officer who worked with Ms. Setalvad on the 2002 riots cases after his superannuation, from his residence in Gandhinagar.

A team from the Anti-Terrorism Squad (ATS) was rushed to Mumbai to pick up Ms. Setalvad, whose NGO, Citizens for Justice and Peace (CJP), was a petitioner in the 2002 riots cases in the Gujarat High Court and Supreme Court.

Ms. Setalvad is being brought to Ahmedabad and will be arrested after her custody is handed over to Crime Branch officials.

Mr. Sreekumar was briefly in charge of the State Intelligence Bureau during the 2002 communal violence. He had accused the State administration of preventing the police from carrying out their duties during the communal riots, while Mr. Bhatt had filed an affidavit in the Supreme Court naming Mr. Modi regarding his role in the riots. Mr. Bhatt had also alleged that he had attended a meeting called by the then CM at his residence after the Sabarmati Express was torched in Godhra, in which 59 pilgrims returning from Ayodhya were charred to death.

The FIR by Darshansinh B. Barad, Police Inspector, Detection of Crime Branch,

Ahmedabad city, alleges that Ms. Jafri had admitted in her cross-examination in the Gulberg Society case that Mr. Sreekumar, then an IPS officer, had come to the said building on February 28, 2002, and that he had been working with Ms. Setalvad. Ms. Jafri had also given a statement before the Nanavati Shah Commission (appointed to probe the Godhra train burning) on August 22, 2003, but she had no occasion to read the copy of the statement. "This indicates that Ms. Jafri was tutored by Ms. Setalvad, a fact that she had to admit in cross examination," the FIR mentions.

According to the FIR, Ms. Jafri had also admitted in the cross examination that she had followed Ms. Setalvad's instructions throughout. In the final supplementary report by the SIT, it had been clearly noted that 19 witnesses insisted on recording their signed statements, which according to them had been prepared by Ms. Setalvad.

"Around 5.30 p.m., six police officers came to office and took Teesta to the Santacruz Police Station. The officers forcibly took Teesta and said they had a warrant but did not show it," Surekha Kalmaste, who works with Ms. Setalvad at the Sabrang office, said. Ms. Setalvad wrote to the officer of the Santacruz Police Station that read: "A lady police officer in a T-shirt and jeans walked into my room and assaulted me. They did not show me any FIR or warrant on why they had 8-10 people in my compound. I have a big bruise on my left hand. I got a call in the afternoon asking my colleague who was in-charge of my security and how many personnel are in-charge. Within half an hour, two Central Industrial Security Force armed police officers came to our office."

## Countdown to Durga Puja in Bengal begins

BISHWANATH GHOSH  
KOLKATA

The countdown for Durga Puja – West Bengal's largest festival – began this week with social media posts reminding people on Thursday that it was only 100 days away. While most of these 100 days will belong to the monsoon season, it will also be the crucial period for all the preparation and planning to take place.

This year, Durga Puja begins September-end and, unless a new wave of the pandemic threatens the State or capital Kolkata, it will be the first time after a long gap of two years that the festival will be conducted without fear and restrictions. Idol-makers of Kumartuli are once again busy, almost like pre-pandemic days, while neighbourhood puja committees are planning how to make the celebrations as big as possible.

"More than anything else, what makes Durga Puja special this year is the culture heritage tag it got from UNESCO (in December 2021). It is a matter of great delight for us. What will be the theme of our puja, what will the idols look like this year – all these things we will decide shortly, but what's certain the moment is that we are going to increase our budget," said Tapan Dasgupta, local councillor. "For the past two years we spent only ₹12-13 lakh, but this year we are looking at spending around ₹30 lakh," said Mr. Dasgupta of his neighbourhood puja, which is 41 years old. Until a couple of months ago, several idol-makers and neighbourhoods were contemplating COVID-19 as their theme, but at the moment the pandemic already appears to be a distant memory and they appear to have dropped the idea.

# PM heads to Germany for G-7 summit

Modi and Trudeau may reset India-Canada ties that suffered after Ottawa's comments on farmers' stir

SUHASINI HAIDAR  
NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau will seek a reset in ties as they hold bilateral talks on the sidelines of the G-7 summit in Germany on June 26-27, their first such meeting in four years, since Mr. Trudeau's visit to India in 2018.

Relations had come under strain in 2020, over Mr. Trudeau's comments on the farmers' protests in 2020, which India had protested with a stern demarche, and cancellation of official meetings, but New Delhi and Ottawa have been working together in a number of areas, particularly on a trade deal, in an effort to bring ties back on track.

The two leaders, who will be in the Bavarian resort of Schloss Elmau during the summit, where India is one of the special invitees, had met briefly during the G-20 summit in Rome in October 2021, and spoken on the telephone three times during the pandemic.

In his departure statement on Saturday, Mr. Modi, who will be in Germany on Sunday, and then go to the



**Back on track:** Anti-G7 protesters march in the city centre, a day ahead of the scheduled start of the G7 summit, on Saturday in Munich, Germany (left); Justin Trudeau and Narendra Modi will meet again on the sidelines of the summit. •GETTY IMAGES

United Arab Emirates on Tuesday, said that he would make interventions during the special sessions on "topical issues such as environment, energy, climate, food security, health, counter-terrorism, gender equality and democracy."

Mr. Modi will fly into Munich on Sunday and attend an Indian diaspora community event, before being taken by helicopter to Schloss Elmau. A meeting with Argentinian President Alberto Fernandez and another with the Bavarian Minister-President Markus Thomas Theodor Söder

are scheduled for Sunday as well.

When asked, the Canadian High Commission spokesperson confirmed that a bilateral meeting between Mr. Modi and Mr. Trudeau is being scheduled during the G-7 summit, possibly on Monday, and that "strengthening engagement and cooperation in the Indo-Pacific and on climate, as well as deepening trade ties" is on the agenda for talks.

The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) declined to comment on the meeting, saying Mr. Modi's schedule is



still being finalised.

However, an official confirmed the summit, adding that apart from the economic agenda, with an interim trade agreement expected to be completed this year, the two leaders would discuss security and "mobility" issues, referring to problems in visas and immigration.

### Visa approvals

On Friday, the MEA announced that senior officials dealing with eight western countries, including the U.S. and Canada, had met with heads of missions in New

Delhi to discuss how to streamline visas to Indian students who were facing long delays.

Currently, 7,00,000 Indian applications for visas are pending with the Canadian government.

Sources said it is also likely that Mr. Trudeau would discuss India's stand on the war in Ukraine, given that the Canadian Prime Minister, who made what he called stopping "Russia's illegal actions" the focus of his discussions in Kigali, Rwanda on Saturday, where he attended the Commonwealth Summit.

## Emergency a 'constitutional system': Cong.

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

On a day when several Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leaders took on the Congress over the Emergency imposed by former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, a statement issued by the Congress in party-ruled Chhattisgarh called it a "samvaidhanik vyavastha" or "constitutional system".

According to the statement issued by the Chhattisgarh Congress media in-charge Sushil Anand Shukla, "...the Emergency was a constitutional step taken according to the then circumstances of the country".

In March last year, former Congress president Rahul Gandhi had said the Emergency was a "mistake".

Mr. Shukla later said that he stood by his statement.

## A village votes



**By the ballot:** Voters queue up to cast their vote during the first phase of panchayat elections at Jharkheda village, near Bhopal, in Madhya Pradesh on Saturday. •A.M.FARUQUI

# JJ Act amendment may backfire

Experts say making these crimes non-cognisable will have a discouraging effect

ABHINAV LAKSHMAN  
NEW DELHI

Reporting instances of abuse and cruelty by staffers or persons in-charge at child care institutions (CCI) is not easy. While the victims themselves are unable to directly report them due to the imbalance in power, most such crimes are reported to the police by either parents or child rights bodies and child welfare committees (CWC).

On the one hand, the parents of these children, who are mostly daily wage labourers, are either unaware of how to, or not inclined to, report the crimes to the police. On the other hand, the CWCs' first instinct in most cases is to "talk and arrive at a settlement" without having to escalate the matter to the police.

With the 2021 amendment to the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection) Act making these crimes non-cognisable along with several other serious crimes under the special law, experts and child rights bodies have raised the alarm saying this would make reporting them to the police even more difficult.

"The current system of reporting crimes committed by staff at CCIs already causes delays in registering FIRs (first information reports) and sometimes FIRs not being registered at all," Bharti Ali of the HAQ Centre for Child Rights, an NGO in Del-



hi said. Bikramjeet Singh, CWC Chairperson in Bathinda explained that once they get to know of such cases – either through NGOs, the children or their parents – meetings were convened with the victim in the presence of the District Child Protection Officer (DCPO), following which both the CWC and the DCPO decided whether the matter needed to be reported to the police. "In most cases, we figure out a way to talk to the children and solve their problems without having to file a police complaint," he said.

### Pan-India problem

Anurag Kundu, Chairperson of the Delhi Commission for the Protection of Child Rights, added that this was a pan-India problem, saying, "This amendment encourages such thinking and will discourage officials from reporting such instances to the police."

Ms. Ali said that in some cases, NGOs or child rights

activists decided to report such instances directly to the police given that they are a cognisable offence (until the amended JJ Act is notified). "But the police will look for someone to be made a complainant even when they can verify the complaint and register an FIR if it is a cognisable offence," she said.

But according to the Code of Criminal Procedure, once the crimes are rendered non-cognisable, the police will be able to register an FIR only on the directions of a magistrate and a complainant will first have to approach the magistrate concerned to start the process.

Ms. Ali explained that most children at CCIs whose parents are daily-wage labourers do not want to engage with the legal process because that would force them to take time off from work, resulting in loss of wages.

"So, they are already discouraged from getting an FIR registered because that would mean they have to appear in court. Now, if another step is added, it will further discourage them," she said.

Despite these circumstances, data from the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) show that since it started recording these crimes in 2017, they had risen by over 700% by 2019. The NCRB in 2017 recorded 278 cases of crimes commit-

ted by CCI officials in-charge across India involving 328 child victims. These cases rose to 1,968 by 2019, involving as many as 2,699 child victims.

State Commissions for the Protection of Child Rights in Delhi, Punjab, Chandigarh, Rajasthan and West Bengal have already publicly spoken out against the 2021 JJ Act amendment and have even flagged it to the Union government. Moreover, the Delhi Commission for the Protection of Child Rights has also challenged the amendment in the Supreme Court.

### Offences reclassified

Specifically, the amendment under challenge is the one to Section 86 of the JJ Act, according to which crimes under the special law, with punishment between three and seven years, have been reclassified as non-cognisable. These crimes include cruelty to children by CCI staff (Section 75), employment of children for begging (Section 76), using children to smuggle or sell intoxicating substances and narcotics (Section 78), sale and procurement of children (Section 81), exploitation of child employees (Section 79), use of children by militant or other groups for illegal purposes (Section 83), and giving children intoxicating/psychotropic substances or narcotics (Section 77).

# Hasina opens Padma multipurpose bridge

India lauds Bangladesh PM's initiatives

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The Government of India has congratulated Bangladesh on the completion of the Padma Multipurpose Bridge.

Praising the leadership of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, the Indian High Commission in Dhaka said the infrastructure project illustrates her bold decision-making abilities and that India has always supported the developmental initiatives of Bangladesh.

"The Padma bridge will not just help the internal connectivity of Bangladesh, but will also improve trade and logistics between India and Bangladesh. This bridge will play an important role in improving bilateral India-Bangladesh and subregional links," said the Indian mission in a congratulatory message.

The Padma Multipurpose Bridge is the biggest infrastructure project of Bangladesh. It was inaugurated on Saturday morning by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina by paying toll tax.

"This success proves the resolve of Prime Minister Hasina that we strongly believed in. India extended unwavering support when Bangladesh decided to self-finance the construction of the project," declared the official Indian statement.

# Pak. opposes G-20 events in Kashmir

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
SRINAGAR

Pakistan on Saturday took exception to the Indian government's move to hold meetings related to the G-20 event, scheduled for November next year in Delhi, in Jammu and Kashmir.

"The Government of India might be contemplating to hold some G-20 related meeting or event in the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK). Pakistan completely rejects any such attempt by India," a Pakistani foreign office spokesperson said in Pakistan's capital Islamabad.

He said Jammu and Kashmir was an internationally recognised "disputed" territory between Pakistan and India.

"Unacceptable travesty" "Contemplating the holding of any G-20 related meeting or event in Jammu and Kashmir, in utter disregard of the globally acknowledged "disputed" status of the territory, is a travesty that the international community cannot accept under any circumstances," the spokesperson added.

The spokesperson said any such controversial proposal from India would be designed to seek international legitimacy for an illegal and tyrannical occupation continuing for over seven decades.

"The G-20 members will be fully cognizant of the imperatives of law and justice and would reject it outright."

### Strong reaction

"Pakistan also strongly urges the international community to call upon India to end its gross and systematic violations of human rights in J&K, revoke its illegal and unilateral actions of 5 August 2019, and free all political prisoners including the true Kashmiri leaders," the spokesperson said.

The Pakistan reaction comes a day after the Jammu and Kashmir administration constituted a committee to coordinate with the delegates of G-20 countries scheduled to participate in meetings to be held in the Union Territory (UT) in the run-up to the summit in Delhi next year.



An aerial photograph of the Padma multipurpose bridge and railway project in Louhajang, Dhaka. •AFP

The bridge will connect at least 20 districts of Bangladesh and is expected to help in faster transportation of goods and commodities with India and other neighbouring countries like Nepal and Bhutan.

Prime Minister of Pakistan Shehbaz Sharif too sent a congratulatory message to Ms Hasina and said the "bridge is an important landmark in the developmental journey of fraternal Bangladesh".

In a speech delivered on Friday, Prime Minister Hasina, however, said that the principal opposition BNP is linked with Pakistan. "They always sing *dil me hei Pakistan*, so it is obvious that they do not want prosperity of Bangladesh," said Ms Hasina criticising those who used to oppose the construction of the Padma bridge.

**Agnipath will cleave the Army: Hooda**

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
CHANDIGARH

Former Chief Minister and Leader of the Opposition in Haryana Assembly Bhupinder Singh Hooda on Saturday said that Centre's Agnipath scheme for defence forces would create two types of Armies in the country — one permanent and one temporary.

He said the party would continue to oppose 'Agnipath' scheme and would hold a sit-in 'dharna' across the country on June 27. Addressing a press conference, Mr. Hooda said the Agnipath scheme is neither in the interest of the country, nor in the interests of national security, the Army or the youth. "With this plan, there would be two types of armies, one permanent and one temporary. It will be very difficult to establish coordination between them," he said.

Mr. Hooda said that the Haryana government is misleading the youth of the State by promising permanent jobs to 'Agniveers', while the reality is that Haryana is facing the highest unemployment in the whole country, due to the ill-conceived policies of the BJP-JJP government.

**Taking up multiple causes, Cong. now a party of protests**

Taking to the streets for issues such as Agnipath, it hopes to connect with people

SANDEEP PHUKAN  
NEW DELHI

With 20 press conference across the country on Sunday and a nation-wide satyagraha on Monday by MPs and MLAs against Agnipath, the Congress plans to step up its campaign against the new recruitment scheme for the defence services.

While the move is aimed at reaching out to the youth who are protesting against the new scheme, it is also a way to reconnect with the people through the path of agitations.

The party has already announced a Kanyakumari-to-Kashmir *Bharat Jodo* [Unite India] yatra to coincide with Mahatma Gandhi's birth anniversary on October 2, took out an *Azadi Gaurav* yatra and organised other protests against price rise and unemployment following the call given at the *Nav Sankalp chintan shivir* in Udaipur last month.

And when former Congress chief Rahul Gandhi was subjected to long hours of questioning by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) in a money laundering case in-



**New-found vigour:** The police clashing with members of the Youth Congress in Bengaluru in Karnataka on Friday. •PTI

volving the *National Herald* newspaper, the party converted the occasion into a massive show of strength on the streets of Delhi.

**Rahul's summoning**  
Starting June 13, the first day of Mr. Gandhi's questioning, party leaders and workers were in protest mode for over a week to highlight the misuse of the ED against their leader.

With many MPs and top party leaders including Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot and his Chhattisgarh counterpart, Bhupesh Baghel, taking part in the protests for several days, many were prompted to ask if the Con-

gress takes up a common man's issues with the same vigour.

Abhishek Manu Singhvi, member of the Congress Working Committee (CWC), said the party cannot be "accused of being supine or inactive in the same breath when protests over various issues are taking place".

"I must point out that there have been a series of such movements since 2014 and it is only for COVID-19 that there were a few pauses," Mr. Singhvi told *The Hindu*.

Professor Ashutosh Kumar, who teaches Political Science in Panjab University, said though inflation, unem-

ployment are intensely political issues, the Congress has not been able to convert them into an effective political narrative.

**Lack of mileage**  
"Somehow the Congress has been unable to bring these issues to the fore and build a strong narrative. And I must say that the media too hasn't been very helpful in this regard," Mr. Kumar said.

Reflecting on Mr. Gandhi's recent statement that he wants to transform the Congress into a party of protests, he said the Congress and Rahul Gandhi are trying to go back to its legacy of marches and satyagrahas.

"The concept of yatra evokes a saintly idiom in politics; an image that you are fighting for a cause by leaving the comforts of your home. Whether or not it will work for the Congress, one can say only after they have undertaken it. But the issue is also about leadership and the Congress doesn't have anyone with [Trinamool chief] Mamata Banerjee's image of being a street fighter," he said.

**Around 2,000 held for violence over Agnipath, Prophet row: U.P. Police**

Over 100 cases registered so far



People protesting against the Centre's Agnipath scheme on Agra-Delhi National Highway in Mathura, U.P. •FILE PHOTO

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The Uttar Pradesh police have so far arrested 1,562 people in connection with the violence over the Agnipath military recruitment scheme, a senior officer said on Saturday. Another 424 people have been arrested in connection with the violence over the controversial remark against Prophet Mohammad, he said.

Additional Director General of Police (Law and Order) Prashant Kumar said, "As many as 1,562 persons have been arrested in the State in connection with the 'Agnipath' violence. Of these, 535 arrests were

made in Jaunpur, 222 in Ballia, and 210 in Chandauli. Eighty-two cases were registered in this regard in 29 districts." On June 17, youngsters aspiring to join the armed forces staged violent protests at various places.

