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Medha Patkar gets jail term for 'defaming' Delhi L-G

Ishita Mishra
NEW DELHI

A Delhi court on Monday sentenced Medha Patkar, activist and founding member of the Narmada Bachao Andolan, to imprisonment for five months in a 23-year-old criminal defamation case lodged against her by Delhi Lieutenant-Governor V.K. Saxena.

The court also ordered her to pay ₹10-lakh compensation to Mr. Saxena. Metropolitan Magistrate Raghav Sharma of the Saket court, who had convicted Ms. Patkar under Section 500 of the Indian Penal Code on May 24, said the order would remain suspended for 30 days.

The court rejected her prayer to release her on probation, and said it was not imposing a jail term of a year or two, considering her age and health.

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New criminal laws will prioritise justice: Shah

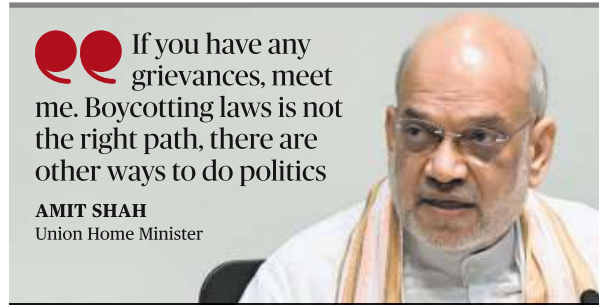
Home Minister says it will take up to three or four years for relevant 'technical aspects' of the legislation to become fully applicable; laws are available in all languages in the Eighth Schedule

Vijaita Singh
NEW DELHI

Union Home Minister Amit Shah said on Monday that it would take up to three or four years for the "entire process" and relevant "technical aspects" of the three new criminal laws to become fully applicable.

After the entire process was implemented, a person would get justice even from the Supreme Court within three years of registration of the first information report (FIR).

Mr. Shah said the new laws would prioritise justice instead of punishment. The Home Minister said the three laws were available in all the languages mentioned in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution, which included Tamil, and the court proceedings would also take place



If you have any grievances, meet me. Boycotting laws is not the right path, there are other ways to do politics

AMIT SHAH
Union Home Minister

in those languages.

"The laws have been translated to Tamil and the proceedings will also take place in Tamil. Neither the [Tamil Nadu] Chief Minister, nor the Members of Parliament have asked time for a discussion regarding their opposition to the names of laws. I want to appeal again. If you have any grievances, meet me. Boycotting laws is not the right path, there are other ways to do politics," Mr. Shah said on being asked about Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin's objec-

tions to the laws.

On June 18, Mr. Stalin wrote to Mr. Shah to keep the laws in abeyance stating that the naming of the laws (in Sanskrit) is clearly violative of Article 348.

Remand period

Mr. Shah asserted that the total duration of police custody remained 15 days and it had not been extended up to 60 days.

"The total remand will be 15 days but will have to be secured within 60 days [of arrest], and can be taken in parts. Earlier, if an

accused was sent to police remand and he got himself admitted to a hospital for 15 days then there was no interrogation as his remand period used to expire," Mr. Shah said.

The Home Minister made it clear that the BNS, which came into force on Monday, had the provision of a maximum 15-day police custody as the erstwhile IPC, and dispelled confusion that the remand period had been extended.

Regarding the missing Section on penal provisions for sexual crimes against men and transgender persons, Mr. Shah said, "There is a Supreme Court judgment on this, it is a matter of interpretation. We will discuss with the Supreme Court."

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FIRST CASE REGISTERED
» PAGE 12

IN BRIEF

'Will ensure full synergy with Navy, Air Force'


NEW DELHI

Army chief General Upendra Dwivedi on Monday said it will be his "endeavour to ensure that the Army is always ready to operate in the full spectrum of conflict, maintaining complete synergy with the Navy, Air Force, and other stakeholders". » Page 10

HC hearing on Kejriwal's plea today

NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court is scheduled to hear on Tuesday CM Arvind Kejriwal's plea challenging his arrest by the CBI in a corruption case related to the excise policy 'scam'. He has also challenged a June 26 order of the trial court, which remanded him in CBI's custody for three days. » Page 4



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Party rebels seek apology from Akal Takht for 'mistakes' during Akali rule

The Hindu Bureau
CHANDIGARH

The rebel faction of the Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) on Monday went to the Akal Takht – the highest temporal seat of the Sikhs – and tendered an apology for all the "mistakes committed" by the party when it was in power in Punjab.

Senior party leader and former MP Prem Singh Chandumajra, former Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC) chief Bibi Jagir Kaur and other leaders, who have been seeking the ouster of party president Sukh-

bir Singh Badal, appeared before Akal Takht jathedar Giani Raghbir Singh at the Golden Temple in Amritsar and submitted a letter seeking forgiveness for the "mistakes" during SAD rule between 2007 and 2017 in the State.

They held the Akali chief, who was Deputy Chief Minister at the time, responsible for the "mistakes" such as the failure to punish those responsible for the sacrilege of the Guru Granth Sahib in 2015, pardoning of Dera Sacha Sauda chief Gurmeet Ram Rahim Singh in the 2007 blasphemy case, and the

appointment of Sumedh Saini as the State's Director General of Police.

Mr. Chandumajra said these mistakes have cost the party dearly – both electorally and religiously – and even though several leaders have been raising the issue surrounding "leadership change" within the party, nothing concrete has been done to revive the SAD in all these years.

Poor electoral run

As the poor electoral run of the party continued in the recently concluded Lok Sabha poll, the challenge before Mr. Badal to keep his

flock together has only grown as several senior leaders have now been gunning for his ouster.

However, SAD's women's wing, Istri Akali Dal, expressed complete faith in the leadership of Mr. Badal. In a statement on Monday, the party wing said Mr. Badal was "best suited to lead the party at this juncture".

"The entire rank and file of the Istri Akali Dal said party president Sukhbir Badal had provided inspiring leadership to lead an effective campaign in the form of the 'Punjab Bachao Yatra'," it added.

Flood fury



Submerged: Villagers use a boat to cross a flood-affected area in Assam's Morigaon district on Monday. The flood situation across the State continued to deteriorate with incessant rains inundating many districts, affecting lakhs of people. PTI

June's gross GST revenue growth slows to a three-year low; no official statement

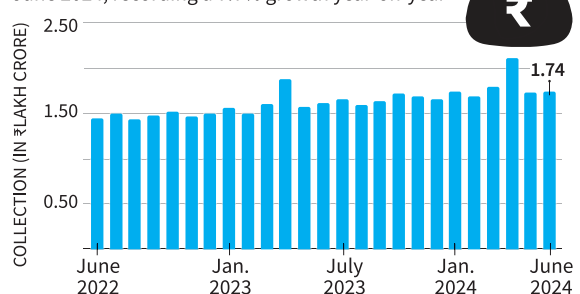
Vikas Dhoot
NEW DELHI

Growth in India's gross Goods and Services Tax (GST) collections slowed to a three-year low in June, with revenues rising about 7.74% to about ₹1.74 lakh crore from ₹1,61,497 crore collected in the year-earlier period, according to numbers shared informally by officials.

The Finance Ministry, which generally releases monthly GST revenue collections on the first of every subsequent month, including details about trends on State-wise collections and revenues collected from domestic transactions and imports, had not officially issued any statement on June's indirect tax receipts till the time of going to press on Monday.

On a slow lane

India's GST collections stood at ₹1.74 lakh crore in June 2024, recording a 7.7% growth year-on-year



The Ministry did put out a series of social media posts to mark the seventh anniversary of the GST regime, with July 1 marked as GST Day, to assert that it had brought "happiness for every home" with lower rates on household goods, a level playing field for all taxpayers, and lower com-

pliance burden on small businesses.

The growth in June's gross GST revenues, pertaining to transactions undertaken in the economy during the month of May, was the slowest pace since June 2021.

The rise in last month's gross GST revenues also

trails the 12.4% and 10% growth recorded in April and May 2024, respectively, and is a mere 0.73% above May's gross tally of ₹1,72,739 crore. For the first quarter, gross GST revenues were about ₹5,57,006 crore, roughly 10.2% higher than the ₹5.05 lakh crore collected in the year-earlier period.

In recent months, the Ministry had begun sharing details about net GST collections as well, after factoring in refunds.

In April, net GST collections had risen 15.5% to ₹1.92 lakh crore out of the record gross revenues of over ₹2.1 lakh crore. However, in May, net GST revenue growth eased to 6.9% with a tally of ₹1.44 lakh crore. In the absence of an official statement, net collections last month are not known.

Economists, speaking on condition of anonymity, expressed surprise at the absence of an official statement on the GST revenues for last month, and reckoned this would hamper analysis on activity trends in the economy.

While data for Central and State GST collections were not available, an official source said that about ₹39,600 crore had been settled to the central GST account from Integrated GST (IGST) collections, while States had been given ₹33,548 crore from the IGST pool.

In June 2023, IGST collections stood at ₹80,292 crore, including ₹39,035 crore collected on import of goods.

CONTINUED ON
» PAGE 10

Govt. undecided on deadline to fix boundaries for Census

Vijaita Singh
NEW DELHI

The deadline to freeze administrative boundaries of districts, tehsils, towns, municipal bodies and others for the Census exercise ended on Sunday, but a new date has not been announced. A senior government official told *The Hindu* that a "decision is yet to be taken and discussions are being held".

The ambiguity has a direct impact on the dates of the Census exercise that was previously held in 2011. The deadline has been extended nine times since December 2020.

A former Census official said an order for a *post-facto* extension could be issued on a later date, but if that was not done, it meant doors were open for the Census exercise in the next three to six



The deadline has been extended nine times since December 2020.

months. The order on December 30, 2023 which extended the freezing of administrative boundaries by State governments till June 30, 2024 effectively pushed the decennial Census exercise at least till October 1 as it usually takes three months to prepare the enumerators for the task.

Women's quota

The implementation of the women's reservation Act passed in the Special Session of Parliament last year, reserving 33% of seats in

Parliament and the Assemblies for women, is dependent on the conduct of the Census.

According to the Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam, reservation of one-third of the seats in the Lok Sabha and the Assemblies for women shall come into effect after an exercise of delimitation is undertaken based on the relevant figures of the first Census recorded after the Act has commenced.

CONTINUED ON
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IN BRIEF



Four-member panel to probe Mathura water tank collapse

The Mathura district administration has formed a four-member committee to probe into the collapse of an overhead water tank that killed two people and injured 11 and directed it to submit a report within a week, it said on Monday. Two women died and 11 people were injured after being buried under the debris of the tank that collapsed in the densely populated Krishna Vihar area on Sunday. The committee formed by District Magistrate Shailendra Kumar Singh will be headed by the Additional District Magistrate (judicial) and have members from Uttar Pradesh Jal Nigam and the Public Works Department. PTI

ED attaches properties worth over 9 crore in PMLA case

The Enforcement Directorate of (ED), Ranchi, has provisionally attached 62 immovable properties of one Mohammad Ezhar Ansari worth ₹9.67 crore in a case registered against him and others under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA). The ED initiated an investigation on the basis of an FIR registered by Jharkhand Police under various sections of the erstwhile Indian Penal Code (IPC), 1860 and Coal Mines Act, 2017 against Mr. Ansari, his truck driver Sayyad Salmani and others. A chargesheet was filed after police seized 19.56 metric tonnes of illegally transported coal and the truck carrying it.

Kejriwal aide's plea against arrest: police stand sought

The Delhi High Court on Monday issued notice to the Delhi Police on Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's close aide Bibhav Kumar's plea challenging his arrest in connection with the alleged assault on AAP MP Swati Maliwal at the Chief Minister's residence. The High Court said Mr. Kumar's plea "at this stage" is maintainable to the extent of issuance of notice to the police. "The merit of the case will, however, be decided only after a reply is filed in this case by the State," the High Court said. Mr. Kumar, presently in judicial custody, allegedly assaulted Ms. Maliwal at Mr. Kejriwal's official residence on May 13. He was arrested on May 18.

Regularise faculty, release pending salaries: TISS teachers

A day after the Tata Institute of Social Sciences withdrew termination letters sent to over 100 teachers, the Teachers' Association of TISS (TISSA) has called for regularisation of faculty funded by the Tata Education Trust and demanded the release of pending salaries. TISSA reiterated that termination letters have not been withdrawn. "These letters must be retracted immediately. Colleagues need to be reinstated, and pending salaries released from March to June 2024," TISSA said. The authorities received criticism from students' and teachers' associations over the termination of 55 faculty members and 60 non-teaching staff.

Shivakumar to form panel to analyse Cong.'s poor show in Karnataka LS poll

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Amid a game of one-upmanship between Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar on the demand for creation of multiple Deputy Chief Minister posts and replacement of the Chief Minister, Mr. Shivakumar on Monday asserted his authority by chairing a meeting of KPCC office-bearers to chalk out the party's strategy for the bypolls to three Legislative Assembly constituencies and polls to urban and rural local bodies.