In connection with the violence that erupted on June 3 and June 10 over the remark made by now-reMOVED BJP spokesperson Nupur Sharma on the Prophet, 424 people have been arrested from 10 districts — Kanpur, Firozabad, Aligarh, Hathras, Moradabad, Ambedkar Nagar, Kheri, Jalaun, Saharanpur and Prayagraj. Twenty cases have been registered so far, he said.

**Don't use SC ruling for politics: Cong.**

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court judgment that dismissed a plea to investigate a larger conspiracy behind the Gujarat riots, should not be politicised, the Congress said on Saturday.

In a series of tweets, Raja Sabha member and senior spokesperson Abhishek Manu Singhvi said the top court's judgment merely upheld the report of the Special Investigation Team (SIT) and held that the riots were not the result of any conspiracy.

On Friday, a three-judge Bench of the top court had rejected a petition by Zakiya Jafri, widow of former Congress MP Ehsan Jafri, who was killed during a mob attack on Gulberg Society, to investigate a larger conspiracy.

In his tweet, Mr. Singhvi said that individual culpability was established previously and many were convicted of murder in the riots. He said that the court had ruled out only the role of Prime Minister Narendra Modi (then Chief Minister of Gujarat) in the riots.

He said the ruling of the top court should be respected.

**BJP received donations from scam-hit DHFL, says Congress**

'How did the audit of PMAY not unearth the DHFL scam?'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The Congress on Saturday accused the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) of accepting donations from the promoters and associated companies of the fraud-hit Dewan Housing Finance Corporation Ltd. (DHFL) and asked if there was a *quid pro quo*.

Addressing a press conference, party spokesperson Supriya Shrinete said that DHFL defrauded 17 banks to the tune of over ₹34,615 crore, but the "worrying thing is the direct link of this fraud company and the BJP".

"DHFL has been accused of committing India's biggest banking fraud, but that hasn't stopped the BJP from receiving donations amounting to over ₹27.5 crore from the tainted promoters as well as associated companies of DHFL," Ms. Shrinete alleged.

She claimed that ₹10 crore was given to the BJP from



DHFL has been accused of defrauding 17 banks of over ₹34,615 crore.

RKW Developers Ltd., owned by the promoters of DHFL, ₹10 crore from Wadhawan Global Capital Ltd. and ₹7.5 crore from Darshan Developers controlled by the Wadhawan family.

"Why did the BJP continue to take money to the tune of ₹27.5 crore from bank fraudsters? Was this *quid pro quo* to allow them to misuse public money and dupe India's public sector lenders?" Ms. Shrinete said. There was, however, no immediate response from the BJP.

The Congress spokesperson alleged that the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana was scammed by one company alone that created 2.6 lakh fake home loan accounts and asked whether an audit of the housing scheme had been done to search for more such fraudsters.

"How did the audit of PMAY not unearth the DHFL scam and it was revealed in the Yes Bank probe? The FIR states DHFL created a fictitious bank branch on paper. That raises the important question of the role of institutions like RBI, SEBI, etc. Why were they all caught unawares?" Ms. Shrinete asked.

The Congress leader claimed that India's largest banking fraud happened right under the nose of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, and asked what steps the government was taking to recover money from fugitives like Vijay Mallya, Nirav Modi and Mehul Choksi.

**GTA polls to see multiple voices, contestants**

Of the 277 candidates, 108 are representatives of various political parties and 169 are Independents

SHIV SAHAY SINGH  
DARJEELING

All roads leading to the Darjeeling hills were lined up with posters of multiple political parties and Independents on Saturday, the eve of elections to 45 seats of the Gorkhaland Territorial Administration (GTA).

A few years ago, before every polls, the posters spoke about the creation of Gorkhaland, which has been central to the politics of the hills for the past several decades. The posters this time give details of contesting candidates and promises of development and democracy.

"*Janatako chahansa, sukha, santi r samridhi* [people want happiness, peace and prosperity]" reads pos-



**Preparations galore:** Polling personnel coming out of a distribution centre in Darjeeling on Saturday. •DEBASIS BHADURI

ters of Anit Thapa's party Bharatiya Gorkha Prajatantrik Morcha (BGP) with the photograph of the leader and the party's electoral symbol.

The posters of the newly formed Hamro Party of Ajay

Edwards also have the promise of democracy. "*Ab Janatako Raj* [now it is going to be rule of the people]".

The GTA polls this season are about multiple voices and contestants and many firsts. Some political parties

have openly declared that they will not contest the polls.

Gorkha Janmukti Morcha president Bimal Gurung went on a hunger strike a few weeks ago, opposing polls to the GTA.

**BJP stays away**  
The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has called the GTA an "unconstitutional body" and has stayed away from the polls. The hills have voted for the BJP in the Assembly and Lok Sabha polls on the promise that the party will address long-standing demands of people of the hills.

Of the 277 candidates in the poll fray in GTA, 108 are representatives of political parties and 169, which is

about 60% of all the contesting candidates, are Independents.

Only Hamro Party, the newly formed political outfit that sprang a surprise by winning the Darjeeling municipality, a few months ago has fielded candidates for all 45 seats, Anit Thapa's BGP for 36 seats, the Trinamool Congress for 10, the Communist Party of India (Marxist) for 12 and the Congress for five.

"All security arrangements have been made. We have held meetings with candidates. The campaign has been very peaceful. We expect polling to be peaceful," Darjeeling District Magistrate S. Ponnambalam told *The Hindu*.

**Cong. protests in Punjab Assembly**

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
CHANDIGARH

Noisy scenes were witnessed in the Punjab Assembly on Saturday when Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann rose to speak on the Governor's address with Congress MLAs protesting that they were denied the time to speak.

Congress MLAs shouted slogans demanding time to speak, to which Speaker Kultar Singh Sandhwan responded, saying that allocated time has been given to the members. Following this, Congress MLAs led by the Leader of the Opposition Partap Singh Bajwa left the House in protest.

Mr. Mann announced the introduction of comprehensive law and order reforms in the State to eliminate "gangster culture".

He said that the government will soon introduce a witness protection Bill and modify jails of the State into high-security prisons.

The Chief Minister said that the State government is committed to maintaining law and order and action would be taken against those who disturb peace.

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1. CWSS to AMBALAVAYAL, NENMENI, POOTHADY AND PULPALLY GP in Wayanad District PROVIDING FHTCs in Pulpally Gp 2.CWSS to AMBALAVAYAL, NENMENI, POOTHADY AND PULPALLY GP in Wayanad District PROVIDING FHTCs in Nenmeni Gp 3.CWSS to AMBALAVAYAL, NENMENI, POOTHADY AND PULPALLY GP in Wayanad District PROVIDING FHTCs in Poothady GP  
EMD: ₹ 500000. Tender fee: ₹150000 +18% GST. Last Date for submitting Tender: 20.07.2022, 05:00pm. Phone : 0495-2371046.  
Website: [www.kwa.kerala.gov.in](http://www.kwa.kerala.gov.in), [www.etenders.kerala.gov.in](http://www.etenders.kerala.gov.in)  
KWA-JB-GL-6-416-2022-23 Superintending Engineer, PH Circle, Kozhikode

**TAMIL NADU CIVIL SUPPLIES CORPORATION**  
HEAD OFFICE, CHENNAI - 600 010.

**NOTICE INVITING e-TENDER (SHORT TERM)**

e-Tenders are invited from the eligible contractors for Providing New RCC Plinth CAP storage with covered shed arrangements and Providing Semi Covered Shed in the existing plinth platform at 15 places in Delta and Non-Delta District.

**e-Tender Notice No.:-CED5/013906/2022, dt. 24.06.2022.**  
Last date and time for Online Submission:-06.07.2022 up to 2.00 P.M.  
Downloading by Free of Cost:- From 29.06.2022 to 06.07.2022 up to 2.00 P.M.  
Last date for receiving physical document:- 07.07.2022 up to 2.00 P.M. (E.M.D only)  
Date of Opening of Online tender:- 07.07.2022 at 2.30 P.M.  
For further details please visit website:- [www.tntenders.gov.in](http://www.tntenders.gov.in)  
DIPR/3009/Tender/2022 **MANAGING DIRECTOR**  
"சேர்நகரை கூட்டுத் தரநிறைவு, சாலைகள் புதிற்று எரித்திறும் படைப்பெடும்"

**TAMIL NADU WATER SUPPLY AND DRAINAGE BOARD**  
INVITATION OF BIDS - TWO COVER-TENDAR TENDER SYSTEM- SHORT TERM (2<sup>nd</sup> Call)

Sl. No.	Name of work	Approximate value (Rs. in lakhs)	Bid security (Rs. in lakhs)
1	CWSS to 637 rural habitations in Vrindavanagar District	4.78	3.60
2	CWSS to 755 Rural Habitations in Vrindavanagar District	4.23	3.20
3	CWSS to 7 TPs, and 395 habitations in Vrindavanagar District	2.72	2.10
4	CWSS to 239 Coastal habitations in Thoothukudi District, 2 Mtps, and 2TPs, in Vrindavanagar District	2.33	1.75
5	CWSS to Mannar in Thuvaiyaru District	2.24	1.70

Operation and Maintenance of CWSS including repair and rectification works (For the period from 16.07.2022 to 31.03.2023)

DIPR/ 2017 TENDER 2022 **Chief Engineer, TWAD Board, Madurai**

# 'Not spending money on Maharashtra MLAs'

Himanta denies paying for their stay in Guwahati

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
GUWAHATI

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Saturday denied the claim that the State government was paying for the food and accommodation of dissident Maharashtra MLAs camping at a five-star hotel in Guwahati since June 22.

At least 40 MLAs, led by Shiv Sena leader Eknath Shinde, have been at the hotel for almost a week now.

"Why should the Assam government settle their hotel bills? Assam is not spending anything on them. File an RTI, you will know it," Mr. Sarma said.

"I don't think the Maharashtra MLAs are facing such a difficulty that we have to take care of their hotel expenses," he added.

## CM attacks Opposition

Mr. Sarma said he was not following Maharashtra politics, and cited an Assamese proverb to prove his point. The proverb literally means: "It is useless for a ginger trader to keep track of ships."

He also justified the frequent visits by some of the Assam BJP leaders to the ho-



Why should the Assam government settle their (Maharashtra MLAs) hotel bills? Assam is not spending anything on them. File an RTI, you will know it. I don't think the Maharashtra MLAs are facing such a difficulty that we have to take care of their hotel expenses  
HIMANTA BISWA SARMA  
ASSAM CHIEF MINISTER

tel. "Our leaders go to other hotels too. I will also go there if I feel like having a cup of tea," the Assam Chief Minister said.

After Assam Pradesh Congress president Bhupen Kumar Borah, Rajiv Dal president and MLA Akhil Gogoi demanded that the Maharashtra legislators should go back.

"He is trying to render the Assamese youth, who work at the hotel, jobless. His agenda is to let business suffer and people lose their jobs so that he can make the most of starting an agitation," the Chief Minister said on Saturday.

## Flood relief

On the floods, the Chief Minister said the State government was carrying out relief

and rescue operations with central funds.

"We have not had to spend the State's funds so far," he said amid criticisms of the Centre for not announcing any flood relief package for Assam.

## Affected people

According to the Assam State Disaster Management Authority, four more people, including two children, died on Saturday to take the death toll due to floods and landslips in heavy rain to 121 since April.

The number of districts has come down to 27 from a high of 35, but over 10.3 lakh people are still affected across 2,894 villages and three urban centres, especially the southern Assam town of Silchar.

# Salt sector crisis pinches livelihood of lakhs

While farmers suffer due to lack of MSP, workers are in distress for want of wage system and security

A.M. JIGEESH  
MORBI/JAMNAGAR

Bharat C. Raval, president of the Indian Salt Manufacturers' Association (ISMA), started his career as a salt inspector with the Gujarat government. After spending 19 months in the government, he was attracted towards the salt cooperatives initiated by Verghese Kurien, the Milkman of India.

Kurien trained Mr. Raval at the Sabarmati Salt Farmers' Society where he joined in April 1988 as a procurement executive. Nearly 35 years later, Mr. Raval feels that the salt industry is facing huge challenges in meeting the demand and in tackling the realisation crisis faced by salt farmers.

Initially, the society where Mr. Raval worked produced 30,000 tonnes of salt. It reached up to 7,00,000 tonnes in three years, by 1991. "We have also operated CSR activities those days by providing health infrastructure support to salt farmers. Farmers were getting ₹17 a tonne when we entered the sector and the price went up in the first years to ₹27 a tonne and touched up to ₹70 by 1991," Mr. Raval said.

There are not much changes considering the cost of living. About five lakh peo-



A salt farmer busy at work at the Little Rann of Kutch near Patdi, Gujarat. •VIJAY SONEJI

ple work in the salt industry. At the moment, a farmer earns about ₹250 to ₹300 for a tonne of salt he or she produces. The prices keep fluctuating. Gujarat produces about 28.5 million tonnes of salt a year, which is more than 80% of the country's total production. While farmers are facing low price as there is no minimum support price, workers are in distress due to a lack of proper system for wages and social security.

There are about 12,800 salt processing units in Gujarat's coastal belt, out of which only 119 are consi-

dered medium and large.

The manufacturers have been knocking the doors of the government, along with the farmers. Very recently, Mr. Raval wrote a letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi. He said in the letter that salt, being a cheap commodity, is getting the last priority of attention from the government. He warned the Centre that if the neglect continued, India may lose its position as the world's third largest producer of salt. "Most of our demands are as old as the freedom movement. Even after 75 years of Independence, the laws that

govern this industry are framed by the British. 120 years ago, Britishers got salt from Mandi in Himachal Pradesh by mining. Therefore, the British put salt production as mining. Hardly 0.5% salt is produced by mining. 99.5% salt is produced either from the seawater or from the subsoil water and the entire process done by seeding, cultivation and harvest," Mr. Raval says.

The production units and farmers say that all laws pertaining to the industries are applicable to salt production even though the production is done through simple solar

evaporation as it is listed as mining industry. "As of now, demand and supply are almost same. We produce 36 million tonnes of salt and our demand, including for export, is 31.5 million tonnes. In the future, if the government doesn't take care of this industry, we will definitely be in trouble. The demand rises at the rate of 8% and the production increase is just 3%," he said. Salt is a central subject as item No. 58 of the Union List of the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution. The industries demand that there should be a nodal agency with common rules and regulations.

M Ramachandran, a trade union leader working among workers in salt processing units said the workers are going through serious health issues and economic distress. "Gujarat produces 80% of the salt in India. Now, companies have replaced cooperatives and they decide the wages of these workers and production of farmers. Most of them are migrant workers. Cooperative sector is more or less inactive. These workers do not have minimum wages or social security. Recently, 12 workers died in Morbi when a packing unit's wall collapsed," he said.

# An arrest on Nepal border helps police bust illegal club

Two Chinese held for running exotic club without any obstruction for the past two years in Greater Noida

VIJAITA SINGH  
NEW DELHI

The chance arrest of two Chinese nationals on the India-Nepal border in Bihar by the Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB) earlier this month led the Uttar Pradesh Police to a sprawling club run illegally by a Chinese national in a village on the outskirts of Delhi. The club functioned under the radar without any obstruction for the past two years in Greater Noida, only 40 km from the national capital.

As on Saturday, Xue Fei (36), alias Lekpa Sherpa, a Chinese national, and Petekhrinuo (22), a resident of Nagaland, had been arrested by the police, while three Indians and another Chinese national were on the run. Police and internal intelligence agencies suspect the arrests could be linked to a larger syndicate of organised crime.

The club called Tiangsheng Rianjen ('heaven on earth') was stocked with Chinese products and served mainly Chinese expats.

The police found Mr. Xue a tough nut to crack. When they interrogated him for three days, he hardly showed any sign of exertion. Perched on a plastic chair in a police interrogation room



The Tiangsheng Rianjen Club run by Chinese national Xue Fei in Greater Noida, 40 km from Delhi. •VIJAITA SINGH

in Greater Noida, the police officers were amazed by his resilience.

"Even at night, after hours of interrogation, he was barely tired. He took quick naps sitting on the chair but did not express any desire to lie down. It seems he is well-trained to sustain interrogations," a senior police officer who interrogated Mr. Xue said. Mr. Xue, currently in an Uttar Pradesh jail, is accused of living in India on a forged Indian passport and running the exotic club illegally.

On June 11, the SSB apprehended two Chinese nationals - Yung Hai Lung and Lo Lung - on the Nepal border in Bihar's Sitamarhi while they were trying to cross over to the neighbouring country. Their interrogation re-

vealed they had spent 15 days at Mr. Xue's place in Greater Noida. The Bihar Police passed the information to the Uttar Pradesh counterparts. When the police reached the apartment in a luxury housing society in Greater Noida, it was found to be locked. The police traced Mr. Xue and Ms. Petekhrinuo to a five-star hotel in Gurgaon on June 13 and the couple were placed under arrest.

The local police were prepared to shut the probe as yet another case of illegal stay of a foreigner in Delhi's satellite town till an officer, Meenakshi Katyayan, analysed the phone call records of the two suspects.

Ms. Katyayan said that during questioning, Mr. Xue

never admitted to the existence of the club. He had destroyed his Chinese passport and from his apartment, the police found photocopies of a voter ID, Aadhaar card and an Indian passport issued from Darjeeling in the name of Lekpa Sherpa. He said he had come to India in 2019 on a business visa, and couldn't return as his visa expired

## SPECIAL

and air travel was banned due to the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions. "He said he couldn't return even after travel restrictions were lifted last year as he did not have enough money to purchase tickets. I knew he was lying as we had recovered two BMWs and another luxury car from the club premises, and ₹52 lakh had been deposited in a friend's bank account in the past six months," Ms. Katyayan said.

The Indian Police Service (IPS) officer said that one location that prominently popped in Mr. Xue and Ms. Petekhrinuo's call logs was the village Gharbara along the Yamuna Expressway. The village does not have a metalled road. In the middle of nowhere, the police

found the three-storey, 70-room club. High iron gates and CCTV cameras ringed the compound running to several acres. The police found the club stacked with Chinese cigarettes, liquor, lipsticks, high-heeled shoes, human-size teddy bears and golf clubs, among other items. A food menu in Mandarin was found. The rooms were electronically locked and CCTV footage had been deleted, the police said. Around 15-20 employees of the club, including women, fled when the police reached there.