Sending a strong message against the demand for "one-man, one-post" advocated by loyalists of Mr. Siddaramaiah, Mr. Shivakumar held discussions



Karnataka Deputy CM D.K. Shivakumar meets Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge in New Delhi on Sunday. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

on the Lok Sabha poll outcome with the party's office-bearers and District Congress Committee chiefs and decided to form a committee to find out reasons for the party's poor show in the election.

Against the expectation of winning 15 Lok Sabha seats, the Congress ended up winning nine. The fact-finding committee will make a presentation be-

Shiv Sena (UBT) retains two seats, BJP wins one in Maharashtra Council

Former Minister Anil Parab of Sena (UBT) elected MLC for third term; BJP announces Pankaja Munde and four former MLAs as candidates for next round of biennial election on July 12

The Hindu Bureau
MUMBAI

After registering victories in 30 out of 48 seats in the recent Lok Sabha election, the Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) won two out of the four seats it contested in the biennial Maharashtra Legislative Council election. The ruling Mahayuti alliance retained its Konkarn Graduates' seat. Counting for the Nashik Teachers' seat was on till late on Monday night.

The six-year term of four Members of Legislative Council (MLC) – Mumbai Teachers', Mumbai Graduates', Konkarn Graduates' and Nashik Teachers' – will expire on July 7. In the 78-member Council, the BJP currently has 22, Shiv Sena (undivided) 11, NCP (undivided) nine, and Congress eight seats. Independents and smaller parties hold the rest, with 21 seats vacant due to recent political realignments.

Anil Parab and J.M. Ab-



Shiv Sena (UBT) Anil Parab wins the Mumbai Graduates' seat in the Maharashtra Legislative Council on Monday. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

hyankar (both Shiv Sena-UBT) were elected from the Mumbai Graduates' and Mumbai Teachers' constituencies, respectively. This will be the third term as MLC for Mr. Parab, a former Minister.

The BJP's sitting MLC from Konkarn Graduates', Niranjana Davkhare, was re-elected giving him a fourth term as MLC. He was with the undivided Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) when he switched over to

the BJP in 2018, resigned as an MLC, only to get re-elected.

There are 21 candidates in the fray for the Nashik Teachers' seat where Shiv Sena (UBT)'s Sandeep Gulve has challenged Kishor Darade from the rival Shiv Sena (Shinde). Vivek Kolhe (BJP) is also in the fray as an Independent.

This was the first State-level election after the recent Lok Sabha poll. Elections for another 11

MLC seats will be held on July 12, for which Tuesday is the last date for filing of nominations.

Candidates for July 12

The BJP on Monday named five candidates for the July 12 biennial elections, including former State Minister Pankaja Munde, who lost the Lok Sabha election from Beed. The Congress has renominated MLC Pradnya Rajeev Satav.

Besides Ms. Munde, the BJP has named former MLAs Yogesh Tilekar, Parinay Phuke, Amit Gorkhe, and Sadabhau Khot.

The NCP (SP), an ally of the Congress, has declared support for Peasants and Workers Party (PWP) candidate Jayant Patil.

With 14 vacancies, 274 MLAs constitute the electoral college in the 288-member Assembly in which BJP has 103, the Ajit Pawar-led NCP 41, the Eknath Shinde-led Shiv Sena 40, the Congress 37, the Shiv Sena (UBT) 13, and the NCP (SP) has 15 seats.

HC hearing today on Kejriwal's plea against his arrest

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court is scheduled to hear on Tuesday Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's plea challenging his arrest by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) in a corruption case related to the excise policy 'scam'.

The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) national convener has also challenged a June 26 order of the trial court, which remanded him in CBI's custody for three days. The court had subsequently, on June 29, extended Mr. Kejriwal's judicial custody till July 12, saying his name had surfaced as one of the main conspirators. It had also remarked that his further custodial interrogation might be required as the investigation is under way.

The CBI arrested Mr. Kejriwal on June 26 from Tihar Jail, where he was remanded till July 3 in a related money-laundering case being probed by the Enforcement Directorate (ED).

"He needs to be in jail in the interest of the investigation and justice," the CBI had said in its remand application before the trial court, claiming that the



Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal

Chief Minister had not cooperated in the investigation.

On June 26, the trial court, while remanding the AAP chief to CBI custody, had refused to declare his arrest illegal, as sought by Mr. Kejriwal's counsel. The court had said, "The timing may be circumspect but it is not the clear criterion for declaring an arrest illegal."

"Don't be overzealous" It had added, "Investigation is the prerogative of the investigating agency; however, there are certain safeguards provided in the law and at this stage, on the material on record, it cannot be said that the arrest is illegal. The agency, however, should not be overzealous."

Mr. Kejriwal was initially arrested by the ED on March 21 on money laundering charges linked to the liquor policy case.

M.P. nod for Bills on seizing vehicles used to transport cows, I-T payment by State Ministers

Press Trust of India
BHOPAL

The Madhya Pradesh Cabinet on Monday approved a Bill providing for seizing vehicles involved in transportation of cows for slaughter, and also gave its nod to another proposed legislation under which State Ministers will henceforth have to pay their own income tax.

The Cabinet approved another Bill that seeks to impose penalty on owners for not plugging open borewells, a move that comes in the backdrop of several incidents of children falling in open borewells and dying in the State.

A Cabinet meeting, presided over by Chief Minister Mohan Yadav, was held in the Assembly campus here, where several important decisions were taken.

On several occasions vehicles caught while illegally transporting cows get released on court orders, says CM

It approved a Bill for amending the Madhya Pradesh Cow Slaughter Prohibition Act, 2004, and giving right to District Collectors to confiscate vehicles involved in transporting cows for slaughter, an official said.

Under the Act, illegal transportation of beef and cows is banned in Madhya Pradesh.

Chief Minister Yadav, in a statement, said on several occasions vehicles caught while illegally transporting cows get released on court orders.

"We have decided that vehicles involved in cow

slaughter will be confiscated and will not get released," the CM said.

According to the official, the Cabinet also gave its nod to a Bill to prevent incidents of children falling in open borewells.

Under the proposed law, if an open borewell is found not plugged, penalty will be levied on its owner, the official said, adding the Public Health Engineering Department is authorised to take action in this regard.

No government role

The Cabinet also gave its nod to a proposal to amend the Madhya Pradesh Minister (Salary and Allowance) Amendment Bill, 2024, and make a provision for State Ministers to deposit their income tax instead of the government bearing such burden.

Who ordered opening of fire on anti-Sterlite protesters, asks HC

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

The Madras High Court on Monday sought to know who ordered the opening of fire by the police on civilians during the May 2018 Thoothukudi anti-Sterlite protests which led to the death of as many as 13 people and left many others injured.

A Division Bench of Justices S.S. Sundar and N. Senthilkumar raised the question during the hearing of a 2021 writ petition filed by human rights activist Henri Tiphagne against the closure of a complaint lodged by him before the National Human Rights Commission.

When counsel representing the then Deputy Superintendent of Police Linga Thirumaran questioned the maintainability of the writ petition, Justice

Sundar retorted that all police officers responsible for the firing should have been prosecuted for murder. The judge lamented that so far none of the officers had shown remorse or felt sorry for the loss of 13 lives.

Mother's plea

Meanwhile, a related PIL filed by J. Vanitha, mother of 17-year old J. Snowlin who was among the protesters killed in police firing, was listed for hearing before the first Division Bench of Acting Chief Justice R. Mahadevan and Mohammed Shaffiq.

The petitioner has sought registration of a murder case against all officials responsible for the firing and to enhance the compensation from ₹25 lakh to ₹1 crore to the families of each of the deceased.

Police to move SC after HC orders release of Pune minor

The Hindu Bureau
MUMBAI

After the Bombay High Court passed an order for the release of the 17-year-old boy accused in the Pune luxury car accident that claimed two lives, a senior officer from the Pune police department said that they would approach the Supreme Court against the order.

The decision to move the top court came after an approval was received from Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde, who had promised swift justice to the victims' family last week.

On June 25, a Division Bench of the court had ordered the immediate release of the minor, terming the Juvenile Justice Board's order to detain the minor in the juvenile observation home as "illegal".

NHRC issues notices to Centre, T.N. govt. over recruitment practices at Foxconn

Ishita Mishra
NEW DELHI

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) on Monday issued notice to the Secretary, Union Ministry of Labour and Employment, and the Chief Secretary, Government of Tamil Nadu calling for a detailed report on reports that Foxconn, a major manufacturer of Apple devices, "systematically excluded" married women from jobs at its iPhone assembly plant in Sriperumbudur.

It was alleged by a former human resources (HR) executive at Foxconn India that verbal directions were given to the Indian hiring agencies by the company in this regard. It was also stated that the company



'No bar': Foxconn has denied allegations of discrimination in employment based on marital status or gender. REUTERS

did not hire married women because of cultural issues and societal pressure. "The Commission has observed that the contents of the media reports, if true, raise a serious issue of discrimination against married women causing the violation of the right to equality and equal opportunity," the NHRC said.

It also noted that gender

equality is not only required in the Indian Constitution but also in international treaties and covenants, such as the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights.

The NHRC also maintained that it is the obligation of State authorities to

ensure that all companies follow the norms and regulations relating to labour laws and the right to health and dignity to any individual, including women, who work in the supply chain of any production unit in the private sector.

Information pamphlet

As per reports, a number of job seekers in the company were spoken to during the period from January 2023 to May 2024 and the candidate information pamphlet of the company was examined. It was allegedly revealed that only unmarried women were eligible for assembly jobs.

Foxconn has denied the allegations of discrimination in employment based on marital status, gender, religion or any other form.



Govt. of Haryana



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- Nayab Singh



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- Narendra Modi



Decentralization of Powers Strengthening Panchayats

State Level Panchayati Raj & Sarpanch Sammelan

Chief Guest

Sh. Nayab Singh

Chief Minister, Haryana

Presided Over By

Sh. Mahipal Dhandra

Minister of State, Development and Panchayats (I.C.),
Haryana

Date
July 2, 2024

Time
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Sense of uncertainty

Amid doubt and fear, new criminal laws take over an unready system

The three new criminal laws have come into force in the country, amidst widespread fears that the policing and judicial systems are not yet ready for their introduction. Barring reports of some rudimentary training to station-house police personnel, some workshops here and there, and an upgrade to the Crime and Criminal Tracking Network and Systems, which will help ease the filing of complaints in electronic form, the exact level of preparedness among the upper and lower echelons of the police is unknown. Earlier the government had appointed July 1 as the day on which the three laws – the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita in place of the Indian Penal Code, the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita to supersede the Code of Criminal Procedure and the Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam, which has replaced the Indian Evidence Act – will come into force. It appears that the Union government decided that it is better to implement them and let the police, courts and lawyers fumble their way towards a rough transition than await a time when everyone involved in the administration of criminal law is brought up to speed. How much the initial period of possible confusion will last is anybody's guess. There is little doubt that more time ought to have been given to the police and legal fraternity to prepare themselves before the codes were brought into force.

The very names of the new laws appear obscure, with many questioning why there is no English equivalent for the new codes, and why they should bear unfamiliar Hindi names. There was no change in the name of the criminal procedure code when the 1898 original was replaced with a new one in 1973. There is also a persistent feeling that the laws were not fully debated in the legislature – even though a Standing Committee of Parliament went into the draft and recommended some changes – or widely discussed with civil society. There is a looming fear that some of the new provisions, especially the one relating to police custody that can be availed of in multiple tranches, will sharply empower the police to the citizen's disadvantage. The inclusion of 'terrorism' as an offence in ordinary penal law in addition to the present special anti-terrorism law is bound to cause confusion. The Centre's announcement that States are free to make their own amendments is fine, but there is no assurance that such amendments will get early Presidential assent. Some procedural reforms such as registering FIRs regardless of jurisdiction and introduction of videography of searches and seizures are welcome initiatives, but there is a palpable sense of uncertainty over the overall impact of these new laws.

Waiting for a reformist

Iran's theocratic state is unlikely to give space to a popular reformist

As no candidate managed to win 50% vote in the first round of Iran's snap presidential elections, the country is headed for a run-off on July 5 between the top two vote getters – reformist Masoud Pezeshkian and conservative Saeed Jalili. Mr. Pezeshkian, a surgeon and lawmaker who was the Minister of Health in the government of reformist President Mohammed Khatami, won 42.5% votes, while Mr. Jalili, Iran's former chief nuclear negotiator, got 38.8% votes. Conservative Parliament Speaker Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf finished third with 13.8% vote share. The election, which was necessitated by President Ebrahim Raisi's death in a helicopter crash in May, is taking place at a crucial time for Iran. There is much public anger amid economic hardships and heightened cultural policing. Iran is facing pressure to rein in its proxies, mainly Yemen's Houthis and Lebanon's Hezbollah, particularly after the Israel-Hamas war began. Iran is also expanding its nuclear programme, defying international pressure, and tensions with Israel rocketed in April when Tehran launched a missile attack towards the Jewish state after its embassy building in Damascus was bombed. A new President, reformist or conservative, is unlikely to change core policies, but the highest elected official in the republic can have a say on how critical policies are being implemented.