## Indian accomplice

Ms. Katyayan said the police were looking for Mr. Xue's Indian accomplice, a man named Ravi Natwarlal Thakkar from Gujarat, who had studied medicine in China. A raid of his Noida home had revealed he had a Chinese passport.

The police also found his Indian passport and are in the process of issuing a look-out circular for him. "It is Ravi who has signed the rental agreement for the club that was running for more than two years," she said. The police recovered details of nine companies registered under different Chinese names

from Mr. Xue's possession. The companies were registered for businesses in e-waste, mobile spare parts and earphone manufacturing. No company was found at the registered addresses when the police raided the locations in Ghaziabad, Panipat and Noida.

"Xue said he was merely an employee of the club and used to get a salary. He had used the identity documents of his Indian friend to strike business deals and make it look genuine," Ms. Katyayan said. Mr. Xue met Ms. Petekhrinuo at the Hunter Valley Club in Gurgaon more than a year ago. "She told us that the money in her account belonged to Xue. She was obviously in love and Xue took advantage of her Indian identity," the officer said.

Intelligence agencies are also analysing the case as it could be linked to a larger syndicate. Ms. Petekhrinuo told the police Mr. Xue also dabbled in bitcoin trading.

At the club premises, the police also found a diary. "The diary, with notes scribbled in English, detailed how women employees had to look presentable, wear make-up all the time, and entertain the guests," Ms. Katyayan said.

# 'U.S. decision could stigmatise abortion'

Unsafe practices will multiply: PFI

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

The United States Supreme Court's decision to overturn its own landmark 1973 judgment in *Roe v. Wade* that made abortion a Constitutional right in the country could stigmatise abortion worldwide, according to the Population Foundation of India (PFI). "Given the global influence of the U.S. across every sphere, this is likely to stigmatise reproductive health worldwide, affecting millions, if not billions of women," Poonam Muttreja, executive director, PFI, added.

## Unregulated abortions

"The decision's implication that reproductive rights are not a part of fundamental rights could lead to similar interpretations in different countries. Such a legal regime could lead to more unsafe and unregulated abortions worldwide, which are not only a cause of severe health conditions for women but can also prove fatal," she added.

Following the U.S. Supreme Court's decision, as many as 26 States in the country are certain or likely to ban abortion without fed-

Given the global influence of the U.S., this is likely to stigmatise reproductive health worldwide, affecting millions, if not billions of women

eral protections, including 13 with laws set to be triggered quickly, according to the Guttmacher Institute.

Since 1994, four nations, now including the U.S., have rolled back abortion rights. The U.S. is by far the richest and most influential nation to do so. The other three nations to restrict abortion rights are Poland, El Salvador and Nicaragua.

In India, abortion is legal but conditional. Under the Medical Termination of Pregnancy (MTP) (Amendment) Act, 2021, abortion is permissible up to 24 weeks for women under specified conditions along with the medical opinion of a medical practitioner registered under the MTP Act. Any decision for the termination of pregnancy beyond 24 weeks, only on the ground of foetal abnormalities, can be taken by a Medical Board.

## SUDOKU

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

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

## Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

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

# Udaipur's 'bird village' to be declared wetland

The two lakes, Brahma and Dhandh, play host to a large number of migratory birds in winter season

MOHAMMED IQBAL  
JAIPUR

Recognised as the "bird village" following community-driven conservation efforts, Menar in Udaipur district is set to be notified as Rajasthan's new wetland. This will pave the way for getting the Ramsar site status for this rural heartland of the Mewar region. The two lakes in the village - the Brahma and Dhandh - play host to a large number of migratory birds in the winter season.

The State government's Forest Department has initiated the process for notification of Menar as a wetland, which will recognise its role in the storage of sediment and nutrients and enable the local authorities to maintain the Brahma and Dhandh lakes. With the status of wetland, the two lakes will be strengthened for increasing vegetation of aquatic plants and protecting biodiversity.

Environmental activists in



Safe zone: Birds at Dhandh lake in Menar village, Udaipur district, Rajasthan. •SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

the region have high expectations of the declaration of Menar as a Ramsar site under the 1971 Ramsar convention on wetlands of international importance. At present, Rajasthan has two wetlands recognised as Ramsar sites - Keoladeo Ghana in Bharatpur district and Sambhar Salt Lake in Jaipur.

The villagers in Menar, situated 45 km away from Udaipur, have built a healthy ecosystem for birds during the last four years with activities

such as patrolling, rescue of injured birds and reporting any attempts for poaching. Menar sarpanch Pramod Kumar Dholi told *The Hindu* that the volunteers known as Pakshi Mitras (friends of birds) were maintaining the lakes as a safe haven for birds.

More than 150 species of local and migratory birds inhabit the two lakes in the winter season. They include greater flamingo, white-tailed lapwing, pelican,

marsh harrier, bar headed goose, common teal, green-shank, pintail, wagtail, green sandpiper and red-wattled lapwing. Bird lovers and tourists flock to the village after the arrival of migratory birds from as far as Central Asia, Europe and Mongolia.

Mr. Dholi said the villagers had stopped using water from the lakes for irrigation and started regular weeding to get rid of water hyacinth, while the panchayat had prohibited fishing in the water bodies. "When the water level declines in summer, we fill the lakes with water through tankers for saving the fish and birds. Pakshi Mitras have also taken up development of pastures near these reservoirs," he said.

Vallabh Nagar MLA Preeti Shaktawat, who recently visited Menar on World Wetlands Day, said the lakes in the village would be developed under the supervision of the Forest Department's officers. The high-tension

power line and sewer line passing through the lakes would also be shifted shortly, she said.

The district administration has also formulated a management plan for systematic development of the lakes, while an action plan is under way to get Menar notified as a wetland at the earliest. The fresh water lakes supporting the ecosystem of the region will be protected with the application of the Wetlands (Conservation and Management) Rules, 2019.

With a rich history connecting it closely with the erstwhile rulers of Mewar, Menar has come on the radar of birdwatchers in the State because of the villagers' conservation initiative. Umesh Menaria, a local volunteer, said the undisturbed environs of the lakes would be a great attraction for experts and researchers to study the behaviour of birds and find out their migration routes.

# Arrested IAS officer's son found dead

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
CHANDIGARH

Kartik Popli (27), son of an IAS officer Sanjay Popli who was arrested on corruption charges, died by suicide on Saturday, the police said. The family of Mr. Kartik, who died in the presence of a team of Punjab Vigilance Bureau at their residence here, alleged that vigilance personnel were responsible for the incident.

Four days after the arrest, the Bureau recovered over 12 kg of gold, 3 kg of silver and other items from the storeroom of his house in Chandigarh. The gold includes nine gold bricks, 49 gold biscuits and 12 gold coins, while the silver includes three bricks and 18 silver coins, said an official statement. He was arrested for allegedly demanding a 1% commission as bribe. The family has alleged that officials were pressuring them.

# Gunman kills two in Oslo 'terror attack'

Police say suspect, a Norwegian citizen of Iranian origin, has a history of violence, mental health issues

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
OSLO

A gunman opened fire in Oslo's nightlife district early Saturday, killing two people and leaving more than 20 wounded in what the Norwegian security service called an "Islamist terror act" during the capital's annual LGBTQ Pride festival.

Investigators said the suspect, identified as a 42-year-old Norwegian citizen originally from Iran, was arrested after opening fire at three locations in downtown Oslo.

Police said two men, one in his 50s and the other his 60s, died in the shootings. Ten people were treated for serious injuries, but none of them was believed to be in life-threatening condition. Eleven others had minor injuries.

The Norwegian Police Security Service raised its terror alert level from "moder-



**On alert:** Norwegian security forces at the site where several people were shot outside a pub in central Oslo. ■ REUTERS

ate" to "extraordinary" – the highest level – after the attack, which sent panicked revelers fleeing into the streets or trying to hide from the gunman.

The service's acting chief, Roger Berg, called the attack an "extreme Islamist terror

act" and said the suspect had a "long history of violence and threats," as well as mental health issues.

He said the agency, known by its Norwegian acronym PST, first became aware of the suspect in 2015 and later grew concerned he had be-

come radicalised and was part of an unspecified Islamist network.

Upon the advice of police, organisers cancelled a Pride parade that was set for Saturday as the highlight of a weeklong festival. Scores of people marched through the capital anyway, waving rainbow flags.

One of the shootings happened outside the London Pub, a bar popular with the city's LGBTQ community, just hours before the parade was set to begin.

Benjamin Lau-Henriksen, 15, and his friend Li-Sullivan Köker Bolstad, 16, walked by the London Pub on their way home from a nearby Pride party for young people about two hours before the shooting. Had they been of drinking age, they would have been at the bar, they said.

"Had we been over 18 yes-

terday, we would have been there and we could have died," Bolstad said. "I'd like to say I'm surprised, but I'm not because as queer youth we live in fear of something like this happening."

Police said civilians assisted them in detaining the suspect. Police attorney Christian Hatlo said the man was being held on suspicion of murder, attempted murder and terrorism, based on the number of people targeted at multiple locations.

"Our overall assessment is that there are grounds to believe that he wanted to cause grave fear in the population," Mr. Hatlo said.

Mr. Hatlo said it was too early to say whether the gunman specifically targeted members of the LGBTQ community.

"We have to look closer at that, we don't know yet," he said.

# Xi to attend Hong Kong handover celebration

Event to coincide with inauguration of new govt. on July 1

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
BEIJING

Chinese President Xi Jinping will attend events to celebrate 25 years since Hong Kong's handover to China, state media reported on Saturday, with the Communist Party looking to showcase its control over the city after crushing a democracy movement.

If Mr. Xi attends in person, the trip would be his first outside of the Chinese mainland since the pandemic began. But state media and Hong Kong officials did not explicitly say whether he would travel to the city or attend virtually.

A trip would also coincide with the inauguration of Hong Kong's new administration, led by former security chief John Lee.



Xi Jinping

The Chinese Communist Party places great importance on anniversaries, and Hong Kong's handover presents Mr. Xi with an opportunity to emphasise China's authority over Hong Kong after three years of political upheaval there.

Hong Kong is at the halfway point of the "One Country, Two Systems" political model, which promised that the former British colony's

way of life would remain unchanged for 50 years after its handover. But a national security law imposed after pro-democracy protests in 2019 has seen dissent quashed, with scores of opposition figures arrested in a political crackdown.

The new Hong Kong government, to be sworn in on July 1, will be led by Mr. Lee, who oversaw the controversial police response to the democracy protests.

Mr. Lee on Saturday said he was delighted by the news of Mr. Xi's attendance and thanked the Chinese leader for his "caring and support" for Hong Kong. "Hong Kong is at the crucial stage of advancing from chaos to governance, and gradually towards prosperity," Mr. Lee said.

# Iran-U.S. nuclear talks to resume soon, says EU

Need to get economic benefits: Tehran

REUTERS  
DUBAI

Iran's indirect talks with the U.S. on reviving the 2015 nuclear pact will resume soon, the Iranian Foreign Minister said on Saturday amid a push by the European Union's top diplomat to break a months-long impasse in the negotiations.

"We are prepared to resume talks in the coming days. What is important for Iran is to fully receive the economic benefits of the 2015 accord," Foreign Minister Hossein Amirabdollahian said, adding that he had held a "long but positive meeting" with EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell.

"We are expected to resume talks in the coming days and break the impasse. It has been three months and we need to accelerate the work. I am very happy about the decision that has been made in Tehran and Washington," Mr. Borrell told a televised news conference in Tehran.

The pact appeared close to being revived in March when the EU – which is coordinating negotiations – invited Foreign Ministers representing the accord's parties to Vienna to finalise an agreement after 11 months of indirect talks between Tehran and President Joe Biden's administration.

# 'Russia is trying to block Lysychansk'

Russian and separatist fighters pushing to cut off city from the south: Governor

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
KYIV

Russian forces are trying to cut off the strategic city of Lysychansk in eastern Ukraine, the Luhansk Governor said on Saturday, after the relentless assault on nearby Sievierodonetsk forced Ukrainian troops to begin withdrawing.

Russia also launched missile attacks on areas far from the heart of the eastern battles.

Serhiy Haidai, Governor of Luhansk province, said on Facebook that Russian and separatist fighters tried to blockade Lysychansk from the south. The city lies next to Sievierodonetsk, which has endured a relentless as-



A Ukrainian military vehicle on a road outside Lysychansk as Russian shelling continues in the city. ■ AFP

sault and house-to-house fighting for weeks.

Russia's Interfax news agency quoted a spokesman for the separatist forces, Andrei Marochko, as saying Russian troops and separa-

aimed at capturing all of eastern Ukraine's Donbas region and destroying the Ukrainian military defending it – the most capable and battle-hardened segment of the country's armed forces.

Some 1,000 km to the west, four Russian rockets hit a "military object" in Yaroviv, Lviv Governor Maksym Kozlytskyi said. He did not give further details of the target, but Yaroviv has a sizable military base used for training fighters, including foreigners who have volunteered to fight for Ukraine.

In the north, about 20 rockets were fired from Belarus into the Chernihiv region, the Ukrainian military said.

Lysychansk and Sievierodonetsk have been the focal point of a Russian offensive

fighters had entered Lysychansk and that fighting was taking place in the heart of the city.

Lysychansk and Sievierodonetsk have been the focal point of a Russian offensive

# Taliban call for more aid after deadly earthquake

Lift sanctions, unfreeze assets: Balkhi

REUTERS  
KABUL

Afghanistan's Taliban administration called on international governments on Saturday to roll back sanctions and lift a freeze on central bank assets following the earthquake that killed more than 1,000 people and left thousands homeless this week.

The 6.1-magnitude quake that struck the east of the country on Wednesday damaged or destroyed 10,000 homes and also injured about 2,000 people, straining the country's fragile health system and posing a major test for the ruling Taliban.

"The Islamic Emirate is asking the world to give the Afghans their most basic right, which is their right to life and that is through lifting the sanctions and unfreezing our assets and also giving assistance," Abdul Qahar Balkhi, Foreign Affairs Ministry Spokesman, said.

Billions of dollars in Afghan central bank reserves remain frozen overseas and sanctions hamper the banking sector as the West pushes for concessions on human rights. Western governments are particularly concerned about the rights of women and girls to work and study.

# Protesters decry U.S. abortion ruling

Doctors seek medical licences in States where the procedure could remain legal

REUTERS  
WASHINGTON

Hundreds of protesters descended on the U.S. Supreme Court on Saturday to denounce the justice's decision to overturn the half-century-old *Roe v. Wade* precedent that recognised women's constitutional right to abortion.

The sweeping ruling by the court, with a 6-3 conservative majority, was set to vastly change American life, with nearly half the States considered certain or likely to ban abortion. Conservative Justice Clarence Thomas suggested the court's reasoning could also lead it to reconsider past rulings protecting the right to contraception, legalising gay marriage nationwide, and invalidating state laws banning gay sex.

The crowd featured both abortion opponents wearing T-shirts reading "I am the Pro-Life Generation" and abortion rights supporters



**Widening divide:** People protesting in Portland after the U.S. Supreme Court struck down *Roe v. Wade* on Friday. ■ AFP

chanting "my body, my choice."

"The Supreme Court has made some terrible decisions," President Joe Biden said on Saturday.

## 'Long campaign'

Christian conservatives had long fought to overturn *Roe*, with Friday's ruling a cherished win that was the result of a long campaign to appoint anti-abortion justices to the top court. The ruling

had the support of all three justices appointed by former President Donald Trump.

The ruling will likely influence voter behavior in the November 8 midterm elections, when Democrats face a high risk of losing their razor-thin majorities in the House of Representatives and possibly the Senate.

Some party leaders hope the decision will win over suburban swing voters, though activists expressed

disappointment and demoralisation at suffering such a defeat while their party held total power in Washington.

"They can ask for vote for more power but don't they already have the Congress and the White House?" said Patricia Smith, a 24-year-old supporter of abortion rights.

The case that led to Friday's decision revolved around a Mississippi law that bans most abortions after 15 weeks of pregnancy, before the foetus is a viable outside the womb.

Jennifer Kerns, a California physician, will soon be practising 2,896 km away at an abortion clinic in Kansas, where women from nearby States with bans on the procedure are expected to seek care. Abortion clinics and providers say Ms. Kerns is among dozens of doctors who have recently sought new medical licences in States where abortion could remain legal, anticipating Friday's Court decision.

# Shanghai reports zero COVID cases

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
BEIJING

China reported zero COVID-19 infections in Shanghai for the first time since March on Saturday, as the country's latest outbreak subsides after months of lockdowns.

China is the last major economy still committed to a zero-COVID strategy, stamping out new cases with a combination of targeted lockdowns, mass testing and lengthy quarantines. In Beijing, restrictions first imposed in May were eased as cases declined, but tightened again this month after a nightlife-linked infection cluster emerged.

# Biden signs landmark gun control measure, says 'lives will be saved'

The law will toughen background checks for younger buyers

ASSOCIATED PRESS  
WASHINGTON

President Joe Biden on Saturday signed the most sweeping gun violence Bill in decades, a bipartisan compromise that seemed unimaginable until a recent series of mass shootings, including the massacre of 19 students and two teachers at a Texas elementary school.

"Time is of the essence. Lives will be saved," he said. Citing the families of shooting victims, the President said, "Their message to us was, 'Do something.' How many times did we hear that? 'Just do something. For God's sake, just do something.' Today we did."



Joe Biden

The House gave final approval on Friday, following Senate passage on Thursday, and Mr. Biden acted just before leaving Washington for two summits in Europe.

"Today we say, 'More than enough,'" Mr. Biden said. "It's time, when it

seems impossible to get anything done in Washington, we are doing something consequential."

The legislation will toughen background checks for the youngest gun buyers, keep firearms from more domestic violence offenders and help States put in place "red flag" laws that make it easier for authorities to take weapons from people adjudged to be dangerous.

The President called it "a historic achievement."

Most of its \$13 billion cost will help bolster mental health programmes and aid schools, which have been targeted in mass shootings.

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**Bird's-eye view:** An aerial shot of the flood-affected areas in Assam. •PTI

## Extreme weather

What accounts for the deficit in some areas and the excess rainfall in Assam this monsoon?

RAHUL KARMAKAR

**The story so far:** Assam received 1,891.9 mm of rainfall from March 1 to June 24, just 347.5 mm less than the annual precipitation the State receives. According to the India Meteorological Department (IMD), Assam's annual normal rainfall between 1961 and 2010 has been 2,239.4 mm. The outcome has been devastating. A total of 117 people have died since April, 17 of them in landslides. An arterial railway track linking southern Assam, Manipur, Mizoram and Tripura has been washed away, 55 lakh people have been affected across more than 5,000 villages and a town, Silchar, has been flooded for more than a week. At least 38 people have died in flash floods and landslides in Arunachal Pradesh and Meghalaya since April. Meteorologists and climate change specialists attribute the high pre-monsoon and monsoon rains to several factors.

How has the monsoon been so far this year?

■ The country received 2% less rain this year than it usually does between June 1 and June 23 every year. The total rainfall was brought down by 34% over central India and 15% over peninsular India compared to the 32% more received by the east and northeast and 7% more by northwest India. According to the IMD, the rain deficiency – private forecaster Skymet pegs the deficit at 4% till now – is expected to be overcome by the first week of July. During the monsoons, whenever moisture-laden southerly or south-westerly winds from the Bay of Bengal hit the region's east-west oriented mountain ranges, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, and Meghalaya receive more rainfall in comparison to other States of the north-eastern region. Meteorologists said the recent episode of heavy rainfall underlined the presence of the east-west trough in the lower levels of the atmosphere over the region and the incursion of large-scale moisture due to strong southerly and

south-westerly winds from the Bay of Bengal.

**What are the factors determining rainfall pattern?**

■ Assam, which receives rainfall beyond the June-September monsoon phase, does not always get above-normal or excess rain. But this year, according to the IMD, it received 41% above normal rainfall during the

pre-monsoon season (March to May), and it has received 71% more than normal rainfall up to June 25. A 2018 study based on IMD data conducted by Pune-based Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology revealed that the State had been witnessing a significant decreasing trend in the average monsoon rainfall since 1870 while experiencing sudden downpour days leading to frequent flooding. It found that the average rainfall deficiency was 5.95 mm per decade between 1981 and 2016. A 2017 study published in the *International Journal of Current Microbiology and Applied Sciences* said Assam's valleys experience both excessive and insufficient rainfall from time to time “due to ecological and climate difference from one place to another”. Climate change is said to have increased the water and surface temperature of the Arabian Sea and the Bay of Bengal by up to 2 degrees, causing the frequent formation of low-pressure areas and cyclonic circulations, resulting in heavy rains. A recent study by the Indian Institute of Technology, Guwahati said aerosols, including black carbon, released by biomass burning, influence the western part of northeast India close to the Indo-Gangetic Plain the most. Rising black carbon emissions, it said, leads to a decrease in low-intensity rainfall while pushing up severe rain in the pre-monsoon season in northeast India.

Was the monsoon late this year?

■ The seasonal monsoon winds are an extremely complex and intricate combination of physical processes that operate not only in the atmosphere but also involve land and ocean. In India, June 1 is regarded as the date of arrival of the monsoon, which accounts for about 80% of the rainfall in the country. The monsoon landed early in Kerala this year, three days ahead of the normal date of June 1, but then it turned sluggish on its western branch's upward journey. But if central India suffered a deficit, the east and north-eastern parts battled a diametrically opposite problem – excess rain – leading to widespread floods in Assam and Meghalaya. Historically, June rainfall is patchy and contributes less than 18% of the total monsoon rainfall. The key monsoon months are July and August and they bring nearly two-thirds of the monsoon rains. The most important synoptic disturbances during the monsoons over India are disturbances (lows, depressions, etc.) that form mostly over the Bay of Bengal, move westwards or west north-westwards along the monsoon trough, and produce a large volume of rainfall. The other synoptic disturbance which affects monsoon rainfall significantly is the position of offshore trough or vortex along the west coast of India. Monsoon in India is known to be affected by global phenomena such as El Nino or La Nina – large-scale warming or cooling events of the sea surface. Other factors such as the Indian Ocean Dipole and Madden-Julian Oscillation also influence monsoon rainfall.

With inputs from Jacob Koshy

# Has the anti-defection law failed in India?

What do developments in Maharashtra, and earlier in other States, say about its efficacy?

K. VENKATARAMANAN

**The story so far:** Maharashtra is in the throes of a constitutional crisis. Many ruling Shiv Sena legislators who seem to have revolted against the leadership of Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray are now holed up in a hotel in distant Guwahati to keep out of the reach of party leaders. Their travel to Guwahati, via Surat, seems to have been facilitated by the BJP, the ruling party in Gujarat and Assam. All indications are that there is a planned mass defection underway so that an alternative regime that includes the BJP is formed in the State.

Isn't there a law against such defection?

■ The Tenth Schedule of the Constitution, commonly known as the anti-defection law, was introduced in 1985 with a view to curb the tendency among legislators to switch loyalties from one party to another and facilitate the toppling of regimes and formation of new ones. It provides for the Presiding Officer of the legislature to disqualify any defector on a petition by another member. The law contemplates two kinds of defection: (a) by a member voluntarily giving up membership of the party on whose symbol he got elected (b) by a member violating a direction (whip) issued by his party to vote in a particular way or to abstain from voting.

While voting contrary to the party's whip is quite a straightforward instance of defection, the other mode of defection has proved to be a source of dispute and litigation. A member 'voluntarily giving up membership' does not refer to a simple resignation letter and formally joining another party. It is often an inference drawn by the party that loses a member to another based on the legislator's conduct. The Supreme Court has also ruled that 'voluntarily giving up membership' can be inferred from the conduct of a person.

How do the MLAs plan to avoid disqualification?

■ The Shiv Sena has 55 members in the Maharashtra Assembly. Eknath Shinde, who leads the rebel group, claims that he has 40 MLAs with him, but the figure may include Independents. The group may claim to be the 'real Shiv Sena' and seek to 'expel' the current leadership. As a legal defence, they may invoke Paragraph 4 of the Tenth Schedule, under which disqualification on account of defection will not apply in case of a merger of one party with another. However, there is a rider. There is a deemed merger only if two-thirds of the party's total strength agrees to the merger. In Maharashtra, the rebel group will need to have 37 MLAs to make the claim that they constitute two-thirds of the legislature party. However, it remains to be seen if the Deputy Speaker (the Speaker's office is vacant), initially, and then the law courts will recognise such a 'merger'. Disqualification proceedings have already been initiated against some of them.

Originally, the 10th Schedule had spoken of a 'split' in a legislature party as an exception to the disqualification rule. That is if one-third of a legislature party leaves it or joins another party, it amounts to a 'split' and such members would not attract disqualification. This proved to be an escape clause for legislators to form a group that amounted to one-third of the legislature party's total strength and then cross over. Paragraph 3, which allowed the use of a split to avoid disqualification for defection, was deleted by the Constitution (91st Amendment) Act, 2003.

How foolproof is this plan?

■ It remains to be seen if the defectors will get away by



**Internal churning:** Supporters of rebel Shiv Sena leader Eknath Shinde outside the party office at Hanuman Nagar in Thane on June 23. •PTI

using the 'merger' argument. In a recent instance, the Bombay High Court at Goa ruled in favour of MLAs who had defected from the Congress to the BJP in Goa. The court noted that they satisfied the two-thirds requirement for a deemed merger and ruled that they were exempted from disqualification. The Congress has appealed to the

Supreme Court.

**As defections continue unabated and Speakers refrain from acting on these developments based on their political loyalties, there is a strong case to reform the anti-defection law, according to experts**

The main ground of appeal is that the Court should not have accepted the existence of a merger, as the merger envisaged in Para 4 of the 10th Schedule is a two-step process under which one political party first merges with another, and then the legislators accept the merger. In the absence of a merger of the parties, the mere fact

that two-thirds of the MLAs cross over to the other party does not save them from disqualification.

In a similar case in Meghalaya, the Speaker recognised as a 'merger' the crossover of 12 Congress MLAs out of a total of 17 to the Trinamool Congress and refused to disqualify them.

The Supreme Court may have to adjudicate whether an actual merger is a condition precedent for bringing into play the 'deemed fiction' of a merger after two-thirds of a party's legislators cross over.

Does the 10th Schedule mean anything?

■ This brings us to the question whether the anti-defection law has been rendered meaningless by various events. What was introduced as a panacea for the menace of floor-crossing and toppling of elected regimes by engineering defections has proved largely ineffective in many cases. Recent instances give an idea of the various ploys adopted by parties, legislators and Speakers to either evade the law against defection or to achieve partisan political ends.

The most common these days is for a ruling party with a big majority to poach the main Opposition parties without any regard for the anti-defection law. When the aggrieved party moves for disqualification, Speakers choose not to act, thus formalising the defection.

In Manipur, for instance, seven Congress MLAs joined the BJP shortly after the 2017 Assembly election and one of them became a Minister too. However, the Speaker did not act on petitions to disqualify the Minister for over two years. In January 2020, the Supreme Court directed the Speaker to dispose of the matter within four weeks. As the Speaker passed no order even long after the deadline,

# How will the Roe rollback impact women?

What are the implications of the U.S. top court overturning a 1973 judgment on the right to abortion?

SUDIPTA DATTA

**The story so far:** The U.S. Supreme Court on Friday ended the constitutional right to abortion, overturning the landmark 1973 *Roe v. Wade* decision that had enshrined a woman's right to her body. In its ruling, the Conservative-dominated SCOTUS (Supreme Court of the United States) said, “The Constitution does not confer a right to abortion;... and the authority to regulate abortion is returned to the people and their elected representatives.” The 6-3 verdict echoed a draft opinion leaked in early May claiming that the SCOTUS would vote to strike down the right to abortion. Also overturned on Friday, was *Planned Parenthood vs Casey*, a 1992 case that upheld *Roe*. While anti-abortionists led by former President Donald Trump cheered the judgment, pro-choice advocates and women's rights bodies decried the move, calling it a “horrible decision with devastating consequences.” According to the Guttmacher Institute, an abortion rights advocacy research group, 26 states (of the 50) are certain or likely to ban abortion; and in at least 13 states, the ban comes into effect quickly.

How did it come about?

■ The *Roe v. Wade* judgment had struck down state-level abortion limits on a foetus before it is viable to survive outside the womb, which is considered to be the 24-28 week mark. On Friday, writing for the majority in the *Dobbs vs Jackson Women's Health Organisation*, Justice Samuel Alito, a conservative appointed by George W. Bush, said: “We hold that *Roe* and *Casey* must be overruled. The Constitution makes no reference to abortion, and no such right is implicitly protected by any constitutional provision, including the one on which the defenders of *Roe* and *Casey* – now chiefly rely – the Due Process Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment.” The Due Process Clause of the 14th Amendment protects among other things, the right to marry, the right to use contraception and the right to abortion.

In 1969, a resident of Texas, Norma McCorvey, sought an abortion when she was five months pregnant and went to court because at that time the state of Texas had a ban on abortions except when it could be carried out to save a mother's life. The pseudonym picked for her was Jane Roe, and it was called *Roe v. Wade* after the district attorney in Dallas, Henry Wade, the defendant in the case. In 1973, when the case reached the Supreme Court on appeal, SCOTUS ruled 7-2 to recognise abortion as a



**In protest:** Abortion rights activists after the overturning of *Roe v. Wade* by the U.S. Supreme Court on June 24. •AFP

The UN sexual and reproductive health agency and the World Health Organization noted that a staggering 45% of all abortions around the world are unsafe, making the procedure a leading cause of maternal death

constitutional right in the U.S.

Following the *Roe v. Wade* judgment, there was a right to abortion in the first three months (trimester) of pregnancy; some limitations were placed in the second trimester; and in the third trimester, states could restrict or ban abortions as the foetus neared the point where it could live outside the womb except for cases in which the life and health of the mother were endangered. Later, in the 1992 *Planned Parenthood vs Casey* case, the SCOTUS rejected the 'trimester' system, but retained *Roe's* “essential holding,” which established women's constitutional right to abortions until the foetus was viable to live outside the womb.

There are nine judges in the U.S. Supreme Court, six of whom were appointed by Republican Presidents. Overturning the right to abortion was a campaign promise made by Mr. Trump, and during his four years as President, he appointed three justices – Neil Gorsuch in 2017, Brett Kavanaugh in 2018 and Amy Coney Barrett in 2020 – to give the SCOTUS a 6-3 conservative majority.

the Court invoked its extraordinary powers to remove T. Shyamkumar Singh, the Minister concerned, from the Cabinet and barred him from entering the Assembly. Opposition members have crossed over to the ruling party in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana in large numbers in recent years, but did not suffer disqualification.

In Karnataka, in 2010, a group of BJP rebels against then Chief Minister B. S. Yeddyurappa met the Governor to express their resentment against his continuance in office and sought a 'constitutional process' to be initiated. The Speaker subsequently disqualified them on the ground that their action in meeting the Governor amounted to voluntarily giving up their membership. However, the Supreme Court ultimately set aside their disqualification on procedural grounds – they were not given sufficient time to file their replies and were not given advance copies of material relied upon by the Speaker.

In an attempt to capitalise on this precedent, a group of AIADMK MLAs revolted against Chief Minister Edappadi K. Palaniswami in 2017 and met the Governor seeking a similar 'constitutional process' against him. The Speaker disqualified 18 MLAs for 'voluntarily giving up membership' of the party which had fielded them as candidates. However, the Madras High Court by a 2:1 majority, upheld the disqualification. Though facts were similar to the developments in Karnataka, the High Court was of the view that there was nothing unreasonable or perverse in the Speaker coming to the conclusion from the MLAs' conduct that they were seeking to topple the regime.

In 2019, one saw the spectacle of some members submitting resignation letters to escape disqualification proceedings, while the Speaker questioned the voluntariness and motive behind the resignations. 'Defection through resignation' became a thing suddenly. The Supreme Court ultimately ruled that the Speaker has the authority to verify if a resignation is voluntary and genuine, but it is constitutionally impermissible for the Speaker to take into account extraneous factors while considering the resignation. In other words, once it is clear that a member is resigning out of free will, the Speaker is bound to accept it.

As defections continue unabated and Speakers refrain from acting on these developments based on their political loyalties, there is a strong case to reform the anti-defection law.

Redefining the merger clause, shifting the adjudicatory power from the Speaker to some other credible authority and even dispensing wholly with the law are measures that jurists have suggested.

Some believe that the anti-defection law should be scrapped as it enslaves members to their party line, prevents them from representing their constituents and the people, and violates their freedom of expression.

Why does it matter?

■ The U.S. on Friday joined three other countries – El Salvador, Nicaragua and Poland – that have rolled back abortion rights since 1994, according to the Center for Reproductive Rights. The Guttmacher Institute points out that years of research has shown that abortion bans severely impact people of marginalised groups who already struggle to access health care, including abortion.

In a statement, Michelle Bachelet, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, said that the verdict represents a “major setback” for sexual and reproductive health across the U.S. The UN sexual and reproductive health agency (UNFPA) and the World Health Organization (WHO) noted that a staggering 45% of all abortions around the world are unsafe, making the procedure a leading cause of maternal death. The UNFPA said that it feared that more unsafe abortions will occur around the world if access becomes more restricted.

In a comment for *The Conversation*, Gretchen Ely at the University of Tennessee suggests this will put the U.S. on a similar path to Ireland between 1983 and 2018. She writes that the Irish law led to a prolonged period of suffering for many Irish women, documented in a series of court cases that helped turn the tide of opinion toward legalisation. These included the tragedy of Savita Halappanavar, a 31-year-old woman forced to miscarry an unviable foetus rather than terminate the pregnancy with medical assistance, which resulted in her death.

What happens next?

■ Thirteen states have 'trigger bans' in place which means abortions are banned under most circumstances and come fully into effect with the overturning of *Roe*. Of the 13, Missouri was the first to invoke the 'trigger law' and ban abortion. Women who seek an abortion will have to travel to states where it is legal, making it an expensive proposition, not available to all. With mid-term elections due in November, the Democrats will lean on the abortion issue to urge pro-choice women to vote for them. But despite President Joe Biden's appeal that the only way “we can secure a woman's right to choose...is for Congress to restore the protections of *Roe v. Wade* as federal law”, he admitted that Congress “as it appears, lacks the vote” to pass that type of legislation. Also, with *Roe* overturned, activists are already afraid that the judgment could have a domino effect on other rights like contraception and same-sex marriage.

DROUPADI MURMU

# The irresistible rise

A tribal woman leader, backed by BJP, seeks to make history on July 18

NISTULA HEBBAR

It is no secret that Droupadi Murmu, the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) nominee for the July 18 Presidential election, was on the short list for the same in 2017 as well. The candidate herself acknowledged it when the BJP leadership announced that she was in the fray this year.

At that time, at the age of 59, she was considered to have time on her side. In 2022, the time seems to have arrived for a woman tribal candidate to occupy the highest office in the country, the beating heart of the Indian Republic, so to speak.

When she was born in 1958, in the district of Mayurbhanj in Odisha, there was nothing to foretell that she was headed to the Rashtrapati Bhavan. She was educated at the Unit II High School and Rama Devi College (now University), both in Bhubaneswar.

She went on to work as a junior assistant in the State Irrigation and Power Department from 1979 to 1983, and then as a teacher at Sri Aurobindo Integral Education Centre at Rairangpur till 1997.

**Entering politics**

It was during her stint in Rairangpur that she got interested in politics and joined the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). In 1997, she was elected to the Rairangpur Corporation and became the Vice-Chairperson of the civic body.

Her political rise has since then been steady. It was a time when the BJP was in an alliance with the Naveen Patnaik-led Biju Janata Dal. In 2000, as the parties contested together, Ms. Murmu won her first Assembly

ILLUSTRATION: R. RAJESH



election.

When the coalition came to power, she was chosen to be a Minister, first for Transport and Commerce and then for Fisheries and Animal Husbandry.

She was given independent charge, a rare responsibility for a first-

**Despite back-to-back personal tragedies, Murmu has stayed active in politics for decades, earning a reputation for being sensitive towards the tribal communities**

time MLA. When the alliance between the BJP and the BJD ended, Ms. Murmu continued to nurture her constituency, Rairangpur, and despite a Naveen Patnaik wave in 2009, she managed to retain her seat.