In the past, reformist politicians such as Mr. Khatami and Hassan Rouhani won huge mandates on promises of change, but did little in opening up the system that is tightly controlled by the Shia clergy. The failure to reform the system from within and alleviate the economic woes, which are a result of the western sanctions, have turned sections of the electorate apathetic. There was a time when Iran's clerical rulers would invoke the high participation of voters as a measure of popular legitimacy for the revolutionary regime, which is partly representative and fully theocratic. If the voter turnout was above 80% in 2009, it was a record low this year – 39.9%. This is not a surprise. All branches of the state are under conservative control, and several reformist politicians were barred from contesting. Even if reformists win, they are constrained by unelected institutions such as the office of the Supreme Leader and the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps. The near-total dominance of the conservatives over the institutions and the clergy's refusal to change are hollowing out even the limited democracy that the revolution had promised. Economic hardships and repression over the Islamic code are adding fuel to the fire. Iran can take pride that it held a presidential election amidst crises. But its rulers should also take a cue from the growing dissent and falling voter interest, and be ready for political and social reforms.

Israel is facing a strategic defeat in Gaza



Stanly Johny

When Israel declared its war on Gaza, following a cross-border attack by Hamas on October 7, 2023, killing at least 1,200 people, Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said his forces would "crush" the Islamist militant group. Since then, Israeli leaders have said, several times, that "eliminating" Hamas is the top objective of the war. Gaza, the tiny Palestinian enclave sandwiched between Israel proper and the Mediterranean Sea, has practically been under an Israeli blockade since 2007. After the October 7 attack, Israel imposed a total siege on Gaza. It first pounded the enclave with heavy air strikes before launching an all-out invasion.

The war has destroyed much of Gaza. Just look at the numbers. Gaza's pre-war population was 2.3 million. Almost all of them have been displaced. More than 37,000 people, that is roughly 1.7% of the enclave's population, have been killed, and over 86,000 people, that is roughly 3.7% of the population, wounded. Did this massive onslaught on the Palestinians help Israel meet its objective? On June 19, after 256 days of fighting, Rear Admiral Daniel Hagari, a spokesperson of the Israeli Defence Forces (IDF), said Hamas cannot be eliminated. "Hamas is an idea, Hamas is a party. It's rooted in the hearts of the people – any one who thinks we can eliminate Hamas [read Netanyahu] is wrong," he said.

Lack of victory

Israel wanted a quick and decisive victory against Hamas. It wanted to destroy Hamas's governing structures, defeat its highly-trained brigades, destroy its vast tunnel networks and kill its top leadership. Israel also wanted to free the over 240 hostages in Hamas custody, and bolster its deterrence that was weakened by the Hamas attack. However, after more than eight months of fighting, even the IDF questions the achievability of the objectives set by Mr. Netanyahu. But that is not the only bad news Israel is dealing with.

When Israel attacked Gaza, Hezbollah, Lebanon's powerful Iran-backed Shia militia, launched controlled attacks from southern Lebanon to Israel's Upper Galilee region on the northern border. Hezbollah's rocket attacks and shelling have displaced some 60,000 Israelis. Israel has carried out dozens of strikes in Lebanon targeting Hezbollah, but has stopped short of launching an all-out war. Israel faces a dilemma in the north.

The controlled aggression does little in deterring Hezbollah. The displaced cannot return to their homes unless there is a ceasefire. And, Hezbollah has made it clear that it will not cease fire unless there is a ceasefire in Gaza. Another option Israel has is to invade Lebanon. The last time Hezbollah and Israel fought a full-fledged

war was in 2006, which did not end well for Israel. And if, after eight months, Israel is still fighting Hamas in a besieged enclave of Gaza, a war with Hezbollah, which is deeply enmeshed into Lebanon's state and Shia society, will be a lot more dangerous and difficult.

The Iran challenge

The second problem is Iran. Israel had adopted a two-pronged military approach when it launched the Gaza war. The first was to pound Gaza, while the second was to attack Hamas's allies across the region. Besides Hezbollah, Israel carried out air strikes targeting Iranian military officers in Syria. But Israel miscalculated Iran's response when it attacked the Iranian embassy complex in Damascus on April 1, killing senior generals. Iran launched an unprecedented barrage of missiles and drones. So, if one of the key objectives of Mr. Netanyahu's war on Gaza was to bolster Israel's deterrence against non-state actors, one of its outcomes was to weaken Israel's conventional deterrence, which had been solid at least since 1973.

Moreover, Iran has signalled that it has been dramatically expanding its nuclear programme, with higher production of enriched uranium at two of its facilities, at Fordow and Natanz. Israel has always seen Iran's nuclear programme as its number one security threat.

Yet, Israel does not have any practical pathways to slow Iran down at this point. Israel itself is mired in Gaza and is stuck with a slow-burning war with Hezbollah. After Iran's attack on Israel on April 14, the Jewish nation has not attacked Iranian officers in other countries. It does not want an open war with Iran, at least for now. The United States, Israel's main ally, has made it clear that it does not want a war with Iran either. This gives Tehran a window of opportunity to fast track its nuclear programme. And Iran is at it.

The third problem is the setback to the Arab normalisation process. Before the October 7 attack, Israel was set to expand its regional cooperation with the Arab world. In 2020, it had already reached a breakthrough normalisation agreement with four Arab countries, including the United Arab Emirates. The U.S. was mediating talks between Israel and Saudi Arabia, which, in the words of the Kingdom's Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, were in a very advanced stage in September 2023. But today, the Saudi normalisation plan has been shelved. Riyadh says there will not be peace with Israel unless there is a clear path towards the creation of a Palestinian state "based on the 1967 border with East Jerusalem as its capital".

Fourth, Israel is facing global isolation for its conduct of the war. There have been two United Nations Security Council resolutions that called

The Palestine question is back in West Asia's geopolitics – with an emphasis on the two-state solution – marking a defeat for Israel

Glossing over unemployment, its high electoral price

The Indian economy requires 25 million-plus jobs to be generated over the next five years in order to employ all those who are presently unemployed in this nation.

The Narendra Modi government has claimed that the Indian economy, judged by GDP, grew at an impressively rapid pace of 8% last year. But even if that claim is true, it has not created an adequate number of appropriate jobs going by the current unemployment in India.

Using the latest official statistics, the unemployment rate for people aged 15 years or above may have dipped from 4.2% in 2021 to 3.1% in 2023, but this is not commensurate with the rapid GDP growth rate of 8%.

As seen in the results of the 2024 general election, it is clear that the Bharatiya Janata Party has paid the price for the setback, thus losing its majority in Parliament. It has had to form a coalition government with parties that follow a contrary economic ideology.

Inequality gap is widening

The gap between the haves and have-nots has widened in the last two decades. Moreover, throughout the past decade under BJP central rule, official statistics reveal a sharp rise in wealth inequality. About 1% of India's population now owns 40% of the country's wealth. This is terrible for any democratic population and state, if not for the stability of the nation.

This is what is graphically called "K-shaped" inequality in the economy, i.e., consumption/income for a few is rising, while for a large proportion of the less well-to-do population, it is sliding, i.e., it is decreasing



Subramanian Swamy

a former Union Minister of Commerce and Law and Justice

There have been few takers for the government's claims about GDP growth, reflected in the election results

'K'-wise. In public meetings, Prime Minister Modi has claimed that because of GDP growth in the last nine years of his tenure, the economy has lifted 25 crore people out of poverty (by investing heavily in capital expenditure) Government economists also claim that the Modi government has succeeded in establishing sustained and fast-paced economic growth, making people happy. This remains to be seen in the next three years.

In fact, the electoral outcome has raised questions about this claim which experts of the government vide news media had touted – that India is the "fastest-growing large economy in the world".

On the contrary, there are few takers for this claim in the electorate. This is now confirmed by the sharp fall in the bench strength of the BJP's Members of Parliament in the Lok Sabha. The decline has in fact been shattering for the party, which now has to rely on two – one State each – "regional" parties.

The BJP government's economic management needs to be overhauled. However, the recent announcement of the appointments of the cabinet Ministers dashes these hopes.

Growth could slip

The Modi government frequently claims that the 2023-24 GDP growth of 8.2% has come on top of the strong 7% growth in 2022-23. How this was calculated has not been disclosed.

India's growth in the last two years has been pushed via a significantly large Budget deficit for funding the government's massive capital expenditure. But this has not been done by structural investments in the industrial,

agricultural, and service sectors. It may be recalled that the GDP growth rate in the fourth quarter of 2019-20, fell from 8% to 3.8%. GDP growth rate in 2015-16, i.e., April 1, 2015 to March 31, 2016 when compared to April 1, 2014 to March 31, 2015, was about 8%. Each financial year has four quarters, namely, April 1-June 30, July 1-September 30, October 1-December 31, and January 1-March 31. In the pre-COVID-19 quarter, January 1, 2020 to March 31, 2020, when compared to January 1, 2019-March 31, 2019, GDP growth declined to a 3.4% annual equivalent year.

Hence, the 8.2% growth registered in 2023-24 by the Finance Ministry appears to be a flash in the pan. It is doubtful if it can be maintained in 2024-25. Indeed, those who study serious quantitative economics expect growth to slip further.

Need for a new strategy

During the last decade, this government's economists have frequently called for the "next generation of reforms" to accelerate national economic growth. It remains to be seen if this is possible as the BJP has lost its majority in Parliament and its allies do not have the same economic perspective as the BJP.

Moreover, in agriculture, 92% of the jobs are in the unorganised sector. In industry and services, 73% of the jobs created are in the small- and medium-informal sections. The government and formal private sector account for a mere 27% of jobs. Thus, India now needs a new long-term economic strategy – a tall order as the BJP lacks a cohesive majority in Parliament and has no economist to speak frankly to the relevant Ministers.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Politics, arrests

While one is in agreement with the reasoning of the Jharkhand High Court in the granting of bail to JMM leader Hemant Soren, one should also not forget the other side. It is accepted that politics in India is 'corrupted and criminalised'. That we have only a few from the political class in jail is another matter. The High Court's findings are subject to appeal. The High Court has also said that Mr. Soren may not be guilty. Which means that he could be guilty too. For the common man, his worry is

that probity and politics are poles apart. Finally, the allegation is that central agencies are harsh on the political adversaries of the ruling party. But this should not be cause for always labelling the actions of these agencies as biased.

P.R.V. Raja,
Pandalam, Kerala

Oath and language

Bansuri Swaraj, a newly elected Member of the Lok Sabha (BJP), was in the media limelight recently for having taken her oath in Parliament in Sanskrit. The grammatical gender of the

words in Ms. Swaraj's oath was masculine. The Lok Sabha Secretariat does not seem to have taken care to tailor the language to suit a lady. Though minor, this lapse is typical of the government's lackadaisical attitude and incompetence. While taking one's oath in an ancient and classical language, it must be ensured that the language is at least grammatically correct.

G.L. Krishna,
Bengaluru

Cigarette sales

I recently travelled from

Chennai to Kolkata, and again from Chennai to New Delhi by air. I found that at all these airports, cigarettes were being sold from kiosks near the boarding gates. There were also 'smoking rooms' next to them. In fact, the cigarette cartons in the sales kiosks are placed at a level where children can read the labels. There is also the strong tobacco odour leaking out of the 'smoking rooms'. When I called the 'grievance cell' at Chennai airport to complain, saying that many of us in the waiting area object to the presence of

the kiosk and the smoking room (the kiosk is outside gate 11, and obstructs the gate), the gentleman patronisingly told me that "many people have complained that they are not able to buy cigarettes and smoke in the airport". When I asked him how smoking can be promoted in an airport when the government has banned smoking in public places, he told me that they were acting within the authority of the law. I find it shocking that the government and/or airport managements are

promoting such a bad habit for a few measly rupees.

D. Indumathi,
Chennai

Farmer grievance

Cluster beans are being cultivated as a commercial crop on an extent of 10,000 acres in Kovilpatti, Thoothukudi district. When it comes to applying for crop loans and crop insurance, there are hurdles. The area under this crop is not recorded by the agriculture, horticulture and revenue departments.

A. Kaja Nazimudeen,
Eruvadi, Tirunelveli, Tamil Nadu

A tool to ensure complete voter anonymity

The Janata Dal (United) candidate from Sitamarhi Lok Sabha seat, Devesh Chandra Thakur, was in the news for 'breaching' the Model Code of Conduct (MCC) no longer in force and rekindling interest in a dormant writ petition (W.P.). Mr. Thakur was in a spot for saying, "Those (from Muslim and Yadav communities) who want to come can come, have tea and snacks, but don't expect any help" and thus explicitly suggesting that the two sections should not expect him to help in the redressal of their grievances as they had not supported him in the elections. Mr. Thakur's statement was a straightforward assertion of a transactional relationship that bordered on defiling democratic principles. It was against the constitutional spirit behind the relationship of the citizens and their elected representatives. What it implied was that he would overlook the interest of the Muslims and the Yadavs. While the JD(U) issued statements to blunt the condemnation that came his way, the Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD), which had been defeated in the constituency, asserted that a leader after winning an election becomes the representative of an area and that "he should work for everyone without categorising caste and community".

The EC's proposal
The cardinal spirit behind an impartial election is that the voter is able to cast his vote without the fear of retribution or feeling induced by the promise of a reward. It was in order to discourage the politics of vendetta or vote bargain that voter secrecy was embedded in Rule 56 of the Conduct of Election Rules, 1961, enjoining the returning officer to "reject a ballot paper if it bears any mark or writing by which the elector can be identified". Similarly, while counting, ballot papers of different ballot boxes were mixed to avoid group targeting of voters based on the



Ashok Lavasa
former Election Commissioner of India

The Election Commission has repeatedly proposed the use of totaliser to avoid identification of areas according to voting behaviour. But the government has said it does not serve a larger public interest

voting trends in a particular area. However, with the introduction of Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs), this 'mixing' cannot be done, which has led to demands of introducing a totaliser to avoid identification of areas according to their voting behaviour.

The totaliser as a technique to mask booth-level voting patterns was mooted in 2007 as a solution to the problem of post-election harassment of voters. It was examined and evolved by the authorised EVM manufacturers in consultation with the Technical Experts Committee of the Election Commission of India (ECI), and demonstrated in 2008 before political parties who had "no objection" to the use of totaliser. In March 2009, it was used on a trial basis in bye-elections to the Legislative Assembly of Meghalaya and Uttar Pradesh. Thereafter, the issue has shuttled between the ECI, government, and the Courts, with the government pussyfooting the proposal till 2014 and then not favouring it altogether.

Following the Madras High Court order of August 2011 in W.P. 11919/2011 directing the government to consider the ECI's recommendation of amending the Rules for introducing the totaliser, the government sought to ascertain the time required to fully deploy it. The EC said it would take about four months. Thereafter, there was a lull. In August 2013, the ECI again requested the government to amend the 1961 Rules.

In April 2014, W.P. 422/2014 Yogesh Gupta v. EC was filed before the Supreme Court, seeking a direction to the EC "to declare the results of every Parliamentary Constituency as a whole and to not declare results of every voting machine separately, so as to preserve the right of privacy in voting" since booth-wise declaration of results provided a "tool in the hands of the political parties to intimidate the voters". In its counter-affidavit filed in June 2014, the EC reaffirmed its commitment to the totaliser

whereupon the court sought to know why amendment to Rules was required and whether the EC could issue instructions for the use of totaliser under existing Rules. The EC reiterated that amendment of Rules was necessary.

Political parties' views
Meanwhile, in its 255th Report, the Law Commission of India endorsed the EC's proposal to introduce totaliser in counting of votes. However, in its affidavit in the Yogesh Gupta matter in February 2016, the government stated that the use of totaliser served no larger public interest. The EC expressed its "firm view" that using totalisers for counting of votes was "absolutely necessary" for protecting the interests of the voters. It held a meeting of recognised political parties for demonstration of totaliser in March 2016. The Bahujan Samaj Party, the Congress, and the Nationalist Congress Party supported the use of totaliser, the Communist Party of India (Marxist) advised a phased introduction, the CPI did not give a view, and the Bharatiya Janata Party opposed it. The EC conveyed the views of the parties to the government reaffirming its original proposal. In 2016, the government referred the matter to a group of ministers which concluded that revelation of booth-wise voting patterns would have a beneficial effect in increasing development activities.

In October 2017, another W.P. (C) No. 927/2017 Ashwini Kumar Upadhyay v. Union of India was filed before the Supreme Court, seeking "appropriate steps to use totaliser" for counting of votes. In this W.P. which is tagged with the earlier one, the EC again submitted that the time was ripe for introducing totaliser. The government counsel raised the issue of the possible leakage of data from the EVM. The matter remains dormant since March 2018. It is worth debating if technology will help us rise above our prejudices or proclivities.

The Kerala Left needs to look in the mirror

It cannot counter the Right by adopting the latter's playbook or by electoral engineering

STATE OF PLAY

Nissim Mannathukkaren



The 2024 Lok Sabha election results in Kerala should ring the alarm bells for the Left. Not just because the BJP won a historic first seat, but also because the NDA registered a 3.57%-point increase in vote share to 19.21%; and the BJP crossed 30% of the vote share in three Lok Sabha constituencies (from one in 2019), came first in 11 Assembly segments (from one in 2019), and second in nine segments (from seven in 2019). Some of this was at the expense of the Left strongholds. Nevertheless, this moment is not a mere electoral setback occasioned by anti-incumbency, public finance troubles of the CPI(M)-led government, and allegations of corruption against it.

The communist movement in Kerala is one of the most important mobilisations of the peasant and the working classes in the Global South. Its success was in how it tried to address together a variety of exclusions based on class, caste, and linguistic identities. This was achieved through struggles and entrenchment in the arena outside elections: in civil society and the cultural sphere. This hegemony of the Left "common sense" in Kerala society is what is being challenged with the rise of Hindutva.

This rise has been foretold in the non-electoral arena – for example, the fact that Kerala has had among the highest numbers of RSS shakhas in India. This has only accentuated in the recent years with their heightened activities around temples and festivals. Hindu nationalism, has followed, ironically, the Italian Marxist

philosopher Antonio Gramsci's prescription for communist revolutionaries in a capitalist society. That is, to be engaged in a "war of position", a long-drawn-out cultural struggle to counter the dominant ideology and gain spaces of influence for one's own weaker ideology. The rightwards shift of the cultural sphere is an outcome. Despite winning the 2021 State elections, the Left has been hard pressed to meet these challenges. The communist parties have de-radicalised since the achievement of major economic goals such as the land reforms. Their conversion into electoral machines means that mass movements and ideological struggles were given the short shrift.

The Sabarimala temple entry for women issue is an example where the Left, after initially seeking to counter the Right, had to soften its stance. Rather than proactively fashioning new ideological programmes, the Left has been reacting to the Right's rise producing vacillations and contradictions. Thus, it counters the popularity of Sangh Parivar's celebration of religious festivals like Janmashtami by organising its own "secular" processions on the same days, in which, on occasion, religious deities have slipped in. In order to offset its potential vote loss among the majority community, it takes up issues like that of Palestine. Howev-

er, it fails to call out the terror by Hamas against civilians.

The Left is also set back further by the development of authoritarian tendencies, and a personality cult around Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan. This is unprecedented in Kerala, and in the Indian Left who practise collective leadership along with institutionalised processes for internal democracy. These tendencies have translated into intolerance towards dissent through police cases against political leaders and journalists.

It would be catastrophic for the Left to believe that it can counter the Right by adopting the latter's playbook or by electoral engineering. It can only happen through a reinvigorated democracy in which the tasks of class, caste, and gender equality are completed. Dalits and Adivasis are still at the bottom of the socio-economic hierarchy of Kerala, belying the promise of communist equality. If the marginalised find the new imaginations offered by the Hindutva forces attractive, it is also located in secular disenchantments. In the present elections, amongst the OBC Ezhavas/Thiyyas, 32% voted for the NDA.

In 1996, the Left government had initiated the People's Plan, participatory planning from the bottom-up. Since then, the local governments have lost some of their critical powers. A reimagining of Kerala's welfare state requires a strengthening of its local democracy against destructive top-down development projects or economic populism, which again mirror the Right.

Nissim Mannathukkaren is Professor, International Development Studies, Dalhousie University, Canada

At the end of Pride Month, assessing the LGBTQIA+ communities' rights

The decriminalisation of Section 377 in 2018 was a huge victory for LGBTQIA+ communities, but the road towards equality before the law is long

DATA POINT

Nitika Francis

Every year, June is observed as Pride Month the world over. The contributions of members of the LGBTQIA+ communities are commemorated, and love, diversity, and acceptance are celebrated. This year, too, pride marches were held across India, not only in metropolises, but also in smaller towns.

The rights and status of the LGBTQIA+ communities vary across the world. **Map 1** shows the legal status of same-sex acts in different countries as of 2024. At present, as many as 59 countries penalise any expression of queerness. In countries such as Ghana and Indonesia, those engaging in homosexual activities are punished with imprisonment or worse, death.

While 79 countries have banned same-sex marriage, 37 have fully legalised it. **Map 2** shows the status of same-sex marriage in different countries around the world as of 2024.

A few countries have also left the communities unrecognised, rendering their status ambiguous. India falls under this category. Some have allowed same-sex couples to opt for civil unions. While the Supreme Court of India decriminalised homosexuality in 2018 by partially striking down Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code, the Indian queer communities' plea to the Court to legalise same-sex unions was rejected in October 2023. Indian courts have acknowledged same-sex couples' right to cohabitation.

Although being queer is not a crime in India any more, people who identify as queer still face discrimination, harassment, and exclusion. They are not afforded the legal aid necessary to protect themselves from discrimination. Transgender and intersex employees in India can seek legal re-

course in the face of discrimination on the basis of gender in hiring, promotion, termination, or harassment. The Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019, prohibits unfair treatment with regard to employment, education, healthcare, public facilities, residence, and more.

India is one of the four countries in the world that provides employee legal aid only on the basis of gender identity, including transgender persons. However, employees are not guaranteed any legal aid when discriminated against on the basis of sexual orientation. There is no means of legally registering or identifying one's sexuality. Legal aid is available on the basis of sexual orientation in 27 countries.

In 90 countries around the world, there are no legal protections available to queer employees. **Map 3** shows different countries' stances on employee discrimination on the basis of gender and sexuality, as of 2024.

In India, members of the LGBTQIA+ communities cannot be recognised as co-parents to an adopted child. However, as per the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015, a prospective adoptive parent is allowed to adopt a child irrespective of marital status.

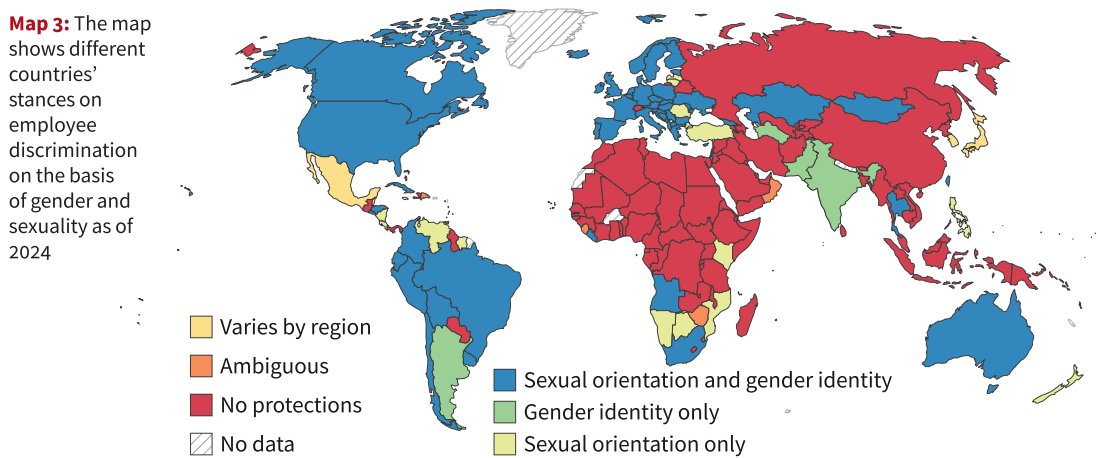
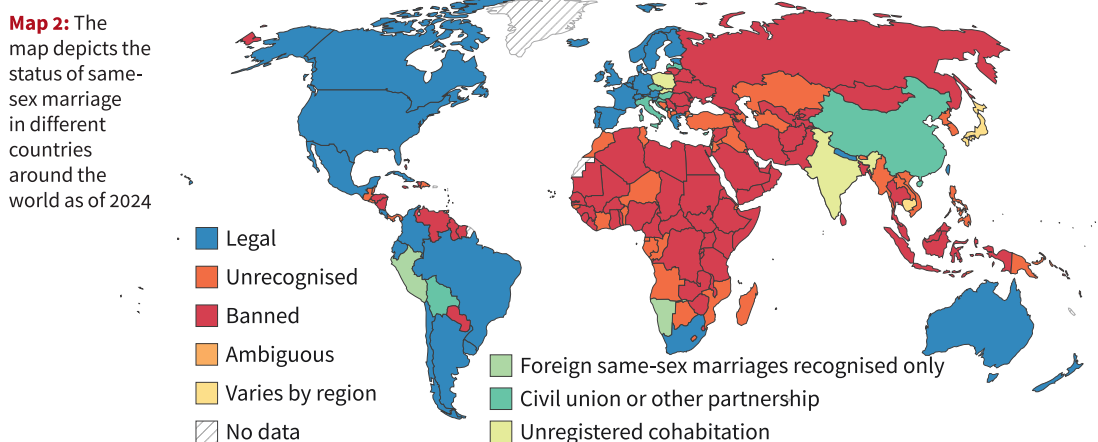
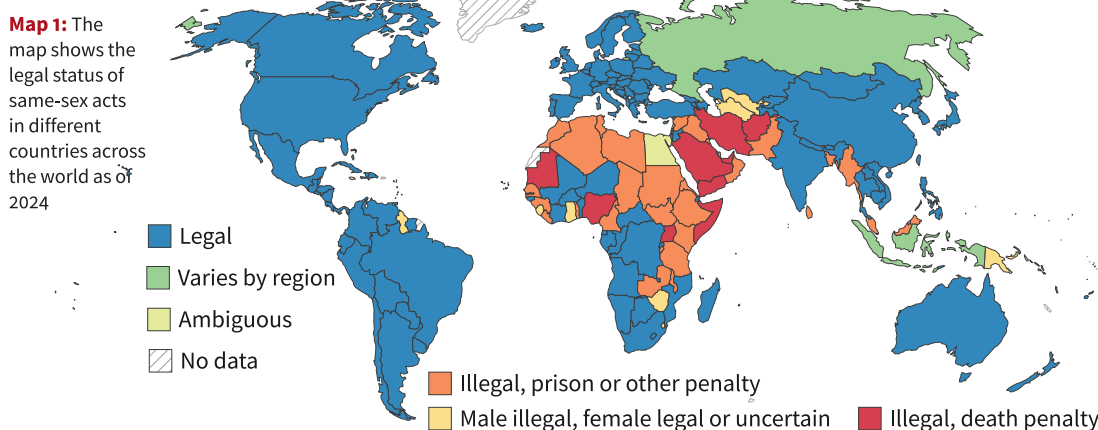
Currently, 39 countries around the world allow same-sex parents to adopt children, and 45 countries have banned the same. However, 100 countries have arrangements similar to India, wherein single parents are allowed to adopt children, with certain conditions.