But this was also the year that she suffered the loss of her 25-year-old son, which she later said in an interview plunged her into depression, and drew her close to spirituality.

amendments related to allowing conversion of land use in tribal areas from agriculture to commercial purposes, and set off a major uproar among tribal groups and civil society.

These Acts were articles of faith in the battle for land rights and rights over natural resources for tribal communities, fought and won in the teeth of opposition and against the British colonial rule. To amend these Acts was akin to a reversal of any gains made by tribal people in terms of land rights.

Ms. Murmu as Governor, someone constitutionally empowered to intervene in issues related to scheduled areas, soon intervened and rejected the two Bills when they were presented to her, an act which won her approbation from the Opposition, with current Chief Minister Hemant Soren lauding her for her "sensitivity" for "providing a balm to society that was on the boil for the last six months".

**Working relationship**

When the government changed in Jharkhand in 2019, Mr. Soren and Ms. Murmu managed a good working relationship. Ironically, Mr. Soren is part of the Opposition grouping, which has announced former Yashwant Sinha, a former Finance Minister (in the Vajpayee-led NDA government) as its presidential candidate.

The distance travelled by Ms Murmu, from Rairangpur to the Raisina Hills, is akin to the lonely, tough furrow ploughed by tribal communities in India, who, despite being at the forefront of India's struggles against the British colonial rule, had to wait till the Republic's 75th anniversary to get its shot at the top job.

YASHWANT SINHA

# A career of many turns

The former BJP leader is the Opposition's face in the presidential race

SOBHANA K. NAIR

Yashwant Sinha's political career has come full circle. From being a trenchant critic of the Congress and the Left as a BJP leader for over two decades to a joint Opposition candidate in the July 18 Presidential election, supported by both.

Mr. Sinha was born in Patna on November 6, 1937, as the ninth of 11 siblings. His father was an advocate in the Patna High Court. At the age of 23, Mr. Sinha joined the Indian Administrative Service and was allotted the Bihar cadre. Fourteen years into the job, in 1974, answering the call for "Total Revolution" from Jai Prakash Narayan, Mr. Sinha wanted to quit the service. He writes in his autobiography, *Relentless*, that he was dissuaded by the family that was solely dependent on his salary and many leaders, including JP himself.

The high point of his bureaucratic career was his term as Principal Secretary to Bihar Chief Minister and socialist Karpooori Thakur, in 1977. In 1984, while serving as Joint Secretary in the Union government, he resigned to join politics.

Through a mutual friend, he met Chandra Shekhar, who was heading the Janata party. Chandra Shekhar was his first mentor and guide. When Chandra Shekhar became Prime Minister in November 1990, Mr. Sinha was picked as his Finance Minister – at a time when the country was going through its worst financial crisis.

By the early 1990s, Chandra Shekhar's political fortunes were sliding and with no future in sight for himself, Mr. Sin-

ILLUSTRATION: R. RAJESH



ha drifted to the BJP. He left his first mentor at his lowest ebb. In 1993, a day after Deepavali, Mr. Sinha joined the BJP, which L.K. Advani termed a "Diwali gift" for the party.

In the 1998 Atal Bihari Vajpayee government, the Prime Minister was keen on appointing Jaswant Singh as Finance Minister, but he had lost the election. Mr. Advani persuaded Vajpayee to allot the portfolio to Mr. Sinha instead.

Though Mr. Advani was his closest ally in the BJP, Mr. Sinha was the first to attack him for his "Jinnah was a secular person" remark that he made in June 2005. Mr. Advani's remarks eventually led to his resignation as the BJP president in December that year.

**Stronger BJP**

When Mr. Sinha was asked if Mr. Advani's resignation would create a vacuum in the BJP, he said the BJP would only emerge stronger. The cord was broken. He bitterly complains in his autobiography that he missed the opportunity to

become the party's leader in the Lok Sabha because of this episode.

But this was not the last time he was challenging the BJP leadership and testing its patience. In 2009, he wrote a letter to then BJP president Rajnath Singh, after the party's consecutive defeats

**A former ally of Chandra Shekhar and Advani, Sinha, who quit the BJP in 2018, has remained a critic of the Modi government for the last several years**

in two general elections. He wanted all BJP office-bearers to resign and a new team to be elected. This was his own version of the Kamaraj plan. Naturally, his idea was binned. Mr. Singh issued gag orders and Mr. Sinha was removed from the post of party spokesperson.

In 2013, he once again challenged the BJP leadership. This time, Nitin Gadkari was the party president whose term

was ending. Many in the party assumed that he would return despite reports about corruption allegations. "I felt that in view of the allegations, he should not seek reelection to the post," Mr. Sinha writes in *Relentless*. Though he called for the nomination form, he never filed it. But that was enough for the party to sideline him. In 2014 he did not get the party ticket to contest from Hazaribagh. The Prime Ministerial candidate, Narendra Modi, wanted those above 75 years of age to retire gracefully. It was the end of the road for Mr. Sinha. He still reached out to Mr. Modi and Mr. Singh for ticket for his son Jayant in his place.

While his son was a Minister of State in the Union Finance Ministry, the father started relentlessly criticising the Modi government's economic policies. On April 21, 2018, he resigned from the BJP. He tried to set up an anti-BJP forum, Rashtra Manch, but failed to create a buzz. In 2021, he joined the Trinamool Congress and became its vice president. Though it was widely believed that he would secure a Rajya Sabha berth, the party didn't oblige. But as a somewhat pale compensation, the Trinamool lobbied to make him the joint candidate for the presidential election.

On the day his candidature was announced, his son Jayant Sinha, who is a BJP MP in the Lok Sabha, said he would not support his father in this race. He said his constitutional duty was towards his party and that election was not a family matter. Mr. Sinha has the support of Opposition parties but as the numbers stand, the election is turning out to be a non-contest.

GUSTAVO PETRO

# From an urban guerrilla to the first leftist President in Bogota

Colombia's President-elect carries both enormous expectations and humongous challenges

SRINIVASAN RAMANI

A former member of an urban guerrilla outfit and later elected as Mayor of Bogota, Gustavo Petro made history by winning the second round run-off in the presidential election in Colombia, securing 50.4% of the vote over his rival, a property tycoon, Rodolfo Hernandez's 47.3% last week. Mr. Petro's victory marks the first time that an avowedly leftist politician won the President's post in a country which has had a right wing/centrist establishment for decades.

Yet, Mr Petro's ascent to the presidency was no flash in the pan. A self described social democrat and a progressive, the economist had managed more than 41% of the votes in the 2018 presidential run-off, finishing second to Ivan Duque of the Democratic Center party. In this election, Mr. Petro's victory was secured through an enhanced support from the poor in the country, especially in the most impoverished provinces (departments). *The Economist* reported that turnout in Magdalena and Choco departments, the poorest in the country, went up by 16%. The overall turnout went up by 4.16%, boosted largely by an increase in voting among Mr.

Petro's supporters.

Mr. Petro's opponent, Mr. Hernandez, left no stone unturned in seeking support from different segments, by tacking onto right wing populism and utilising social media campaigns to experience a surge in his popularity. But Mr. Petro's grassroots campaign focused on policies that he promised would tackle long-term poverty and inequality that were a consequence of decades of conservative rule and had exacerbated problems during the pandemic in particular. His campaign was boosted by his choice of running mate in Vice-President designate Francia Marquez, a human rights and environmental activist and who is now the first Afro-Colombian to secure that position.

**Aided by the poor**

Mr. Petro's victory was aided not only by the rural poor, but also from support in the capital city of Bogota, where he served as Mayor for a period of nearly three years in the early 2010s. As Mayor, he worked on expanding amenities to the sprawling urban slums in the city, subsidising public transport, and recognising the work of the informal recycling sector that employed so many of the poor. This tenure significantly increased his personal popu-

larity and expanded support for his Humane Colombia movement, which has now graduated into a political party that integrated into the "Historic Pact for Colombia" (PHxC) coalition with the support of other left-wing political parties and social movements in 2021 and catapulted Mr. Petro to becoming its presidential candidate.

His opponents have sought to play on fears of Mr. Petro being a "radical leftist" based on his earlier association with the urban guerrilla movement, "April 19" or M-19, which he joined at the age of 17. As a rebel, Mr. Petro went by the name 'Aureliano', a reference to Nobel laureate Gabriel Garcia Marquez's *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, which features the perennial rebel Aureliano Buendia. Largely a political activist associated with the M-19 group, Mr. Petro never participated in militant action, but he was arrested and later tortured in prison before the group demobilised in the early 1990s. A decade later, Mr. Petro had become a member of Congress and had entered legal political life.

Mr. Petro's platform was one of economic reforms to address the severe issues of inequality and poverty in Colombia – one of the most unequal societies in Latin America – including signifi-

ILLUSTRATION: J.A. PREMUKUMAR



cant agrarian reform, progressive taxation, a strong emphasis on climate-centric policies such as reliance on clean energy, besides expansive social welfare programmes in education and health care. Mr. Petro rejects his critics' likening of his ideology to be akin to that of other Latin American socialists such as Hugo Chavez, and says he is ideologically closer to figures such as Jose "Pepe" Mujica, the former Uruguayan President, who also rose from being a former urban guerrilla to becoming one of Latin America's most popular Presidents in the

early 2010s.

In an interview to *The Economist* last month, Mr. Petro identified taxation of the Colombian wealthy elite, prohibition of new hydrocarbon extraction projects while taxing dividends and surpluses gained in the existing ones, a transition from exports gained from the extraction industry to domestic production and agrarian transformation as key policy initiatives that his government will pursue. Colombia, which teetered into what critics called a "narco-democracy" in the late 20th/early 21st century continues to be a

major partner and recipient of U.S. funds to tackle the problem of cocaine production.

But the "war against drugs" has only militarised Colombian society, creating a nexus between the illegal narcotics production industry and the elite in several Colombian towns and the countryside. He has identified the renewed emphasis on helping agrarian populations with credit and incentives as a way to wean them off from the control of the narcotic mafia and weakening its hold on the economy.

Mr. Petro's alternative emphasis on the "war on drugs" has caused some alarm within the Washington establishment, which for decades in its relationship with Colombia has relied on a policy of penal provisions such as extradition of drug lords, eradicating coca production and a strong security relationship that focused both on the drug war as well as on threats from rural guerrilla insurgents such as the (now disbanded) Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) and National Liberation Army (ELN).

**A new pink tide**

In the early-mid 2000s, the term "pink tide" was used to describe the swathe of left-wing regimes that took root in most parts of Latin America – from Hugo Chavez's Venezuela to Evo Morales's Bolivia to Rafael Correa's Ecuador on the one end of the leftist (socialist) spectrum to Lula Inacio Da Silva's

**Petro now represents the "new Pink tide" in Latin America as other progressives such as Argentina's Alberto Fernandez, Chile's Gabriel Boric and Honduras's Xiomara Castro**

Brazil, Nestor Kirchner's Argentina, Michelle Bachelet's Chile among others in the social democratic end.

The regimes in the socialist spectrum were inspired by the Cuban Revolution in some ways, especially the successes in the social sector by the revolutionary government in Havana. These regimes sought to rewrite the social contract between the people and government in their respective countries – by setting up new Constituent Assemblies that worked towards political reforms which included decentralisation of power.

The "socialist" regimes were, in hindsight, only partially successful.

The "social democratic" regimes did not fare too well either. Mr. Petro seems to be cognisant of the failings of these Left regimes in the early 21st century and has emphasised a significant difference – instead of harnessing the profits from the hydrocarbon extraction industry for redistribution, his political platform would instead focus on diversification of

the economy and reducing dependence upon it. He has reiterated that he will adhere to the constitutional norms of a single tenure government and will not pursue radical reforms of the kind seen in Venezuela for example. At the same time, Mr. Petro has emphasised the reopening of the borders with neighbouring Venezuela and betterment of diplomatic ties despite political and ideological differences.

**Historic victory**

While Mr. Petro has managed a historic presidential victory, he faces significant challenges in implementing his agenda as the PHxC only has 15% of seats across both houses of Congress. Other institutions that were built and thrived during former President Alvaro Uribe's tenure – one that marked right-wing authoritarianism and the instituting of neoliberalism – will also resist any significant changes to the economy that are being proposed by Mr. Petro. It will be up to him to mobilise further support from civil society to make incremental progress and lessons learnt from the Left's experience in Latin America in the past decade will come in handy. After all, Mr. Petro now represents the "new Pink tide" in the continent as other progressives such as Xiomara Castro in Honduras, Gabriel Boric in Chile, Alberto Fernandez in Argentina and Pedro Castillo in Peru, who have inherited similar challenges in their respective countries.

# GST compensation cess extended till '26

The levy on luxury, demerit goods will be collected 4 more years till March 2026, to repay borrowings

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI**  
The Centre has extended the time for levy of GST compensation cess by almost four years till March 31, 2026.

As per the Goods and Services Tax (Period of Levy and Collection of Cess) Rules, 2022, notified by the Finance Ministry, the compensation cess would continue to be levied from July 1, 2022, to March 31, 2026.

The levy of cess was to end on June 30 but the GST Council, chaired by Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and comprising State FMs, decided to extend it till 2026 to repay the loans taken in the last two years to make up for the shortfall in their revenue collection.

After the 45th GST Council meeting in Lucknow in



**Burden to bear:** The levy's extension will impose a burden on sectors like automotive, says Deloitte's Mani. ■K. PICHUMANI

September last year, Ms. Sitharaman had said the regime of paying compensation to States for revenue shortfall resulting from subsuming their taxes such as VAT in GST, would end in June 2022. However, the

compensation cess, levied on luxury and demerit goods, would continue to be collected till March 2026 to repay the borrowings that were done in 2020-21 and 2021-22 to compensate States for GST revenue loss.

In order to meet the resource gap of States due to short release of compensation, the Centre borrowed and released ₹1.1 lakh crore in 2020-21 and ₹1.59 lakh crore in 2021-22 as back-to-back loan to partly meet the shortfall in cess collection.

### Principal repayment

The Centre has repaid ₹7,500 crore as interest cost for the borrowing in 2021-22 and ₹14,000 crore is to be paid this fiscal year. From 2023-24, the repayment of the principal amount would start and would continue till March 2026.

Goods and Services Tax (GST) was introduced with effect from July 1, 2017, and States were assured of compensation for the loss of any revenue arising on account

of implementation of GST for a period of five years.

Though States' protected revenue has been growing at 14% compounded growth rate, the cess collection did not increase in the same proportion and COVID-19 further increased the gap between protected revenue and the actual revenue receipts.

The Centre has released the GST compensation payable to States up to May 31.

"The extension of the levy of compensation cess, although expected, will continue to impose a burden on the impacted businesses, especially sectors like automotive, which need to be encouraged as it is one of the sectors that has a multiplier effect on GDP and employment," said Deloitte India Partner M.S. Mani.

## INTERVIEW | SAURABH KUMAR SAHU

# '5G to turn homes, enterprises into focal points for innovation'

'India making steady progress in terms of 5G readiness'

**MINI TEJASWI**

5G will lead to widespread adoption of artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML), enabling gargantuan volumes of data to be acquired, processed, and intelligently analysed in real time, says Saurabh Kumar Sahu, MD and Lead - Communications, Media and Technology, Accenture in India. Excerpts:



Saurabh Kumar Sahu

**What are some of the key challenges faced by telecom companies in 5G deployments in India?**

Some of the key challenges faced by telecom companies include developing a viable business and pricing model, fibreisation, an upgraded transport network and extension of cloud. While 5G is well poised to transform consumer experiences, businesses, the economy, and society in the next decade spurred by faster connectivity speeds, ultra-low latency, and greater bandwidth, it is a capital-intensive exercise.

**How do you view the country's current readiness for 5G?**

India has been making steady progress in terms of 5G readiness. As telecom companies prepare for commercial roll-out, they have been working on creating the ecosystem with partners, and setting up labs and innovation centres.

In fact, we are also witnessing use-case based roll-outs of 5G services through private networks across multiple industries, aimed at improving productivity, efficiency, and agility. Network roll-out for consumers

is expected to be in the trial stage in 2022 and its scaling to large deployments would depend on the 5G spectrum auction.

**What are the new trends around 5G and network modernisation?**

The most important trend that is shaping the 5G and network modernisation agenda for telecom companies is the cloudification of the network. Distributed hybrid architecture across Core and RAN, decoupled network, applications management stack and an evolved operating model comprise its key components. Operating a cloud-native network requires the support of robust digital technologies including automation as well as artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML) which help make the network more self-reliant and responsive.

**What technological innovations are required to drive 5G in India?**

5G will lead to widespread artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML) adoption, enabling gargantuan volumes of data to be acquired, processed, and intelligently analysed in real time. The maturity of enabling technologies such as AI, edge computing and ad-

vanced data analytics coupled with 5G will transform the industry. This will provide advantages of near real time responsiveness (ultra-reliable, low latency), fast speed (enhanced mobile broadband), all device connectivity (massive Internet of Things/ IoT) enabled by network slicing.

**What has been Accenture's role in enabling the 5G journey of telcos in India?**

We are committed to helping telcos and enterprises to prepare for the 5G opportunity. Combining our 5G capabilities, Network Equipment Provider (NEP), application vendor, device and sensor partners enable us to help both telcos and enterprises to be at the heart of the 5G ecosystem to unlock the growth. We also bring proven expertise across industries which enables us to achieve digitisation and transformation at scale. We are also helping businesses finalise their 5G strategy and roadmap.

**How will 5G impact homes and enterprises, especially in terms of innovation?**

We expect to see more innovation in the enterprise segment, which will be a composite of 5G, 4G, small cells and even WiFi offloads, along with the play of new digital technologies. This enterprise movement will be enabled by a hybrid network, enhanced in coverage through hyperscale collaboration. In the consumer space, we will see a shift from business-to-consumer (B2C) to business-to-business-to-consumer (B2B2C), with the home becoming the focal point for innovation.

# Duty waiver for cotton import likely to lapse on Sept. 30

Govt. planning scheme for textile machinery manufacture

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
COIMBATORE**

The Centre is unlikely to continue the import duty exemption for cotton beyond September 30 as the prices of cotton textiles have started easing, Union Minister for Commerce and Industry and Textiles Piyush Goyal said on Saturday.