The decriminalisation of Section 377 was undoubtedly a huge victory for the LGBTQIA+ communities in India.

However, queer people still struggle to fight for their constitutional rights, for acceptance in their families, for recognition and growth in their jobs, for equality and justice in their everyday lives and interactions, and overall inclusion.

Pride and prejudice

The maps were sourced from Our World in Data



FROM THE ARCHIVES

The Hindu

FIFTY YEARS AGO JULY 2, 1974

President Peron of Argentina dead

Buenos Aires, July 1: Gen. Peron, one of the most loved and hated figures in Latin American history, died in bed to-day at the age of 78 during his third term as Argentina's President. Vice-President Isabel Peron, who became acting President on Saturday and assumed her husband's mandate on his death, made the announcement in a brief emotional speech which she read over the nationwide radio as she fought back tears. By assuming the Presidency, Mrs. Peron, who is 43, became the first woman to head a government in male-oriented Latin America. Peron was one of the few Latin American strong men to capture the imagination of the world. He was first elected President in 1946 after taking part in a military coup three years earlier. He served 9 stormy years until he was thrown out by the army in 1955 in a bloody coup engineered by political foes in the middle classes, the Intelligentsia and the Roman Catholic Church. He barely escaped with his life, fleeing into exile aboard a Paraguayan gunboat. Yet 18 years later on June 20, 1973, at 77, Peron came home to thundering cheers from many of the same people who applauded his flight. His return was marred when violence broke out among the three million supporters who turned out to greet him. About 30 persons were killed and 500 wounded. His way home was paved by his party which won a crushing majority in free elections in March. Peron had been allowed back in the country in November 1972, but said then he would not run for President and returned to Spain. At that time he chose Hector J. Campora who as his handpicked candidate for the Presidency won the March elections by almost 50 per cent. Campora resigned on Peron's return so that Peron himself could run for the Presidency.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO JULY 2, 1924

Printing ink industry

Simla, July 2: The printing ink industry came up before the Tariff Board yesterday for protection. The Hooghly Ink Company which is stated to be the only concern which manufactures printing ink in substantial quantities in India, through Mr. Richardson, Managing Director, pressed for protection. The Company is a private limited company and there is no Indian capital nor are there Indians on the directorate.

Text & Context

THE HINDU

NEWS IN NUMBERS

The share of Kaziranga which is submerged in the Assam floods

43 in per cent. With worsening flood conditions in Assam, rising water levels have impacted 101 of the 233 forest camps at Kaziranga National Park and Tiger Reserve, according to a flood report. PTI

Market capitalisation of BSE-listed firms hit lifetime high

443 in ₹ lakh crore. The market capitalisation (Mcap) of BSE-listed firms hit a lifetime high, driven by a rebound in equities, where the benchmark Sensex ended at a new all-time peak. PTI

The increase in Aviation Turbine Fuel (ATF) price

1.2 in per cent. ATF price was hiked by ₹1,179 per kl to ₹96,148 per kl in Delhi in line with international oil price trends, according to a price notification of State-owned fuel retailers. PTI

The rainfall deficit recorded in the month of June in India

11 in per cent. India received 147.2 mm of rainfall against a normal of 165.3 mm for the month. June rainfall accounts for 15% of the total precipitation of 87 cm recorded during the monsoon season in the country. PTI

Number of deaths in violent attacks in Pakistan: CRSS

380 About 240 terror incidents and counter-terror operations were reported between April to June in Pakistan. PTI
COMPILED BY THE HINDU DATA TEAM

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Will the Hosur airport become a reality?

What are the challenges and obstacles to the Hosur airport project proposed by the Tamil Nadu government? Why is the project being proposed for Hosur? How can an airport gain clearance from the Civil Aviation Ministry? What is the process to be followed?

EXPLAINER

Sanjay Vijayakumar

The story so far:

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin announced in the legislative assembly plans for setting up an international airport on 2,000 acres of land, with the capacity to handle three crore passengers annually, in the industrial town of Hosur, which is 40 kms away from Bengaluru. While the airport has been a long standing demand of the industrialists in the area, one of the hurdles is that the concession agreement signed between the Centre and the Bangalore International Airport Ltd (BIAL), the operator of Kempegowda International Airport Bengaluru, does not allow for new or existing airports (except for Mysore and Hassan airports) within an aerial distance of 150 kms before 2033.

What is the significance of Hosur?

Hosur in Krishnagiri district is located on the border of Tamil Nadu and Karnataka. Hosur is situated at 3,000 metres above sea level and according to a report by online publisher Visual Capitalist in 2021, it was ranked 13 in the world among the list of cities with the fastest population growth with an annual growth rate of 5.38%. Hosur has emerged as a flourishing industrial town with prominent companies such as Tata Electronics, TVS, Ashok Leyland, Titan, and Rolls-Royce (IAMPL) establishing significant operations in the area. It has emerged as a nucleus for auto and electric vehicle manufacturing, advanced manufacturing, logistics and electronics. The industrial town is also strong in traditional sectors like floriculture and horticulture. Estimates suggest that around 3,000 MSMEs are present in the region, engaged in engineering fabrication, tooling, and polishing, among others.

The State Industries Promotion Corporation of Tamil Nadu Limited



ISTOCKPHOTO

(SIPCOT), the State government's nodal agency to promote industrial infrastructure, has established industrial parks in Hosur in two phases spread over 2,093 acres. SIPCOT is currently in the process of acquiring land of 3,382.84 acres for expanding and setting up new industrial parks in the region. Private industrial parks have also come up in the region. To meet the water requirement of the industries located in the Hosur area, SIPCOT is establishing a 20 megalitres per day Tertiary Treatment Reverse Osmosis (TTRO) plant at Kelavarapalli, which is expected to be completed by September.

According to Tamil Nadu Industries Minister T.R.B Rajaa, the airport project in Hosur will enhance connectivity and stimulate economic growth, benefiting not only Hosur but also neighbouring districts such as Dharmapuri and Salem.

He has also pointed out that the new airport will foster a twin-city ecosystem with Bengaluru, propelling growth in both Tamil Nadu and Karnataka.

What about the previous plan?

Hosur airport is owned by Taneja Aerospace and Aviation Limited. In 2023, replying to a question by Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) Rajya Sabha MP P. Wilson, the then Union Minister of State for Civil Aviation General (retired) V.K. Singh said in the first round of bidding under the Regional Connectivity Scheme (RCS)- Ude Desh Ka Aam Nagrik (UDAN), a bid was received for the routes Chennai-Hosur-Chennai and due to the concession agreement with BIAL the route was not awarded and Hosur airport was deleted from UDAN document for future round of bidding.

What does the Union Civil Aviation Ministry's guidelines state?

As per the present guidelines of the Civil Aviation Ministry, the regulator Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) while granting licence to operate a greenfield airport should take into account that no greenfield airport would be allowed within an aerial distance of 150 kms of an existing civilian airport. In case a greenfield airport is proposed to be set up within 150 kms of an existing civilian airport, the impact on the existing airport would be examined and such cases would be decided by the government on a case to case basis. Such an application shall be first considered by the Steering Committee, headed by the Secretary of Civil Aviation. After considering the application, the Steering Committee shall make a suitable recommendation to the Ministry of Civil Aviation. The Ministry shall place the matter before the Union Cabinet for its consideration and the DGCA would grant a licence only after their approval.

In 2017, the Centre granted in-principle approval for a greenfield airport at Jewar in Greater Noida based on the recommendations of the Steering Committee on Greenfield Airports. The Noida International Airport is located 72 kms from the Indira Gandhi International (IGI) Airport, Delhi and 65 kms from the Hindon Air Force station Ghaziabad. The Centre said the airport in Delhi NCR region will help decongest the IGI Airport and will serve the people of Delhi, Noida, Ghaziabad, Aligarh, Agra, and Faridabad.

What next?

Airport projects have a long gestation period to come on stream. Given that the DMK government is part of the Opposition alliance, it has to negotiate hard with the Centre to get the necessary relaxation in norms for setting up the airport, besides other regulatory and environmental clearances. Setting up the necessary supporting infrastructure for the airport is another challenge which needs to be overcome.

THE GIST

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin announced plans for setting up an international airport on 2,000 acres of land, with the capacity to handle three crore passengers annually, in the industrial town of Hosur, which is 40 kms away from Bengaluru.

As per the present guidelines of the Civil Aviation Ministry, no greenfield airport would be allowed within an aerial distance of 150 kms of an existing civilian airport.

Given that the DMK government is part of the Opposition alliance, it has to negotiate hard with the Centre to get the necessary relaxation in norms for setting up the airport.

What is on the agenda for the 16th Finance Commission?

How do other countries devolve funds to their local governments? Why is the Census significant?

Tikender Singh Panwar

The story so far:

The 16th Finance Commission (FC) has begun its work, established under Article 280 of the Indian Constitution, primarily focusing on the devolution of the consolidated fund. Since the 73rd and 74th constitutional amendments, local bodies have gained significant recognition within the federal system. These amendments introduced sub-clauses 280 (3) (bb) and (c), which mandate the FC to recommend measures to augment State consolidated funds for supporting panchayats and municipalities.

What about cities?

The National Commission on Urbanisation in the mid-80s described cities as "engines of growth." Although this view is somewhat narrow, the reality is that cities contribute around 66% of India's GDP and about 90% of total government revenues. Cities, thus, are an

important spatial zone for the overall development of the country. However, our economic scale is insufficient to meet rising needs. The World Bank estimates that \$840 billion is needed for basic urban infrastructure in the next decade.

Despite the efforts of five commissions since the 11th Finance Commission, financial devolution to cities remain inadequate. The fiscal health of municipalities is poor, affecting both city productivity and quality of life. Rapid urbanisation without appropriate fiscal action has adverse effects on development. Intergovernmental transfers (IGTs) to Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) in India are about 0.5% of GDP, much lower than the 2-5% typical of other developing nations. For instance, South Africa allocates 2.6%, Mexico 1.6%, the Philippines 2.5%, and Brazil 5.1% of their GDPs to their cities. Although IGTs make up about 40% of ULBs' total revenue, issues persist regarding their predictability, earmarking for vulnerable groups, and horizontal equity. IGTs are

crucial for ULBs, given their financial state and the need for stable support until their own revenues improve.

What about the taxation system?

The introduction of the Goods and Service Tax (GST) has reduced ULBs' tax revenue (excluding property tax) from about 23% in 2012-13 to around 9% in 2017-18. IGTs from States to ULBs are very low, with State Finance Commissions recommending only about 7% of States' own revenue in 2018-19. Increasing the quantum of IGTs as a percentage of GDP is necessary. Despite the 74th constitutional amendment's aim to financially strengthen ULBs, progress over three decades has fallen short.

The 13th Finance Commission observed that "parallel agencies and bodies are emasculating local governments both financially and operationally." Local governments require support from Union and State governments through funds, functionaries, and technical aid. However,

the growth of parallel agencies has distorted local governments' roles. Programs like the Member of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme and the Member of Legislative Assembly Local Area Development Scheme exacerbate this issue, distorting the federal structure.

How important is the Census?

In the absence of the 2021 Census, reliance on 2011 data is inadequate for evidence-based fiscal devolution. India has approximately 4,000 statutory towns and an equal number of Census towns, with an estimated 23,000 villages, all of which are effectively urban. These figures must be captured by the 16th FC, including the significant migration to Tier-2 and 3 cities.

Thus, the 15th FC's nine guiding principles require a revisit. Not all of them but reference to enhancement in property tax collection in tandem to the State's GST; maintenance of accounts; resource allocation for mitigating pollution; focus on primary health care, solid waste management, drinking water, etc., deserve attention. The 16th FC must consider India's urbanisation dynamism and ensure IGTs to urban areas are at least doubled. A McKinsey Global Institute report warns that if India continues investing in urban infrastructure at current rates, urban infrastructure will fall short, leading to water supply issues and untreated sewage.

Author is former Deputy Mayor, Shimla, and Member, Kerala Urban Commission.

THE GIST

Despite the efforts of five commissions since the 11th Finance Commission, financial devolution to cities remain inadequate. The fiscal health of municipalities is poor, affecting both city productivity and quality of life.

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The 16th FC must consider India's urbanisation dynamism and ensure IGTs to urban areas are at least doubled.

BUILDING BLOCKS



Old is gold: A close-up of one of two IMAX cameras seen at the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum in Washington. REUTERS

How cinema is captured and presented through the IMAX format

IMAX is one of the most popular film formats being employed in commercial filmmaking in cinema today; its continued use in the production pipelines of many major films, suggests that it is here to stay

Prathmesh Kher

Cinema has always been a home to spectacle. Most theatrically released cinematic works, especially till the development of digital photography, employed the use of 35 mm film stock to capture the stunning vistas and cinematic protagonists. For the bulk of its history, almost all movies were shot using this 35mm film. Most modern cinematic productions have since replaced the 35mm film stock with a digital sensor. But film purists argue that film stock provides for superior resolution.

Standard film stock is a photochemical emulsion with a total width of 35mm, which records images passing vertically through a camera. Some of that frame width needs to be used to accommodate sprocket holes, which are called perforations (or perfs, if you will), that pass the film through the camera. A standard 35mm film stock has four perforations. As must be self evident, a larger surface area on a piece of film would allow for more photographic information to be captured. This was made possible through the use of 70mm film stock. The expansive imagery of the American West in Raoul Walsh's 1930 film *The Big Trail* was brought to light through the use of 70mm film. But it wasn't until television started stealing viewers away from Hollywood in the 1950s that the industry recognised the benefit of making 70mm a major event.

This period led to the release of epics such as *Lawrence of Arabia* and *The Sound of Music* in the 1960s. The numbers bore out the impact that the 70mm format had with its visual resolution and superior sound quality.

It was in this period that Graeme Ferguson, Roman Kroitor, Robert Kerr, and William C. Shaw came together to develop what would become IMAX.

What is IMAX?

IMAX is a motion picture film format. It consists of a production pipeline of high-resolution cameras, film formats, projectors, and theatres. Developed in Canada in the 1970s, IMAX seeks to give the viewer an immersive movie-watching experience with its large screens. IMAX theatre screens have a tall aspect ratio of 1.43:1, meaning that the width of the screen is 1.9 times the height of the screen. The screens can be 18 by 24 metres in size, with the largest screen in Leonberg, Germany, measuring 38.8 metres by 21 metres.

The IMAX negative frame has a size of 70x48mm, nearly eight times the size of what a traditional cinema film stock can capture. The IMAX format uses 70 mm film run horizontally through the projector. In normal film projection theatres, a 35 mm or a 70 mm film is run vertically. Because of this horizontal orientation, the IMAX format produces images that can be screened at 8.3 times the size as a regular 35 mm film or 3.4 times as large as the regular 70 mm film. The larger the surface area of a piece of film, the more photographic information it will contain. This means that an IMAX image yields more detail in the image.

IMAX cameras are notably larger and bulkier compared to standard cinema cameras. This size is primarily due to the large film format they use. This larger film size allows for higher resolution and clarity. Digital IMAX cameras, while smaller than their film counterparts, are still larger than most standard digital cinema cameras due to their advanced sensors and technology. The IMAX film format provides an extremely high resolution vis-à-vis its 35mm counterpart. In fact, theoreticians estimate that a standard 35mm film would have a digital resolution of around 4k, whereas a standard 70mm film would resolve at around 8k. In comparison, the IMAX

format is estimated at having an equivalent digital resolution of 18k.

As a capture and storage medium, film can last indefinitely. This means that future generations could witness even more detail lurking within an IMAX frame when digital projection technology catches up.

Big screen, big business

The Dark Knight was the first major motion picture to be filmed with high-resolution IMAX cameras, and its billion dollar box office result along with its many award nominations, including for its cinematography, cemented IMAX's potential as a motion picture format. The success of Christopher Nolan's other movies, *The Dark Knight Rises*, *Interstellar*, *Dunkirk*, and his most recent *Oppenheimer*, all of which employed the IMAX format, have made its commercial potential evident. It has also sparked an interest in other filmmakers such as J.J. Abrams (*Star Wars: The Force Awakens*), Michael Bay (*Transformers: Revenge of the Fallen*) and Damien Chazelle (*First Man*) who also employed the format.

There is also a trend of conventionally shot films being upscaled to be projected on IMAX screens; the improved sound quality and visual appearance is supposed to enhance the viewing experience. IMAX has, in recent years, also ventured into digital filmmaking with its own slew of certified high-fidelity digital cameras that can be used to create IMAX-format films. The first film to employ such a camera was *Captain America: Civil War* following which many blockbuster movies including *Top Gun Maverick* as well as the *Dune* films were shot using this format. With films being converted to the IMAX format, the market seems to be saturating with the format. There is also concern that with such a vast stockpile of digital productions in their pipeline, the IMAX film format which is

what cemented its position in the first place might become a thing of the past. However, there are filmmakers such as Christopher Nolan, Jordan Peele, Ryan Coogler and others who continue to boost the IMAX film format.

Heavy lies the crown

As with all things in life, IMAX does come with its own downsides.

The first, and possibly the most evident, drawback is cost. IMAX film cameras are notoriously expensive to rent. This combined with the cost of buying and processing the amount of 65mm film, which because in IMAX's film runs horizontally, is also considerably higher. With 15 perforations per frame moving through the camera's gate 24 times per second, over 300 feet of 70mm film is required for every minute that is shot. The IMAX cameras are also incredibly noisy given that 15 perforations of film need to run through the camera much faster than a regular four perforations 35mm film. This makes it difficult if not impossible to record synchronous audio and forces filmmakers to do Automated Dialogue Replacement (ADR). This additional cost of dubbing the dialogue over is compounded by the bulkiness of the IMAX cameras. The heavy cameras were not designed to be handheld forcing filmmakers to use additional equipment such as a dolly, cranes, tripods, and other devices to mount the cumbersome IMAX camera.

However, given its increasing demand in tentpole films, IMAX has said it is working to improve the specifications on its camera technology. This would theoretically make their hulking cameras more mobile and also reduce its mechanical noise. These technical developments, as well as the continued use of the format in the production pipelines of many major films, suggests that IMAX is here to stay.



FROM THE ARCHIVES

Know your English

K. Subrahmanian

“Think up’ ‘think through’ (A. Nagpal).”
“‘Think up’ means ‘produce by thought, devise.’

I must think up a way of getting out of this place.

He has thought up a plan for eradicating malaria.

‘Think through’ means ‘reflect fully upon.’ When you think through something, you consider it fully.

I am sorry I have not thought the problem through.

I must think through the problem and then see if I can think up a solution to it.”

“Is it good to coin words?”

“We get tired of ordinary language and occasionally coin words to express some new concept. It is a human tendency and it is done by speakers of all languages. Sometimes we do it for fun, sometimes in all seriousness. Even children coin words to the surprise of adults. When a word is coined by a writer, he does it in order to fill a semantic gap. Sometimes it is given a warm welcome, often the cold shoulder. Some coinages survive and some do not. Ruskin coined the word ‘illth’ in the analogy of ‘wealth.’ ‘Wealth’ is from ‘weal’ which originally meant ‘well-being.’

Ruskin wanted to convey the opposite of ‘well-being’ by the word ‘illth.’ ‘Commonwealth’ literally means ‘common well-being.’ From ‘well-being,’ we get the modern meaning ‘riches.’ We tend to believe that our well-being depends largely on ‘riches’. Ruskin’s coinage ‘illth’ has not survived.

When ‘mob’ was used for the first time in the 18th century, it was severely attacked by writers like Swift.

When ‘implement’ and ‘contact’ were first used as a verb about 50 years ago, teachers and grammarians came down heavily on such usage. Now few are even aware that there was a chorus of criticism against the use of ‘implement’ and ‘contact’ as verbs. We are all the time contacting someone or other to find out whether something should be implemented or not. When ‘hopefully’ was used for the first time in the sense of ‘it is to be hoped,’ there was a howl of protest. It is used in this sense by a lot of people now. But it is still looked on with disfavour by some grammarians. After mentioning the meaning ‘it is hoped,’ dictionaries add ‘disp.’ to convey that this meaning is still disputed by some. Hopefully, the new meaning will be accepted soon without any dispute.

Coinages like ‘sexploitation’ and ‘sexpot’ meaning ‘the excessive exploitation of sex, especially commercially’ have entered the dictionary but not ‘sexitement’. Nobody can predict what coinages will survive and what not. Words are coined all the time. No living language is static. Some words die, some new words come into being and some words acquire an additional meaning or meanings. Also words with a good sense acquire a bad meaning and words with a bad meaning acquire a good meaning. That is, over a period, some words become exalted in meaning and some become degraded in meaning. Like human beings, words also have their ups and downs. More about this next week.

Published in The Hindu on July 21, 1992.

THE DAILY QUIZ

As the Parliament session starts, a quiz on the role of the Speaker and deputy Speaker

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

Venkataraghavan Srinivasan

QUESTION 1
Which Speaker of the Lok Sabha was the first to serve twice but neither for the full designated term?

QUESTION 2
Who was the first Speaker of the Lok Sabha to serve two terms?

QUESTION 3
Which former Speaker of the Lok Sabha later became the President of India?

QUESTION 4
In the event of the Speaker's office falling vacant, who presides over the sessions of the Lok Sabha?

QUESTION 5
In the Lok Sabha, can the Speaker vote for any legislative business?

QUESTION 6
Which politician from Tamil Nadu has served as the deputy Speaker of the Lok Sabha twice?



Visual question: Identify this politician. She was the first woman Speaker of Lok Sabha. FILE PHOTO

Questions and Answers to the previous day's daily quiz: 1. The first Tour de France was organised by this newspaper. **Ans: L'Auto**
2. The other two countries, apart from France, that hosts Grand Tour races. **Ans: Italy and Spain**
3. The reason why Tour de France will not finish on the iconic Champs-Élysées street in Paris in 2024. **Ans: Because Paris is hosting the Olympics**
4. The body which required women's World Tour races to have a maximum stage length of 160 km. **Ans: Union Cycliste Internationale**
5. The word used to describe groups of cyclists who ride close to or just behind each other. **Ans: Peloton**
Visual: Name this cyclist. **Ans: Marco Pantani**
Early Birds: Seema Das| Abhyuday Singh Bhadauria| Manjot Singh| K.N. Viswanathan

Word of the day

Febrile: of or relating to or characterised by fever

Synonym: feverish

Usage: *It was a febrile reaction caused by an allergen.*

Pronunciation: bit.ly/febrilepro

International Phonetic Alphabet: /ˈfebɹaɪl/

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

From Page One

New criminal laws will prioritise justice: Shah

The Home Minister said there was a "leak-proof" system to store data and accountability had been fixed for those who record the videos and upload the data.

The Bharatiya Nagrik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS) mandated compulsory audiovisual recording of search and seizure in each criminal case and mandatory forensic examination in all cases where an offence attracted punishment of seven years or more. The recordings would have to be submitted before the court electronically "without delay."

Addressing a press conference, the Minister said various misconceptions were being spread about the new criminal laws, which aimed to create confusion in the minds of public about these laws. He said every aspect of the new laws had been discussed extensively with different stakeholders for four years and no law in independent India had been discussed at such length.