However, if there was a need, the government could consider extending the exemption by a month, Mr. Goyal told reporters. In April, the Union government had suspended the 10% import duty on cotton till September 30.

The government was also formulating a scheme to promote indigenous manufac-



turing of textile machinery, he said.

Textile and clothing exports grew 40% in 2021-2022 to \$44 billion. It is expected to cross \$50 billion this year, he said, adding the industry and the government were working to help the industry

to reach a size of \$250 billion, with \$100 billion of exports, in another five years.

The minister said talks were on between the Industry and Textiles ministries and Niti Aayog to come out with another Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme for the textile sector.

Asked about the National Textile Corporation (NTC) mills, he said, "We are examining whether NTC can be run professionally and profitably. But, so far, NTC performance has not been profitable, has not been efficient." The assets of NTC could, however, be put to use by a joint effort of government and the private sector, Mr. Goyal added.

# 'NBFCs should diversify their risks across sectors'

Ex-SBI chair Kumar sees tighter norms

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
KOLKATA**

Non-banking financial companies need to diversify risks across sectors and geographies, as well as adhere to capital adequacy norms and introduce core banking solutions going ahead, former State Bank of India chairman Rajnish Kumar said.

Mr. Kumar also said the risk-taking abilities of NBFCs are higher than banks, and that the regulatory stance will become tougher, with the regulation arbitrage between lenders and non-banking entities ceasing to exist.

"Regarding asset quality review of lenders, as pointed out by former RBI governor Raghuram Rajan, the NPA problem started with the NBFCs. The whole issue

**The whole issue boils down to risk management and governance**

boils down to risk management and governance.

"There is a need for NBFCs to take a diversified approach across sectors and geographies and also be mindful about the risk matrix," he said at an event organised by VFS Capital.

Almost 23% of lending in the financial sector happens through the NBFCs, he said.

Regarding NPAs, Mr. Kumar said lenders could not escape their share of the blame, adding that "faulty" government policies in "power, coal, telecom and road sectors" were also responsible for the bad loans.

# Future defaults on ₹4.1 crore NCDs' interest

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI**

Debt-ridden Future Enterprises Ltd. has defaulted on interest payment of ₹4.10 crore for its non-convertible debentures.

The due date for payment was June 24, 2022, the company said in a regulatory filing.

"The company is unable to service its obligations in respect of the interest on non-convertible debentures was due on June 24, 2022," it said.

This is the fourth default in June by the Kishore Biyani-led Future group firm. Earlier this week, FEL defaulted twice on interest payments of ₹85.71 lakh and ₹6.07 crore for its non-convertible debentures. FEL had made another default on the payment of interest of ₹1.41 crore, earlier this month.

# Brakes India plans to boost capacity to meet growth: Viji

MD sees plants running out of capacity in 18 months' time

**N. ANAND  
CHENNAI**

Brakes India, a major supplier of automotive braking systems, is considering setting up a new plant in one of its existing premises in Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh or Gujarat to meet future growth, said MD Sriram Viji.

"Currently, we are in the process of setting up a new plant in Theruvoy Kandigai, near Chennai, by investing ₹100 crore," Mr. Viji said. The plant, which would manufacture products for commercial vehicle braking systems, was expected to become operational in three months time, he observed, adding that the products were currently in the process of getting validated.

According to Mr. Viji, the company had succeeded in



Sriram Viji ■BIJOY GHOSH

posting high growth due to a good order book position as well as the introduction of new products.

"The factories are expected to run out of capacity in 18 months time... we are looking at expanding the capacity within our premises either in Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh or Gujarat," Mr. Viji explained.

On the outlook for the company's future prospects, Mr. Viji said that over a five-year horizon, Brakes India expected to double sales in the domestic market and register a fivefold expansion in the export market, helped by volume growth and product content.

### Eyeing Southeast Asia

Last fiscal, Brakes India along with its associate companies posted a total turnover of ₹5,500 crore, of which exports alone accounted for ₹1,400 crore.

The company is a big supplier of safety critical braking systems to Europe, which accounted for export revenue of ₹1,000 crore. It is also exploring opportunities in Southeast Asian countries, Mr. Viji added.

# 'Raw coking coal output to touch 140 MT'

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI**

The government on Saturday said the country's domestic raw coking coal output may touch 140 million tonnes (MT) by 2030 from the present 51.7 MT.

"With transformative measures taken by Ministry of Coal under 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' initiative of PM, domestic raw coking coal production is likely to reach 140 MT by 2030," the coal ministry said.

To further increase the output of raw coking coal, the Centre has auctioned 10 coking coal blocks to the private sector, with a peak rated capacity (PRC) of 22.5 MT during the last two years. Most of these blocks are expected to start production by 2025.

# Atlas SkillTech eyes ₹150 crore for expansion

Looks to mobilise ₹100 cr. via grants

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
MUMBAI**

Atlas SkillTech University, Maharashtra's first multidisciplinary skills university, is planning to mobilise ₹150 crore to fuel its next round of growth.

The private not-for-profit university was set up last year at Bandra-Kurla Complex (BKC) with an initial grant of ₹150 crore from up-Grad, an online higher education company co-founded by philanthropist Ronnie Screwvala.

"We have already invested ₹150 crore in building up the university towards infrastructure, faculty and high-quality international partnerships for curriculum and towards scholarships," said Siddharth Sahani, execu-

utive president and co-founder Atlas SkillTech University.

"We have earmarked another ₹150 crore for expansion in the next three years," he added.

"We see a lot of other corporates wanting to come together and work with us. We will be mobilising ₹100 crore through grants. The other well-wishers as well who want to contribute can do so," Mr. Sahani said.

The university, which currently focuses on three new-age disciplines namely design, entrepreneurship and technology, is gearing up to introduce additional courses relating to the new economy for creating talent for high value jobs both in India and abroad.

# Hindustan Copper may raise ₹500 cr.

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
NEW DELHI**

Hindustan Copper Ltd.'s board will meet next week to consider a proposal to raise up to ₹500 crore by issuing debentures.

"A meeting of the board of directors of Hindustan Copper will be held on June 30 to inter alia, consider and recommend resolutions seeking approval of the shareholders of the company to authorise the board of directors... to offer, issue and allot secured or unsecured non-convertible debentures or bonds on a private placement basis up to ₹500 crore," the PSU said in a filing.

The board will also consider raising funds through a qualified institutional placement, it added.

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# IRELAND VS INDIA

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# Harmanpreet leads from the front

India pulls off series-sealing victory as Sri Lanka crumbles after fantastic start

## INDIA IN SL

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA  
DAMBULLA

Skipper Harmanpreet Kaur contributed with both bat and ball to steer India Women to a series sealing five-wicket win over Sri Lanka in the second Twenty20 International here on Saturday.

Vice-captain Smriti Mandhana's (39, 34b) experience complemented by the exuberance of Shefali Verma (17, 10b) and S. Meghana (17, 10b) helped India chase down the 126-run target in 19.1 overs.

India stuttered in what should have been a comfortable run chase before Harmanpreet took India home with an unbeaten 31 off 32 balls.

Sri Lanka squandered a fine start to post a below par 125 for seven.

## Smriti's milestone

It was a day to remember for Smriti who became the second fastest Indian woman to reach 2,000 T20 runs. She reached the milestone in her 84th innings, becoming the third Indian woman after the legendary Mithali Raj (70 innings) and current skipper Harmanpreet (88 innings) to cross the mark.

Opting to bat and with the series on the line, captain Chamari Athapaththu (43,



**Cool campaigner:** Even as India stuttered in the chase, Harmanpreet steadied the ship and took it home. ■SRI LANKA CRICKET

41b) and Vishmi Gunaratne (45, 50b) provided an ideal start for the Lankans.

However, once Chamari and Vishmi departed, Sri Lanka crumbled.

**The scores: Sri Lanka:** Vishmi Gunaratne c & b Harmanpreet 45 (50b, 6x4), Chamari Athapaththu c Radha b Pooja 43 (41b, 7x4, 1x6), Harshitha Samarawickrama c Shafali b Deepti 9 (13b), Kavisha Dilhari c Smriti b Renuka 2 (5b), Nilakshi de Silva lbw b Deepti 1 (2b), Hasini Perera run out 0 (0), Oshadi Ranasinghe c Yastika b Radha 5 (3b, 1x4), Anushka Sanjeevani (not out) 8 (5b), Sugandika Kumari (not out) 1 (1b); Extras (b-4,

lb-2, w-5); 11; Total (for seven wickets in 20 overs): 125.

**Fall of wickets:** 1-87 (Chamari, 13.5 overs), 2-106 (Vishmi, 16.6), 3-108 (Harshitha, 17.2), 4-110 (Nilakshi, 17.6), 5-110 (Hasini, 18.1), 6-116 (Oshadi, 18.5), 7-120 (Kavisha, 19.3).

**India bowling:** Renuka 4-0-26-1, Deepti 4-0-34-2, Simran 2-0-14-0, Radha 3-0-15-1, Pooja 4-0-18-1, Harmanpreet 3-0-12-1.

**India:** Smriti Mandhana st Anushka b Inoka 39 (34b, 8x4), Shafali Verma c Kavisha b Oshadi 17 (10b, 2x4, 1x6), S. Meghana st. Anushka b Sugandika 17 (10b, 4x4), Harmanpreet Kaur (not out) 31 (32b, 2x4), Jemi-

nah Rodrigues c Hasini b Inoka 3 (6b), Yastika Bhatia st. Anushka b Oshadi 13 (18b), Deepti Sharma (not out) 5 (5b); Extras (lb-1, w-1); 2; Total (for five wickets in 19.1 overs): 127.

**Fall of wickets:** 1-30 (Shafali, 3.4), 2-48 (Meghana, 5.4), 3-86 (Smriti, 10.6), 4-91 (Jemimah, 12.4), 5-114 (Yastika, 17.2).

**Sri Lanka bowling:** Udeshika 2-0-22-0, Oshadi 4-0-32-2, Sugandika 4-0-20-1, Inoka 4-0-18-2, Kavisha 3.1-0-17-0, Chamari 2-0-17-0.

**Toss:** Sri Lanka; **Player-of-the-Match:** Harmanpreet; **India won by five wickets to lead three-match series 2-0.**

**Third T20I:** June 27, Dambulla.

# Smriti all praise for Indian bowlers

P.K. AJITH KUMAR

Sri Lanka may be facing a fuel crisis, but that didn't stop Smriti Mandhana's fans from driving to the Rangiri Dambulla International Stadium on Saturday. 'No petrol, but still came to see Smriti Mandhana,' said a banner from a spectator during the second Women's T20I between Sri Lanka and India.

Smriti gave her fans something to cheer about, too.

The left-handed stylist made 39 off 34 balls. A little after India chased down the modest target of 126 with five wickets and as many balls to spare, she said it wasn't an easy wicket to bat on.

"The wicket was keeping a bit low," she said. "...You really had to work hard for your runs."

Smriti, who also completed 2000 T20I runs during her innings, praised the young bowling attack.

"They did a really good job today and in the last match also when they defended a total of (less than) 140," she said.

**You really had to work hard for your runs**

SMRITI

# Important we play every match like a WC final, says Hardik

Skipper feels these matches will help the team improve

## IND IN IRELAND

SHAYAN ACHARYA

As Hardik Pandya leads India's limited-overs side in the two-match T20I series against Ireland, beginning on Sunday, he said that henceforth each and every game will be crucial for the team and should be treated with the same intensity as the World Cup final.

"The first thing I told this group is that this is a challenge - mainly mentally because it is easy to say that we are playing against Ireland, but I don't want that mindset in my team. When you are playing for India, it's a matter of pride and if we want to win the T20 World Cup, from hereon, each and every match will be important and it is important that we play them like a World Cup final," Hardik said on Saturday.

With barely four months left for the T20 World Cup, Hardik feels that these matches will help the team improve. "If you work hard every day, eventually you will get better in the longer run and that will help the Indian team. That's something I told the boys that it does not matter who our opponents are, we have to focus



**Brains trust:** Hardik discusses tactics with head coach Laxman as Bahutule looks on. ■TWITTER/BCCI

on every game and consider that this is our biggest match to get better."

## On the same path

With Rahul Dravid busy with the red-ball team for the Test against England, V.V.S. Laxman has been drafted as the head coach of the T20I squad. "It's about making sure that in the group we keep the same intensity which we generally keep, even if we are playing the World Cup or a big series. It comes down to the mental state and how better you can get because playing two matches it's not easy in terms of getting yourself

pumped up, but at the same time, we are playing for India, so we will have to play our A game, which we will," Hardik said.

"The conversations between me and the coach (Laxman) have been simple. He is on the same path where we want to make sure the attitude and approach is the same as we play in any other game or maybe the World Cup game. He is here to make sure that the culture and the pathway towards the World Cup, which is set by Rahul Sir and Rohit Sharma will be the same and we're going to be following that..."

Match starts at 9 p.m.

# It's Rajat Patidar's turn to notch up a hundred at the expense of Mumbai's attack

Saransh Jain chips in with a fifty; Shaw's men push for quick runs in the second innings and are 49 runs adrift with eight wickets in hand



**Regal knock:** Patidar's strokeful century put Madhya Pradesh firmly in the driving seat. ■K. MURALI KUMAR

## RANJI FINAL

K.C. VIJAYA KUMAR  
BENGALURU

On Saturday morning with a cool breeze wafting across, a father and his son climbed the stairs towards the lone stand allowing spectators at the M. Chinnaswamy Stadium. He bumped into another family and quipped: "After seeing the 1983 film, my son is interested in cricket." Coincidentally the statement was made on a day - June 25 - that marked the 39th anniversary of India's historic World Cup triumph.

And inside the venue, another new order was being etched in domestic cricket with Madhya Pradesh setting itself up for its maiden Ranji Trophy title and that too at multiple-champion Mumbai's expense.

## Critical benchmark

Rajat Patidar's remarkable 122 (332m, 219b, 20x4) and Saransh Jain's 57 ensured that Madhya Pradesh seized a crucial 162-run first innings

lead and scaled the first critical benchmark on its path towards the title. Replying to Mumbai's 374, Madhya Pradesh posted 536.

At the fourth day's close of the Ranji final, Mumbai scored 113 for two in its second innings and is trailing by 49 runs. Skipper Prithvi Shaw and fellow-opener Hardik Tamore batted aggressively and also enjoyed their share of reprieves as catches were dropped. Tamore, however, fell on the sweep to spinner Kumar Kartikeya. Shaw was regal till he lasted, targeting the upper tier, eager to whittle down the deficit but fell in the last session.

Earlier, resuming at the overnight 368 for three, Madhya Pradesh skipper Aditya Shrivastava played out a maiden for spinner Shams Mulani. From the Far End, Mohit Avasthi steamed in and Patidar on-drove for four, and during the 127th over, a brace off the same bowler helped Madhya Pradesh move to 376 for three and two ahead of Mumbai's 374. Both Shrivastava and Patidar

played some rousing shots and, as the 60-run partnership promised more, the captain edged a lifter from Avasthi.

Just as Mumbai prised out wickets, Patidar marched to his own stylish beat with shots that scorched the turf. Akshat Raghuvanshi on-drove Avasthi for four but had no clue to a Tushar Deshpande delivery that angled in. Next man Parth Sahani had a reprieve on two when Shaw grassed an edge off Mulani. But the batter did not capitalise and Mulani had the last word.

Immediately, southpaw Jain lofted a four to commence his knock. And as the fans did their 'RCB, RCB' chants, Patidar pulled Deshpande to move to 99, he then punched one towards cover and a special hundred was his to savour. He cut Deshpande, punched Mulani and Madhya Pradesh had 475 for six at lunch.

After the break and with the new ball, Deshpande castled Patidar. Meanwhile Jain nonchalantly whipped his

fours. The whimsical Bengaluru weather threw up showers and on either side of the rain-break, Mulani scalped Anubhav Agarwal and Kartikeya. Another wet spell meant that tea was announced, and when play resumed Madhya Pradesh's last wicket fell, leaving Mumbai with a mountain to climb and a miracle to dream about.

**The scores:**  
**Mumbai - 1st innings:** 374 in 127.4 overs.

**Madhya Pradesh - 1st innings:** Yash Dubey c Hardik Tamore b Mulani 133 (336b, 14x4), Himanshu Mantri lbw b Deshpande 31 (50b, 3x4, 2x6), Shubham Sharma c Tamore b Avasthi 116 (215b, 15x4, 1x6), Rajat Patidar b Deshpande 122 (219b, 20x4), Aditya Shrivastava c Sarfaraz b Avasthi 25 (69b, 2x4, 1x6), Akshat Raghuvanshi b Deshpande 9 (18b, 1x4), Parth Sahani lbw b Mulani 11 (18b, 2x4), Saransh Jain c Aman Khan b Mulani 57 (97b, 7x4), Anubhav Agarwal lbw b Mulani 8 (29b, 1x4), Kumar Kartikeya c Sarfaraz Khan b Mulani 9 (13b, 1x4), Gaurav Yadav (not out) 1 (2b); Extras (b-10, lb-1, nb-2, w-1); 14; Total (in 177.2 overs): 536.

**Fall of wickets:** 1-47 (Mantri, 16.3 overs), 2-269 (Sharma, 89.4), 3-341 (Dubey, 111.5), 4-401 (Shrivastava, 132.5), 5-411 (Raghuvanshi, 138.1), 6-430 (Sahani, 143.5), 7-483 (Patidar, 163.2), 8-505 (Agarwal, 171.2), 9-515 (Kartikeya, 173.6).

**Mumbai bowling:** Dhawal Kulkarni 24-4-53-0, Tushar Deshpande 36-10-116-3, Shams Mulani 63-2-11-173-5, Mohit Avasthi 32-7-93-2, Tanush Kotian 22-1-90-0.

**Mumbai - 2nd innings:** Prithvi

Shaw c Yash Dubey b Yadav 44 (52b, 3x4, 2x6), Hardik Tamore b Kartikeya 25 (32b, 2x4, 1x6), Armaan Jaffer (batting) 30 (34b, 3x4), Suved Parkar 9 (14b); Extras (lb-2, w-3); 5; Total (for two wickets in 22 overs): 113.