"Many disputed provisions which were continuing from the British time and were creating problems for the people have been removed and new Sections have been added which are of relevance today," the Home Minister stated.

He said the crime on sedition, made by the British, had been abolished in the new laws. A new Section had been added for anti-national activities, under which there was a provision of severe punishment for those who damage the unity and integrity of India.

Mr. Shah said 99.9% police stations across the country had been computerised and the process of generating e-record had already started in 2019. He said that zero-FIR, e-FIR and charge sheet would be in a digital format.

He said forensic investigation was mandatory in offences punishable by seven years or more, which would help speed up justice and take the conviction rate up to 90%. Trained manpower would be required for this purpose and in the country, there would be more than 40,000 trained manpower after three years. The Home Minister said the Union Cabinet recently decided to set up campuses of Forensic Science University and establish six Central Forensic Laboratories in nine more States.

GST revenue growth slows to three-year low

From that kitty, the government had settled ₹36,224 crore to CGST and ₹30,269 crore to SGST. Compared to that settlement, June 2024 has seen a 9.3% rise in CGST and 10.8% in SGST apportioned from the IGST collections. Tax experts noted the slowdown in June's revenue growth relative to recent months. "However, overall GST collections have shown an encouraging trend over the last few months," said Pratik Jain, partner at PwC India. "Industry hopes that the trend will enable the GST Council to restart the rationalisation of GST's rate structure, as indicated in the Council's last meeting on June 22," he added.

Govt. undecided on deadline for boundaries

Union Home Minister Amit Shah informed the Lok Sabha last year that the Census and delimitation of constituencies would be conducted after the Lok Sabha election, but did not specify the year.

"States would also require five to six months to prepare the apparatus. Since it will be a digital Census, training will have to be given afresh for the entire process. If dates for freezing of administrative boundaries are not extended, the first phase of Census and an update of the National Population Register (NPR) can be done in 2025," the former Census official said.

The Janata Dal (United), a key ally of the ruling BJP, had demanded a caste census. On June 6, senior JD(U) leader K.C. Tyagi told *The Hindu*, "A caste census is being demanded by all. Bihar has paved the way for it. Even the Prime Minister did not oppose the caste census, so we will pursue it."

Medha Patkar gets jail term for 'defaming' L-G

"The offence entailed a maximum punishment of simple imprisonment of up to two years or fine or both," the court said.

Mr. Saxena was the president of the National Council of Civil Liberties. In 2000, the non-governmental organisation published an advertisement against Ms. Patkar's movement which opposed the construction of a dam on the Narmada river. In a press statement soon after, she said Mr. Saxena was a "coward" and not a "patriot".

Mr. Saxena approached a court in Ahmedabad which took cognisance of the offence. The case was moved to the Saket court in 2003 pursuant to the orders of the Supreme Court.

Convicting Ms. Patkar, the court said her actions were deliberate and malicious. She imputed that Mr. Saxena was an agent of the Government of Gujarat, which and her comments were a direct attack on the petitioner's personal character and loyalty to the nation.

The court said the accused had failed to provide any evidence to counter the claims that she did not intend or foresee the harm these imputations would cause to the complainant.

Will ensure complete synergy with Navy, Air Force, says Army chief

General Dwivedi says the Army faces unique operational challenges and to remain prepared for such threats, it is crucial that the soldiers are equipped with state-of-the-art weapons and technology and that new fighting strategies are evolved

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Chief of the Army Staff, General Upendra Dwivedi, on Monday said it would be his "endeavour to ensure that the Army is always ready to operate in the full spectrum of conflict, maintaining complete synergy with the Navy, Air Force, and other stakeholders".

General Dwivedi was speaking after inspecting a Guard of Honour on South Block lawns. "This will ensure that India's interests are secured, and we become a major pillar of nation-building to achieve the vision of Viksit Bharat-2047," he said.

'Evolving technology'

The geopolitical landscape is changing rapidly and technology is evolving at a very fast pace, General Dwivedi, who took over as the 30th Chief of the Army Staff on Sunday, said. "The Army faces unique operational challenges and to re-



General Upendra Dwivedi during a Guard of Honour, a day after taking charge as the 30th Chief of the Army Staff, at South Block in New Delhi on Monday. SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

main prepared for such threats and distinctive requirements, it is crucial that we continuously equip our soldiers with state-of-the-art weapons and technology and continue to evolve our war fighting strategies."

On the military modernisation under way, he said the Army was on the "path

to transformation" and aspired to be "atmanirbhar". To achieve this, he said, the Army would encourage indigenous initiatives and induct "maximum" war systems and equipment manufactured in the country.

"It will be my priority to ensure that the interests and welfare of all ranks

and defence civilians of the Army are looked after," he said.

"My responsibility towards veterans, *veer naris* and their families is a sacred commitment and I assure this extended family, my full support," the Army chief added.

General Dwivedi took over from General Manoj

Rahul, Rajnath spar in Parliament over compensation for Agniveers

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Agnipath scheme for the recruitment of soldiers, which was a major poll issue in the recently concluded Lok Sabha election, led to a heated exchange between Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi and Defence Minister Rajnath Singh in Parliament on Monday. Asking Mr. Gandhi not to mislead the House by "making wrong statements", Mr. Singh said the next of kin of Agniveers killed in the line of duty received a financial assistance of ₹1 crore.

"One Agniveer lost his life in a landmine blast but he is not called a 'martyr'. I call him a martyr but the Government of India does not call him a martyr. PM Modi does not call him a martyr - he calls him an Agniveer. His family will



Defence Minister Rajnath Singh speaks during the Lok Sabha session, in New Delhi on Monday. ANI

not get a pension. They won't get compensation. Agniveer is use-and-throw, like a labourer," Mr. Gandhi said. The exchange took place in Hindi.

Mr. Singh objected to Mr. Gandhi's statement. "Financial assistance of ₹1 crore is given to the family of the Agniveer who sacrifices his life while protecting our borders or during war," the Minister said.

"I am not wrong, sir," Mr. Gandhi said in response, and repeated, "I am not wrong, sir."

Agniveers are not entitled to pension and emoluments but will get a lump-sum package on the completion of four years of service. According to their terms of engagement, in the case of their demise as a battle casualty, the emoluments due to their next of kin include ₹48 lakh non-contributory insurance, *ex-gratia* of ₹44 lakh, 'Seva Nidhi' with 30% contributed by the Agniveer and an equal matching contribution from the government, and interest thereon. In ad-

dition, the next of kin receive pay for the balance tenure from the date of death to completion of four years (about ₹13 lakh), and a contribution of ₹8 lakh from the Armed Forces Battle Casualty Fund.

Mr. Gandhi said the scheme was creating a divide between soldiers. "One will get the name of a martyr, while one [the Agniveer] will not. One will get the pension, while the other will not. An Agniveer is not called a jawan. And then call yourself a patriot," he said.

Mr. Singh said direct communication had been established with many people, suggestions had been taken from 158 organisations, and then the scheme had been introduced.

Over the years, the Ministries of Defence and Home have reiterated that there is no official usage of the term 'martyr'.

Bengal Governor to meet victims of public flogging, seeks report

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI/KOLKATA

The public flogging of a couple in West Bengal's North Dinajpur district has sparked outrage, with Governor C.V. Ananda Bose seeking a report from Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee and the BJP accusing the ruling Trinamool Congress of "unleashing Taliban rule" in the State.

Mr. Bose will meet the victims of the attack on Tuesday.

The National Human Rights Commission said it has issued a notice to the West Bengal government and the State's police chief.

Tajimul Islam, a local Trinamool Congress leader, has been arrested in connection with the case. He was sent to police custody for five days.

"A horrific video has come to light from West Bengal, reminding us of the brutalities that exist only in theocracies. Be it

Sandeshkhali, Uttar Dinajpur or many other places, Didi's West Bengal is UNSAFE for women," BJP chief J.P. Nadda posted on X.

At a press conference, BJP national spokesperson Gaurav Bhatia questioned the "silence" of the INDIA bloc leaders on the issue.

"Law and order has completely collapsed in West Bengal," he alleged, demanding the resignation of Ms. Banerjee.

'Bad influence'

Meanwhile, Trinamool Congress MLA Hamidul Rahaman raised questions over the "character" of the woman who was mercilessly beaten up. "The woman also did commit a mistake, leaving her husband and children. She became corrupt," he said. Though the MLA admitted that some excesses had been done, he insisted that the woman was a "bad influence" on society.

Field evaluation trials of submarine bids under Project-75I complete

Dinakar Peri
NEW DELHI

The Navy's mega-submarine deal under Project-75I, estimated at over ₹43,000 crore, has crossed a major milestone in the process with the field evaluation trials (FET) - to check the compliance of the bids received - now complete. There are two contenders in the fray: Germany's Thyssenkrupp Marine Systems (TKMS) and Navantia of Spain.

While an Indian Navy team visited the TKMS shipyard in March for FET, the evaluation of Navantia's offer was conducted last week, officials confirmed.

The evaluation report will now be compiled and presented to the Defence Ministry, which will declare the technical complaint bids which is expected to take about two months, a defence official explained.

Diplomatic sources said that Navantia would be de-



Moving forward: Navantia of Spain has offered a vessel based on its new S80 class of submarines. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

monstrating the Air Independent Propulsion (AIP) system fitted in a submarine operating on the surface and not submerged and that the submerged performance would be demonstrated in due course.

The design offered by TKMS, which has partnered with Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL), is based on its highly successful Class 214 submarine as well as Class 212CD. Navantia, which has tied up with Larsen & Toubro, has offered a vessel based on its new S80 class

Bengal Governor seeks action against top police officers

The Hindu Bureau
KOLKATA

West Bengal Governor C.V. Ananda Bose has written to Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee demanding "appropriate punitive action in accordance with law" against Vineet Goyal, Commissioner of Police, Kolkata; Indira Mukherjee, Deputy Commissioner of Police; and the police contingent posted at the Raj Bhavan.

Referring to the allegations against him made by a Raj Bhavan employee, the Governor said that if the Constitution and the laws are not followed in matters concerning the Constitutional office of the Governor, it is dangerous and appalling to think of the procedure that would be adopted by the officers and his subordinates in cases involving the com-

mon man. The Kolkata Police had registered a case and constituted an eight-member Special Investigation Team to look into the allegations against the Governor.

The communication from the Raj Bhavan said that Ms. Mukherjee informed the details of the allegations and the action taken by the police.

"By such a brazen declaration, Smt. Indira Mukherjee has openly defied the Constitution and the laws, besides the judgments of the Hon'ble Supreme Court which has time and again held that there is a complete bar on initiation or continuation of any kind of criminal proceedings against a Governor," the letter said. The Governor also accused the Commissioner of engaging in unconstitutional acts.

NIA nod for Engineer Rashid to take oath as MP

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) on Monday gave consent for jailed Kashmiri leader Sheikh Abdul Rashid, aka Engineer Rashid, to take oath as a Member of Parliament.

The NIA's consent came a day prior to a Delhi court's hearing on Mr. Rashid's plea seeking bail to take oath as an MP. Additional Sessions Judge Chander Jit Singh is scheduled to pass an order on Tuesday regarding the interim bail plea filed by Mr. Rashid.

Advocate Vikhyat Oberoi told the media that the Central agency had agreed for Mr. Rashid to take oath on July 5. The agency had said he should be subject to certain restrictions such as not speaking to the media and that the entire process must get finished in a single day.

In jail since 2019, Mr. Rashid was charged by the NIA under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) in the alleged terror funding case.

BJP accuses Rahul Gandhi of lowering dignity of the office of LoP

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Mounting a sharp attack on Congress leader Rahul Gandhi for his speech in the Lok Sabha on Monday, Union Ministers Ashwini Vaishnav and Kiren Rijiju accused him of lowering the dignity of the office of the Leader of the Opposition in the House by making "extremely irresponsible" remarks and "unverified" claims.

They also accused Mr. Gandhi of insulting the entire Hindu community by terming them violent and "asatyavadi (untruthful)".

Mr. Vaishnav said the Congress leader who was previously used to enjoying power without responsibility, now held a responsible post but was still making "most irresponsible statements". He said Mr. Gandhi's claims about compensation to the people affected in Ayodhya were untrue, as the State government's data clearly showed that over ₹1,253 crore had been given to the local shopkeepers and others and necessary relocations also done. The Minister said that Mr. Gandhi behaved in an "irresponsible manner" in his comments on the Chair of the Speaker, alleging that the Congress had always attempted to weaken the constitutional scheme of things.

At a press conference, Mr. Rijiju alleged that the Congress leader's utterances reduced the level of debate on Monday. He said that despite repeated reminders citing the rules, Mr. Gandhi had been showing his back towards the Chair and was addressing his MPs instead.

Mr. Vaishnav said the most worrisome aspect of Mr. Gandhi's speech was the allegation that the whole Hindu community was violent and untruthful.