**Fall of wickets:** 1-63 (Tamore, 10.3 overs), 2-83 (Shaw, 15.6).

**Madhya Pradesh bowling:** Kumar Kartikeya 10-1-50-1, Anubhav Agarwal 6-0-32-0, Gaurav Yadav 5-0-23-1, Parth Sahani 1-0-6-0.

# Final is not over yet: Mulani

ASHWIN ACHAL  
BENGALURU

Mumbai spinner Shams Mulani stated that his team is "still in the contest" against Madhya Pradesh in their Ranji Trophy final match here.

"The match is heating up. We are still in the contest. A good first session and we're back in the game. If we get around 50 to 60 overs to bowl at Madhya Pradesh, we have a chance. It will be a fifth-day pitch - there will be some turn, and some

balls might keep low," Mulani said after the fourth day's play here on Saturday.

Mulani, the highest wicket-taker of the tournament, underplayed the impact of his five-for in the Madhya Pradesh first innings.

"It took a long time to get the five-for - 63 overs. I'm slightly disappointed that it took so many overs.

"A personal milestone is fine, but the team needs to win," the left-arm spinner said.

## IN BRIEF

### WI takes marginal lead

GROS-ISLET (ST. LUCIA)  
West Indies was 248 for four at tea in reply to Bangladesh's first innings total of 234 on the second day of the second and final Test on Saturday.

**The scores:** Bangladesh 234 in 64.2 overs (Tamim Iqbal 46, Liton Das 53, Seales 3/53, Ouseph 3/50) vs WI 248/4 (Kraigg Brathwaite 51, Jermaine Blackwood 40 batting, Kyle Mayers 60 batting), at tea.

### Honour for Vijay Amritraj

LONDON  
In recognition of his outstanding impact on the sport of tennis as a player, promoter, and humanitarian, India's Vijay Amritraj has been named the 2021 recipient of the Golden Achievement Award. The award was presented on Friday at a special celebration hosted in Amritraj's honour on Friday. ANI

# Latham hits fifty, but England on top

## NZ IN ENGLAND

REUTERS  
LEEDS  
England's bowlers struck three times in quick succession late on day three to take control of the final Test against New Zealand at Hedingley on Saturday and stay on course for a 3-0 series sweep.

The visitors were 168 for five and led England by 137 runs when rain brought a premature halt to the day's play.

New Zealand was off to a promising start in its second innings, thanks to a fluent half-century from Tom Latham (76), but lost its way after the opener was dismissed by debutant Jamie Overton off the first ball after tea.

Earlier, Jonny Bairstow

## SCOREBOARD

**New Zealand - 1st innings:** 329.

**England - 1st innings:** Alex Lees b Boulton 4, Zak Crawley b Boulton 6, Ollie Pope b Boulton 5, Joe Root c Blundell b Southee 5, Jonny Bairstow c Boulton b Bracewell 162, Ben Stokes c Williamson b Wagner 18, Ben Foakes lbw b Wagner 0, Jamie Overton c Mitchell b Boulton 97, Stuart Broad b Southee 42, Matty Potts (not out) 1, Jack Leach lbw b Southee 8; Extras (lb-11, w-1); 12; Total (in 67 overs): 360.

**Fall of wickets:** 1-4, 2-14, 3-17, 4-21, 5-55, 6-55, 7-296, 8-351, 9-351.

**New Zealand bowling:** Boulton 22-4-104-4, Southee 23-2-

100-3, Wagner 12-1-75-2, Bracewell 7-0-54-1, Mitchell 3-0-16-0.

**New Zealand - 2nd innings:** Tom Latham c Bairstow b Overton 76, Will Young c Pope b Potts 8, Kane Williamson c Bairstow b Potts 48, Devon Conway c Pope b Root 11, Henry Nicholls c & b Leach 7, Daryl Mitchell (batting) 4, Tom Blundell (batting) 5; Extras (b-5, lb-1, nb-2, w-1); 9; Total (for five wickets in 51.5 overs): 168.

**Fall of wicket:** 1-28, 2-125, 3-152, 4-153, 5-161.

**England bowling:** Broad 14-2-45-0, Leach 13-5-26-1, Potts 9.5-2-20-2, Overton 9-2-34-1, Stokes 4-0-30, Root 2-0-7-0.

were dismissed for 360 in their first innings for a 31-run lead.

# Shreyas, Kohli come good in the second innings

## INDIA IN ENG

AGENCIES  
LEICESTER

The Indian batters made 364 for seven wickets after 92 overs at the end of the third day's play on the third day of the warm-up match against Leicestershire on Saturday. Shreyas Iyer, Virat Kohli and Ravindra Jadeja scored half-centuries. Thanks to this India took an overall lead of 366 runs.

Kohli, who came in at No. 7, scored 67 with five fours and two sixes.

The scores:

**Indians - 1st innings:** 246 for eight decl.

**Leicestershire - 1st innings:** 244.

**Indians - 2nd innngs:** K.S. Bharat c Bumrah b Saini 43,



**Handy innings:** Kohli made good use of the game time, scoring a half-century. ■TWITTER/LEICSCCC

Shubman Gill c Bates b Saini 38, Hanuma Vihari c Bates b Davis 20, Shreyas Iyer c Evison b Nagarkoti 62, Ravindra Jadeja (batting) 56, Shardul Thakur b Nagarkoti 28, Virat Kohli c Sa-

kande b Bumrah 67, Cheteshwar Pujara st Bates b Saikishore 22, Mohd. Siraj (batting) 1; Extras (b-16, lb-3, w-1, nb-7); 27; Total (for seven wickets in 92 overs): 364.

**Leicestershire bowling:** Prasidh 4-0-30-0, Walker 15-4-48-0, Davis 14-3-40-1, Saini 16-0-55-2, Bumrah 12-2-30-1, Sakande 6-0-39-0, Nagarkoti 11-1-48-2, Saikishore 14-2-55-1.

**LIVE TELECAST**

**Ranji Trophy:** (final), Star Sports 2 (SD & HD) & Hotstar, 9.30 a.m.  
**FIH Pro League:** SS Select 2 (SD & HD) & Hotstar, 3 p.m., 5 p.m. & 7.30 p.m.  
**England vs New Zealand:** 3rd Test, day 4, Sony Ten 2 (SD & HD) & Sony LIV, 3.30 p.m.  
**West Indies vs Bangladesh:** 2nd Test, day 3, FanCode, 7.30 p.m.  
**TNPL 2022:** Star Sports 1 (SD & HD) & Voot Select, 7.30 p.m.  
**Ireland vs India:** 1st T20I, Sony Six (SD & HD) & Sony LIV, 9 p.m.  
**Squash:** World Championships, Sports 18-1 & Voot Select, 11.30 p.m.

**IN BRIEF**



**Injured Madison Keys pulls out of Wimbledon**  
Former Wimbledon quarterfinalist Madison Keys has withdrawn from the grasscourt Grand Slam due to an abdominal injury, the American 19th seed said on Saturday. The 27-year-old has been replaced by fellow American CoCo Vandeweghe in the draw. **REUTERS**

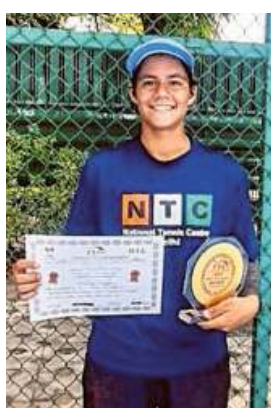
**Rishi-Parikshit duo finishes runner-up**  
CHIANG RAI (THAILAND)  
Rishi Reddy and Parikshit Somani were beaten 6-4, 6-4 by Pruchya Isararo and Thanub Suksumrarn in the doubles final of the \$15,000 ITF men's tennis tournament in Chiang Rai, Thailand, on Saturday.  
**Other results: \$15,000 ITF men, South Bend, USA: Semifinals:** James Kent Trotter (Jpn) & Siddhant Bantbia bt Colin Markes (USA) & Shuchi Sekiguchi (Jpn) 6-0, 6-4.

**India under-17 women lose 1-3 to Chile**  
AQUILEIA (ITALY)  
The Indian under-17 women's team suffered a 1-3 loss to Chile in its second match in the four-nation tournament here on Friday. Katherine Ramos, Maitte and Ambar Rolino scored for Chile while Kajol reduced the margin. **PTI**



**Ranjeet wins title**  
LUCKNOW  
Former national champion and top seed V.M. Ranjeet beat Raghav Jaisinghani 6-4, 6-1 in the final of the ₹100,000 AITA men's tennis tournament at the Unnad Tennis Academy here.

**Riya triumphs**



Riya with her prize **•KSL**

**SPORTS BUREAU**

Qualifier Riya Sachdeva beat Bhakti Shah 7-5, 6-2 in the final of the ₹100,000 AITA women's tennis tournament at the Haryana Sports Complex, Sector-12 in Faridabad.  
The 15-year-old Riya, a trainee of the National Tennis Centre, did not drop a set in the whole tournament and lost only 22 games in all.  
**The results: Final:** Riya Sachdeva bt Bhakti Shah 7-5, 6-2.  
**Semifinals:** Bhakti bt Rutuparna 6-4, 7-5; Riya bt Srinidhi Sreedhar 6-2, 6-3.  
**Quarterfinals:** Bhakti bt Iram Zadi 6-3, 6-2; Rutuparna bt Aditi Rawat 6-4, 6-4; Riya bt Shruti Gupta 6-1, 6-3; Srinidhi bt Radhika Yadav 4-6, 7-5, 6-3.

**Katie Ledecky extends reign**

McKeown wins maiden Worlds gold



**World beater:** Kaylee McKeown celebrates her first Worlds triumph. **•REUTERS**

**SWIMMING**

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE  
BUDAPEST  
Katie Ledecky won a record-breaking fifth straight 800m freestyle world title on Friday, just over an hour after Sarah Sjöström surged to her fourth consecutive victory in the women's 50m butterfly.  
Local hero Kristof Milak sparked delirium in the Duna Arena in Budapest when he grabbed the 100m butterfly gold, his second of the week.  
Australian Kaylee McKeown won the women's 200m backstroke for a first world title to go with three Olympic golds.  
**The results: Men:100m but-**

**terfly:** 1. Kristof Milak (Hun) 50.14s; 2. Naoki Mizunuma (Jpn) 50.94s; 3. Joshua Liendo (Can) 50.97s.  
**50m freestyle:** 1. Benjamin Proud (GBR) 21.32s; 2. Michael Andrew (USA) 21.41s; 3. Maxime Grousset (Fra) 21.57s.  
**Women: 50m butterfly:** 1. Sarah Sjöström (Swe) 24.95s; 2. Melanie Henique (Fra) 25.31s; 3. Zhang Yufei (Chn) 25.32s.  
**200m backstroke:** 1. Kaylee McKeown (Aus) 2:05.08s; 2. Phoebe Bacon (USA) 2:05.12s; 3. Rhyann White (USA) 2:06.96s.  
**800m freestyle:** 1. Katie Ledecky (USA) 8:08.04s; 2. Kiah Melverton (Aus) 8:18.77s; 3. Simona Quadarella (Ita) 8:09.00s.  
**Mixed 100m freestyle relay:** 1. Australia 3:19.38s (WR); 2. Canada 3:20.61s; 3. USA 3:21.09s.

**Jyothi Surekha claims two medals**

Wins mixed team gold and an individual silver

**ARCHERY**

**SPORTS BUREAU**

V. Jyothi Surekha celebrated her return to the Indian compound side by claiming the mixed team gold and women's individual silver medals in the Archery World Cup Stage-3 in Paris on Saturday.  
After beating Sophie 147-

Jyothi combined with Abhishek Verma to defeat France's Sophie Dodemont and Jean Philippe Boulch 152-149 and help India win its maiden compound mixed team gold. This was Abhishek's third team gold medal (including two in men's team event) of the season and fourth overall.  
She tied the scores 148-148 in the fifth and final end to take the sensational contest to a shoot-off.  
While Renu Sharma, the wife of late Yashpal Sharma was in attendance, Ravi

145 in the semifinals, the second-ranked Jyothi lost to top-ranked Ella Gibson of Great Britain via shoot-off to get her first individual silver.  
Jyothi matched the flawless Ella in two ends before trailing by a point.  
She tied the scores 148-148 in the fifth and final end to take the sensational contest to a shoot-off.

Jyothi shot a 10, while Ella hit the bull's eye to triumph.  
**The results (compound): Mixed team gold: Final:** V. Jyothi Surekha & Abhishek Verma bt Sophie Dodemont & Jean Philippe Boulch (Fra) 152-149.  
**Women's individual: Final:** Ella Gibson (GBR) tied with Jyothi 148-148. Ella won the shoot-off; **Semifinals:** Jyothi bt Sophie Dodemont (Fra) 147-145.

**Indians strike it rich**

**ATHLETICS**

**SPORTS BUREAU**

Indian athletes won seven gold medals at the Qosonov international athletics meet, a World Athletics Continental Tour (Bronze) event, in Almaty (Kazakhstan) on Saturday.  
**The results (Indians only): Men: 400m:** 2. Muhammed Anas (46.27s), 4. V. Muhammed Ajmal (46.93).  
**400m hurdles:** 2. T. Santhosh Kumar (49.97s), 3. A. Dhruvan (50.10).  
**Long jump:** 1. Muhammed Anas (8.04m).  
**Discus throw:** 1. Kirpal Singh (59.22m).  
**Women: 100m:** 2. Dutee Chand (11.49s, clocked a wind-assisted 11.38s in heats), 3. M.V. Jilna (11.61), 5. N.S. Simi (11.85).  
**400m:** 1. Kiran Pahal (52.54s), 3. Summy (53.70), 4. Jyothika Sri Dandi (53.92).  
**1500m:** 1. K.M. Chanda (4:24.44s).  
**400m hurdles:** 1. Vithya Ramraj (56.87s).  
**Discus:** 1. Navjeet Kaur Dhilon (56.24m).  
**Shot put:** 1. Abha Khatua (16.71m), 3. Manpreet Kaur (14.24).

**China to give Olympiad a miss**

**PRESS TRUST OF INDIA CHENNAI**

China will not be taking part in the 44th Chess Olympiad to be held at Mamallapuram from July 28. Replying to a question on the sidelines of the Candidates tournament in Madrid, World No.2 and China's top player Ding Liren, said neither he nor the team will take part in the Olympiad. "I think the Chinese team will not play," said Ding.  
The Chinese, however, did not give any reasons for their withdrawal, according to the AICF secretary.

**Book on 1983 World Cup released**

**CRICKET**

**AMOL KARHADKAR MUMBAI**

The 1983 World Cup-winning captain Kapil Dev, the team's star all-rounders Mohinder Amarnath and Sandeep Patil, among others, spoke during the launch event of the *The 1983 World Cup Opus*, a coffee table book, here on Saturday, the 39th anniversary of the 1983 final.  
"The first thing that comes to my mind was the last wicket, when Jimmy bowled the ball and it was adjudged lbw," Kapil in an interaction with Harsha Bhogle, with a majority of the squad members on the dais.  
While Renu Sharma, the wife of late Yashpal Sharma was in attendance, Ravi



**Star night:** Captain Kapil Dev and other members of the World Cup-winning team at the launch. **•PTI**

Shastri and Sunil Gavaskar joined via videoconferencing.

**Belief**  
Mohinder Amarnath stressed that the team "believed in ourselves", while Sandeep Patil summed up the composition of the squad in a lighter vein.

"We had seven good guys and seven naughty ones. They would play during the day and we would play in the evenings," Patil said.  
Former India captain Dilip Vengsarkar and former India all-rounder Roger Binny, members of the victorious squad, spoke on the sidelines of the release.

**It's Supernatural vs. Once You Go Black**

**BENGALURU:** Supernatural and Once You Go Black may fight out the finish of the Colts Championship Stakes (1,600m), the chief event of the races to be held here on Sunday (June 26). There will be no false rails.  
**1. HASSAN PLATE (1,200m),** rated 100 to 25, 4-y-o & over, 2:30 P.M.: 1. Classic Charm (4) G. Vivek 62.5, 2. Habanero (1) Kritish B 60, 3. Messala (5) Khurshad 59.5, 4. Spirit Dancer (8) Kiran Rai 59.5, 5. Infinite Spirit (2) Abhay S 58, 6. Max Mueller (6) Ashhad A 55.5, 7. Perfect Halo (3) Ashhad A 55.5 and 8. Activated (7) P. Surya 55.  
**1. CLASSIC CHARM, 2. HABANERO, 3. MAX MUELLER**  
**2. ASTRONOMIC PLATE (1,100m),** rated 20 to 45, 3:00-1. Appasara (2) Nikhil N 60.5, 2. Domina (8) Gaurav S 58, 3. Ultimate Striker (5) G. Vivek 56, 4. Mount View (1) Sandesh 55.5, 5. Lady Supremos (3) Vinod Shinde 54, 6. Ostris (6) Arvind K 54, 7. Mr Humble (4) P. Surya 53, 8. Anne Boleyn (7) Akshay K 52.5 and 9. Dallas Drifter (9) Khurshad 52.5.  
**1. MOUNT VIEW, 2. ANNE BOLEYN, 3. DOMINA**  
**3. KARNATAKA SUB-AREA TROPHY (1,600m),** maiden 3-y-o only, (Terms), 3:30-1. Fortunate Son (4) N.S. Parmar 56, 2.

King Pompous (9) Nikhil N 56, 3. Prague (1) Trevor 56, 4. Ripple N Storm (8) Dhanu S 56, 5. Roudy (10) P.S. Chouhan 56, 6. Sadler's Legacy (3) Yash 56, 7. Twilight Tornado (5) J.H. Arul 56, 8. Karyna (2) Bhawani S 54.5, 9. Klimt (7) Sandesh 54.5, 10. Mirra (6) Akshay K 54.5 and 11. Speaking Of Love (11) Kiran N 54.5.  
**1. PRAGUE, 2. SADLER'S LEGACY, 3. FORTUNATE SON**  
**4. COLTS CHAMPIONSHIP STAKES (1,600m), 3-y-o Colts & Geldings (Terms), 4:00-1. All Attraction (1) C.S. Jodha 56, 2. Arthur (2) A. Imran 56, 3. Cyrenius (9) Sandesh 56, 4. King Louis (1) P.S. Chouhan 56, 5. Last Wish (3) Dhanu S 56, 6. Leonardo (6) Akshay K 56, 7. Mojito (7) N.S. Parmar 56, 8. Once You Go Black (4) Suraj 56, 9. Prince O' War (8) P.P. Dhebe 56, 10. Ravishing Form (10) R Oliver 56 and 11. Supernatural (5) Trevor 56.  
**1. SUPERNATURAL, 2. ONCE YOU GO BLACK, 3. RAVISHING FORM**  
**5. JUNE PLATE (1,200m),** rated 50 to 65, 4-y-o & over, 4:30-1. Colonel Hartly (1) Angad 62.5, 2. Ascovall (6) Trevor 61.5, 3. Aztec Queen (7) Arvind K 60, 4. Kvasir (4) Siddharth 56.5, 5. Mustertion (8) Vishal B 53, 6. The Strength (2) Ajeet K 52.5, 7. Aceros (9) Vinod Shinde 51.5, 8. Lagopus (3) P. Surya 51.5 and 9. Anakin (5) Abhay S 50.5.  
**1. ASCOVALL, 2. THE STRENGTH, 3. COLONEL HERTY**  
**6. PARSIANA PLATE (1,800m),** rated 20 to 45, 4-y-o & over, 5:00-1. Southern Dynasty (6) C.S. Jodha 62, 2. Muirfield (3) S. John 60, 3. Rhapsody In Green (2) T.S. Jodha 59, 4. Only You (1) Sandesh 58.5, 5. Shubankar (5) Akshay K 57 and 6. Super Ruffian (4) Dhanu S 61.  
**1. ONLY YOU, 2. RHAPSODY IN GREEN**  
**7. MAURITIUS PEARL PLATE (1,200m),** rated 20 to 45, 5:30-1. Del Mar (2) Ashhad A 61.5, 2. Forseti (1) Trevor 58, 3. Knotty In Blue (10) S. Shareef 57.5, 4. Striking Memory (7) S. Saqlain 56.5, 5. Unique Style (9) Vishal B 56, 6. Princess Jasmine (4) Darshan 55.5, 7. Twilight Fame (6) Rajesh K 54, 8. Amazonite (5) S. Mubarak 53, 9. Sea Blush (2) P. Surya 51 and 10. Tiger Returns (8) Tousif K 50.5.  
**1. FORSETI, 2. DEL MAR, 3. TWILIGHT FAME**  
Day's best: PRAGUE  
Double: MOUNT VIEW - FORSETI  
Jkt: 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7; Tr (1): 2, 3 and 4; (1): 5, 6 and 7.**

**Zuccarelli claims Chief Justice's Cup**

**BENGALURU:** P. Shroff-trained Zuccarelli (Trevor) up won the Chief Justice's Cup, the feature event of the races held here on Saturday (June 25). The winner is owned by Five Stars Shipping Co. Pvt Ltd rep by Mr. K.N. Dhunjibhoy & Mr. Z.K. Dhunjibhoy, M/s. DT Racing & Breeding LLP rep by Mr. D.R. Thacker, Mr. Mukul A. Sonawala and Mr. A.S. Narielwala.  
**1. XISCA PLATE (DIV. II), (1,400m),** rated 00 to 25: ALTAMONTE (Darshan) 1, Handsome Rocky (Rajesh K) 2, Fierce Fighter (T.S. Jodha) 3 and Jersey Legend (Salman K) 4, 1, 3/4/2 and Lnk. Im, 29.67s, ₹29 (w), 14, 12 and 20 (p), SHP: 30, THP: 44, FP: 80, Q: 40, Trinella: 214 and 160, Exacta: 1,240 and 683, Favourite: Handsome Rocky. Owner and trainer: Mr. S. Inayathulla.  
**2. ADLER PLATE (DIV. II), (1,400m),** rated 20 to 45, 4-y-o & over: ELUSIVE GIRL (Arshad) 1, Wonder Wench (Rayan) 2, Capri King (Akshay K) 3 and Stunning Beauty (Arvind K) 4, 2, 3/4 and Lnk. Im, 29.14s, ₹54 (w), 17, 14 and 16 (p), SHP: 37, THP: 42, FP: 222, Q: 99, Trinella: 1,263 and 699, Exacta: 84,262, Favourite: Wonder Wench. Owner Mr. Aziz A. Jaffer. Trainer: Azhar Ali.  
**3. V.V. MEMORIAL TROPHY (1,600m),** rated 40 to 65: ASHWA

YUDHVIR (Yash) 1, Capable (Siddharth) 2, Grey Channel (Arshad) 3 and Vanguard (P. Dhebe) 4, 2-1/4, Nk and 5-3/4, Im, 40.67s, ₹45 (w), 15, 17 and 34 (p), SHP: 58, THP: 61, FP: 684, Q: 500, Trinella: 5,563 and 1,651, Exacta: 75,496 and 32,355, Favourite: Etosha. Owner: Mr. Ravinder Pal Singh Chouhan. Trainer: Rajesh Narredu.  
**4. CHIEF JUSTICE'S CUP (1,800m), 4-y-o & over, (Terms):** ZUC-CARELLI (Trevor) 1, Theon (P.S. Chouhan) 2, Giant Star (Yash) 3 and Chopin (R Oliver) 4, Shd, 9 and 8, Im, 52.43s, ₹13 (w), 13 and 15 (p), SHP: 21, THP: 27, FP: 25, Q: 25, Trinella: 132 and 71, Exacta: 413 and 176, Favourite: Zuccarelli. Owners: Five Stars Shipping Co. Pvt Ltd rep by Mr. K.N. Dhunjibhoy & Mr. Z.K. Dhunjibhoy, M/s. DT Racing & Breeding LLP rep by Mr. D.R. Thacker, Mr. Mukul A. Sonawala and Mr. A.S. Narielwala. Trainer: P. Shroff.  
**5. EVERYSKY PLATE (1,400m),** maiden 3-y-o only, (Terms): FORTUNATUS (Sandesh) 1, Queenstown (Dhrajath S) 2, Roman Power (Trevor) 3 and Queen Envid (Anjar) 4, 3-3/4, Snk and 1-3/4, Im, 27.68s, ₹16 (w), 10, 15 and 18 (p), SHP: 29, THP: 40, FP: 33, Q: 36, Trinella: 84 and 63, Exacta: 275 and 157, Favourite: Fortunatus. Owners: Mr. C. Aryama

Sundaram, Mr. P.J. Vazifdar & Mr. M. Rishad. Trainer: S. Padmanabhan.  
**6. ADLER PLATE (DIV. I), (1,400m),** rated 20 to 45, 4-y-o & over: IN A BREEZE (Likith) 1, Divine Ray (R Oliver) 2, Own Legacy (Trevor) 3 and Eco Friendly (Ajeet K) 4, 2-1/4, 2-1/4 and 4-3/4, Im, 27.49s, ₹86 (w), 19, 14 and 12 (p), SHP: 32, THP: 46, FP: 358, Q: 112, Trinella: 578 and 316, Exacta: 5,346 and 3,723, Favourite: Divine Ray. Owners: Hyperion Bloodstock Pvt Ltd rep by Mr. & Mrs. Farouk K. Rattoneyy, Mr. Sameer F. Rattoneyy and Mr. Zaher F. Rattoneyy. Trainer: Irfan Ghatala.  
**7. XISCA PLATE (DIV. I), (1,400m),** rated 00 to 25: EXTRAORDINARY (Arvind K) 1, Toronoro (L.A. Rozario) 2, Able One (Arshad) 3 and Mark One (Ajinkya) 4, 3-3/4, 1-1/4 and 3-3/4, Im, 28.73s, ₹34 (w), 12, 34 and 16 (p), SHP: 100, THP: 43, FP: 752, Q: 793, Trinella: 2,488 and 439, Exacta: 6,021 and 2,796, Favourite: Mark One. Owner: Mr. C.V. Prasad Rao. Trainer: Sharat Kumar.  
Jackpot: ₹19,285 (four tkts.); Runner-up: 580 (57 tkts.); Treble (1): 1,125 (10 tkts.); (1b): 2,043 (10 tkts.).

**CoA is transparent and democratic, says chairperson Gita Mittal**

'Court cases put pressure on the selected players who should be preparing for matches'

**TABLE TENNIS**

**M. R. PRAVEEN CHANDRAN THIRUVANANTHAPURAM**  
Justice Gita Mittal (Retd.), the chairperson of the Committee of Administrators (CoA) appointed by Delhi High Court to conduct the affairs of TTFI said the body has taken transparent and democratic steps to put the game back on track in the country.  
Speaking to *The Hindu* during the 83rd National Junior and Youth Table Tennis Championships, Justice Gita Mittal said the major achievement of the CoA in the last four months was that

it was able to conduct all the three nationals without proper budgeting and without any help from sponsors. She said it was done to facilitate the participation of the national team for the Commonwealth Games and other international events.  
The chairperson said the recent selection controversy and court cases had affected the morale of the selected players and CoA was facing challenges to send the team for the Commonwealth Games.  
"The independent selection committee had recommended the names of the



Justice Gita Mittal (Retd.) **•SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT**

players to the CoA. But the existing ranking and selection criterion makes no provision for doubles teams.

There is an exaggerated weightage given to domestic tournaments over international events," she said.  
"Doubles is an essential part of Asian, Commonwealth and Olympic Games. We needed to identify the right pair. The selectors were in a conundrum as Archana Kamath has no points in domestic circuit. She also didn't play doubles in the senior nationals and lost in the first round in singles.  
"However, the selection committee recommended Archana as the doubles partner of Manika Batra for Commonwealth and wrote

that it should be cleared by SAI. The CoA wrote to SAI pointing out the reasons.  
"SAI said it was the prerogative of the sports body to decide on its teams. Now it is unfortunate that the players have decided by themselves who are more meritorious. Four players went to court and it has put a lot of pressure on selected players who should actually be preparing for the matches," she said.  
The chairperson said that the aim is to do well in 2028 Olympics and the need to spread the game in tier two cities in the country.  
"We have plans to start a

national TT Academy on the same lines as the NCA. There would be regional academies for identifying and nurturing talent as well. We have also asked the Petroleum Sports Promotion Board to revive their academies," the chairperson said.  
"We have introduced electronic draw of lots to avoid rigging and it was well received by players.  
"We have implemented the parity on prize money in the 83rd junior national in Alappuzha. Further, I understand that the match officials are paid poorly and their remuneration needs to be increased," she said.

**Karman to meet Costoulas in final**

Imamura wins doubles titles partnering Nugroh

**ITF TENNIS**

**KAMESH SRINIVASAN GURUGRAM**  
Karman Kaur Thandi unleashed a high percentage of her best game to outwit the gutsy Punnin Kovapitukted 6-2, 6-3 in the semifinals of the \$25,000 ITF women's tennis tournament at the Tennis Project, Baliawas, on Saturday.  
Serving strong and stroking with intensity into the corners, the 24-year-old Karman exasperated her diminutive opponent who tried her best to make a fight of it.  
In the final, the eighth-seeded Karman will face the 17-year-old World No. 3 ju-

nior, Sofia Costoulas of Belgium, who played an energetic game to beat Saki Imamura of Japan 6-2, 6-4.  
Imamura did have the consolation of winning the doubles title later in the evening, in partnership with Priska Madelyn Nugroho of Indonesia.  
Karman's only singles title in the professional circuit was in 2018 in Hong Kong.  
Karman had two aces and seven double faults in the match. She was not too pleased with her first serve percentage, and made it a point to hit a few serves after the match before leaving the court. She converted five of 11 break points while the

Thai succeeded in converting two of seven break points.  
Karman has kept improving with each round, sharpening her game, despite the energy sapping conditions.  
"I am happy to be in the final. I am looking for more consistency," said Karman, who trains with long-time coach Aditya Sachdeva at the RoundGlass Academy in Chandigarh.  
**The results: Semifinals:** Sofia Costoulas (Bel) bt Saki Imamura (Jpn) 6-2, 6-4; Karman Kaur Thandi bt Punnin Kovapitukted (Tha) 6-2, 6-3.  
**Doubles (final):** Imamura (Jpn) & Priska Madelyn Nugroho (Ina) bt Momoko Kobayri & Misaki Matsuda (Jpn) 6-4, 7-5.

I did some tests (related to my speed, stamina, flexibility and power) last month. After that there have been some improvements," Bajrang said during a virtual interaction facilitated by the Sports Authority of India (SAI) on Saturday before his departure for a 35-day training stint in the USA.  
Bajrang asserted that he was ready to get back to competitions again. "Now I am fully fit. In the last 15-20 days' training, I have noticed some differences in my body and wrestling movement. I think I am ready for competition. I will try to have a good beginning at the Commonwealth Games."

**I think I am ready for competition: Punia**

**Y.B. SARANGI KOLKATA**  
Wrestler Bajrang Punia says that he has overcome the fear of getting injured again and has got back to the competition mode ahead of the Commonwealth Games next month.  
Bajrang, who secured an Olympics bronze medal last year despite nursing a knee injury, got injured again after the Games. It affected his natural game as he wrestled defensively in some events earlier this year.  
"When I began training, I thought I should not get injured again. It adversely affected my game. I consulted my physio and coaches and



**On the ball:** Karman outwitted Kovapitukted in the semifinals. **•KAMESH SRINIVASAN**

# Troubled waters | The economic crisis in Sri Lanka is forcing families to risk a boat ride through choppy seas to Tamil Nadu

TEXT AND IMAGES BY L. BALACHANDAR

On April 10, a group of 10 Sri Lankans, including two children and three women, were left high and dry by Sri Lankan fishermen on an islet near Arichalmunai. Shivering and surrounded by lapping waves in the twilight hours, they waited for the day to break and then they were rescued by the local fishermen and the police.

On June 16, seven Sri Lankans, including four children, began a perilous journey to escape the economic crisis besieging the Island nation. These people were lucky for early next morning, they landed in Dhanushkodi.

From here, they were picked up by the police, and on completion of preliminary enquiries, they found a roof over their head at the refugee camp in Mandapam.

So far, 90 people have taken the same choppy sea route to reach India in small batches from March 22. For all these families, mostly from northern Jaffna and Mannar district of Sri Lanka, the spiralling prices of essential commodities was the trigger that forced them to risk their lives. Even to make this illegal journey, they had to

give a few lakhs of rupees to boatmen who helped them escape.

For most Sri Lankan Tamils, leading a secure and peaceful life has always been an elusive dream. Right from the 1980s to 2009, there has been waves of migration as thousands fled the country during the civil war. From 2002, when a lengthy ceasefire began, to February 2022, 17,933 Sri Lankan refugees came voluntarily to India.

But from 2012, India has not granted the status of refugee to those arriving from Sri Lanka. As a result, these migrants are now housed in 113 camps in Tamil Nadu and are dependent on the dole being provided by the State government. In August 2021, Chief Minister M.K. Stalin increased the monthly cash dole to the head of each family living in rehabilitation camps from ₹1,000 to ₹1,500. Along with this monetary aid, they have been provided basic needs.

A police official said that, during inquiry, most of these migrants revealed that before leaving Sri Lanka, they had sold their immovable and moveable properties with the intention of remaining in Tamil Nadu permanently.

A dream that they hope to realise without the refugee tag.



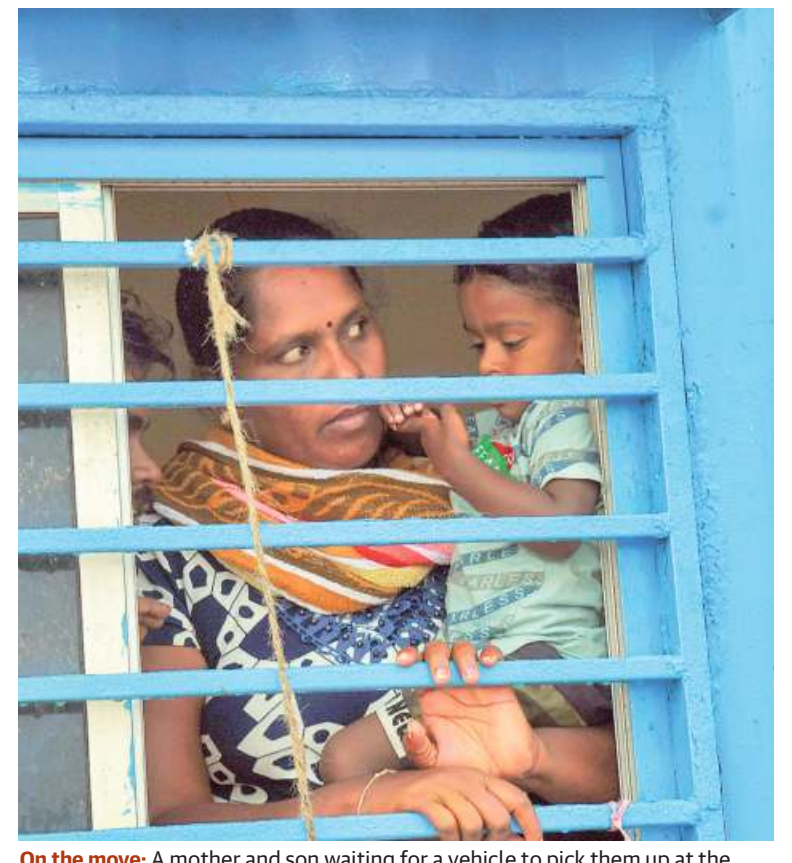
**Escaping penury:** Ten Sri Lankan Tamils landed on an islet near Arichalmunai near Dhanushkodi in Tamil Nadu to escape from the economic crisis in Sri Lanka.



**Land ahoy:** The marine police picked up three families by boat from the islet and brought them to the mainland.



**Firm ground:** On safe territory in India.



**On the move:** A mother and son waiting for a vehicle to pick them up at the Arichalmunai police booth.



**Checking out:** An official questions the Sri Lankan Tamils at the Mandapam marine police station, after which they were sent to the Mandapam refugee camp for Sri Lankans.



**Food on the table:** The Mandapam marine police hosting the Sri Lankan Tamils.

**Hard times:** A man and a woman stare at an uncertain future.



**Making do:** Sri Lankan Tamils who arrive in Rameswaram are provided with essential items at the rehabilitation camp.

**New country, new beginnings:** Sri Lankan Tamils after questioning by Central and State officials.