Rahul leads attack against BJP for 'spreading violence, hate'

In his maiden speech as Leader of the Opposition, he raises NEET, Manipur violence, price rise, and unemployment; PM, Ministers interrupt speech lasting over one hour and 40 minutes, accuse him of insulting Hindus, misleading House

Sandeep Phukan
NEW DELHI

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's maiden speech as Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha on Monday, during the Motion of Thanks to the President for her address to the joint sitting of Parliament, prompted Prime Minister Narendra Modi to retort that Mr. Gandhi had insulted Hindus by calling them violent.

Mr. Gandhi had targeted the BJP by saying "those who call themselves Hindus indulge in hate and violence round the clock". "The issue is a serious one; to call the entire Hindu community violent is serious," Mr. Modi interjected.

Hitting back, Mr. Gandhi said, "Narendra Modi ji is not the entire Hindu community, the BJP is not the entire Hindu community, the RSS is not the entire Hindu community."



Hitting out: Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi speaking in the House on Monday. PTI

The Prime Minister, who sat through most parts of the Opposition leader's speech, intervened twice.

Taking a dig at Mr. Gandhi's comment that Ministers do not greet him "out of fear of Modi ji," he said democracy and the Constitution had taught him to take the post of Leader of the Opposition seriously.

Mr. Gandhi took a swipe at the Prime Minister for being a "non-biological

being, referring to an interview of Mr. Modi. The speech, which stretched over one hour and 40 minutes, was marked with confrontation, interruptions and interjections from senior Ministers, besides the Prime Minister.

All the Ministers alleged that the Opposition leader was misleading the House, and countered Mr. Gandhi.

Holding up a photo of Lord Shiva, a combative Mr. Gandhi started his speech by taking on the

Hindutva plank of the BJP, and said his own party's symbol — the hand — was like the *abhay mudra* of Lord Shiva and it had resonance with all religions including Islam, Sikhism, Christianity, Buddhism and Jainism. He also displayed photos of Guru Nanak and Jesus Christ.

Alleging that the Opposition leader had "categorically" called Hindus a "violent community", Union Home Minister Amit Shah said, "Crores of people take pride in identifying themselves as Hindus, so he [Mr. Gandhi] should apologise to the whole country."

The Home Minister urged Speaker Om Birla not to be indulgent towards the Opposition leader beyond what rules permitted, and sought protection of the Chair while pressing for authentication of the statements Mr. Gandhi made on the floor of the House.

The debate witnessed a

sharp exchange between Mr. Birla and Mr. Gandhi, who asked why the Speaker had bowed before Mr. Modi.

Mr. Birla said, "Prime Minister is the Leader of the House. My culture and traditions say I should bow to those who are elders and those who are equal should be treated equally." The Congress leader accused the BJP of launching "systematic attacks" on the Constitution, threatening minorities and spreading hatred and violence.

Asserting that two crore students have been affected by 70 paper leaks in the past seven years including the latest NEET controversy, Mr. Gandhi said, "The students do not believe in the exam because they feel that it is for the rich people and there is no place in it for meritorious students."

He also spoke about the Agniveer scheme, Manipur and targeted the government over price rise and unemployment.

Kharge targets PM, RSS in Rajya Sabha; remarks expunged

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI



Mallikarjun Kharge

The Leader of the Opposition in the Rajya Sabha, Mallikarjun Kharge, on Monday attacked Prime Minister Narendra Modi for his election speeches, and criticised the workings of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, the ideological parent of the Bharatiya Janata Party.

Rajya Sabha Chairperson Jagdeep Dhankhar expunged most of the remarks made against Mr. Modi and the RSS.

Calling the RSS "an organisation engaged in working for the nation", Mr. Dhankhar asked, "Is it a crime to be a member of an organisation?" "You are saying a particular person is a member of the RSS. Is that in itself a crime?"

Mr. Kharge was interrupted several times by the Treasury benches during the course of his 90-minute speech on the Motion of Thanks to the President for her address to the joint sitting of Parliament.

On Manipur conflict

He attacked the government on its failure to address the ethnic conflict in Manipur, and questioned the Prime Minister for not visiting the State even once, while he had the time to visit 14 foreign countries in the past year.

The Congress president demanded a caste census, an investigation into the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (NEET) issue, and called for a withdrawal of the Agnipath scheme.

Mr. Kharge mentioned comments made by Mr. Modi in the run-up to the 2024 Lok Sabha election, presenting data on the number of times the latter had referred to "Muslims" and "Pakistan". Mr. Dhankhar asked him to authenticate his assertions and re-

refused to accept the newspaper clippings the Congress leader showed to buttress his points.

Mr. Kharge was backed by his party colleague and former Union Finance Minister P. Chidambaram, who asked how an Opposition MP could authenticate what the Prime Minister had said other than by citing news reports.

Congress leader Sonia Gandhi concurred as she thumped the desk.

The Chair, however, did not accept the arguments, and expunged the remarks made by Mr. Kharge from the records.

The Leader of the Opposition insisted that he was only seeking to highlight the divisive nature of the speeches delivered by the Prime Minister. He also said no other Prime Minister before Mr. Modi had ever made such comments.

Mr. Kharge cited a remark by RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat on Manipur, but that too was expunged, with Mr. Dhankhar saying the Congress leader was contradicting himself.

Leader of the House and BJP president J.P. Nadda said the remarks made by Mr. Kharge against the RSS were regrettable.

Mr. Kharge raised the issue of the relocation of statues of prominent personalities, including Mahatma Gandhi and Chhatrapati Shivaji, on the Parliament premises.

Third term is for stability, development: BJP

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Former Union Minister and MP Anurag Thakur on Monday said the mandate for the BJP's third term in office was one for stability and development.

Opening the debate in the Lok Sabha on the Motion of Thanks to the President for her address to the joint sitting of Parliament, Mr. Thakur said India was once a fragile economy; in the past 10 years, the country had become the world's fifth-largest and also the fastest-growing economy.

The BJP MP also said

that India was, is and will remain "Sanatan".

Even as he congratulated Rahul Gandhi for becoming the Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Thakur said that the Congress leader now had power with responsibility and "absentee landlordism will not work". "Will he sit in Lok Sabha all day?... he is not there (even) now," the BJP leader said.

Mr. Gandhi responded to Mr. Thakur's comments later during his speech.

In her maiden speech in the Lok Sabha, BJP MP Bansuri Swaraj said: "The path-breaking initiatives



Anurag Thakur

helped the NDA win a majority for a third term. The Opposition, which imposed Emergency... which murdered democracy, the same Opposition members are creating a constitutional crisis in Delhi because Arvind Kejriwal is adamant

that he will not leave the chair and run the government from jail."

Rajiv Ranjan Singh of the Janata Dal(U) accused the Opposition of attacking constitutional positions in the country.

From the Opposition benches, Congress leader Manish Tewari spoke on the new criminal laws, and said that they would establish a police state in the country. He said that these laws had been passed when 146 MPs had been suspended from both Houses. "Thus, they do not reflect the collective wisdom of both the Houses."

DMK leader A. Raja questioned the government on its claim, through the President's address, that it had won a majority with 240 seats.

"I do not know where the maths has been taught to them that 240 is majority and they are claiming it through the President."

He said there was a difference between the Emergency and the rule of Prime Minister Narendra Modi as Indira Gandhi had apologised for, and regretted, her decision while what this government was doing was "complete naked fascism".

Opposition criticises govt. over economy, attacks on minorities

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Opposition MPs in the Rajya Sabha targeted the government over management of economy, price rise and continuing attacks on minorities during their speeches on Monday on the Motion of Thanks to the President for her address to the joint sitting of Parliament. National Democratic Alliance (NDA) MPs countered this by saying that people reiterated their faith in Prime Minister Narendra Modi by electing the NDA again.

After a speech made by Opposition leader Mallikarjun Kharge, Trinamool Congress MP Jawhar Sircar continued the attack against the Centre, and said inequality had increased in the past 10 years. He said a few big businessmen were "nourished under the NDA" and the poor became more poor during this time.

He demanded that the Centre stop the implementation of new criminal laws as they were passed without proper discussion.

YSR Congress Party MP Media Raghunatha Reddy welcomed the President's speech, and urged the Centre to intervene to stop the alleged attacks against his party's cadre.

Communist Party of India (CPI) MP Binoy Viswam

Parliament hails Indian cricket team's victory

NEW DELHI

Both Houses of Parliament on Monday congratulated the cricket team for winning the T20 World Cup. Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla said youngsters would derive inspiration from the victory. "Such historic accomplishments inspire every citizen to dream big," Rajya Sabha Chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar said. PTI

said the BJP-led government worked with an "upper caste" mindset.

Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam MP Tiruchi Siva said the people had given a clear verdict and the government could not bulldoze Bills as it was doing earlier. He alleged that the exit poll results led to a loss of around ₹30 lakh crore to stock market investors and it was a "very big economic scam". He said a stock market fluctuation was created artificially and people had invested following the statements of "PM Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah predicting a new high" after June 4.

Nationalist Congress Party leader Pratul Patel said corruption had decreased in the past 10 years.

BJP paid the price for throttling my voice: Mahua

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Trinamool Congress MP Mahua Moitra, who was expelled from the previous Lok Sabha, said on Monday that the BJP had paid a heavy price for throttling the voice of one MP.

Participating in the debate to thank the President for her address, Ms. Moitra said: "I lost my membership. I lost my house. I also lost my uterus in an operation. But you know what I gained? I gained what Rahul Gandhi said: the freedom of not fearing you! I don't fear you, your agencies, vicious trolls, your Godi [lapdog] media. I will see the end of you."

The MP underwent a hysterectomy last year around the time she was asked to vacate her house after her expulsion.

In a fiery comeback speech on Monday, she said the BJP paid a heavy price for throttling her voice which led to loss of 63 of its MPs in the Lok Sabha election. She added that now they would not be able to treat the Opposition the way they treated it during the last session.

"The BJP's 'raj tantra' has been reduced by the 'lok tantra' of this country. This is not a stable government. It depends on multiple allies who have a history of U-turns," she said.

SOUTHERN POWER DISTRIBUTION COMPANY OF TELANGANA LIMITED
e-Procurement Notice for (Paper Notification)
TGSPPCL intends to float tender for the work of "Supply and erection of AMR (Automatic Meter Reading) System for the 11 KV Rural Feeders in all the Non-GHMC circles in TGSPPCL, on e-procurement platform.
For further details of the above tender, please visit www.tgsppcl.com and www.tender.telangana.gov.in
R.O.No.: 137/PP-CL-AGENCY/ADVT/1/2024-25, Date: 01.07.2024 TGSPPCL

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
DEPARTMENT OF SPACE
HUMAN SPACE FLIGHT CENTRE (HSFC),
CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE GROUP**
Antariksh Bhavan, Bengaluru - 560094, Ph:080-22172614/261315610
e-Tender Notice No.: HSFC/CMG/CAP/2(10)/Comp/114/2024-25 Dt: 01.07.2024

BRIEF NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER
On behalf of the President of India, online item rate tenders are invited through E-tendering for the following work.

Title of work	Construction of Gaganyaan Integration and Checkout Facility for HSFC at Devanahalli, Bengaluru (Civil, PH, Electrical & AC works)
Estimated Cost put to tender	Rs. 4691.00 Lakhs
Period of Completion in months reckoned from the 15th day of date of issue of work order	(22) Twenty Two months
Period during which the tender documents can be requested	From: 11:00 Hrs on 02.07.2024 to 23:30 Hrs on 23.07.2024
Period during which the tender documents can be downloaded	From: 11:10 Hrs on 02.07.2024 to 23:59 Hrs on 23.07.2024
Bid clarifications	From: 11:30 Hrs on 02.07.2024 to 17:00 Hrs on 24.07.2024
Reply to Bid clarification	Up to 17:00 Hrs on 26.07.2024
Last date & time for receipt of tenders	Up to 11:00 Hrs on 29.07.2024
Due date & time of opening of tenders (Technical Bid)	11:30 Hrs on 29.07.2024
Earnest Money Deposit EMD	Rs. 56,91,000/- (Rupees Fifty Six lakhs Ninety One Thousand only)

Interested tenderers may please refer Detailed Notice Inviting E-Tender (E-NIT) for eligibility criteria and other details, which can be downloaded from website: www.tenderwizard.com/ISRO
Sd/- Head CMD, CMG, HSFC.

**Government of Punjab
Department of Higher Education**
**Appointment of Vice-Chancellor of Punjabi University, Patiala
(A State Public University Established under Act 1961)**
Punjabi University, Patiala is an institution of excellence in higher learning and research. Punjabi University, Patiala established in 1961 is a premier institution of Punjab with more than 53,700 Students and 63 teaching and research departments, 16 Regional Campus/Constituent Colleges and about 258 affiliated Colleges.
To apply for the position of Vice Chancellor, the following UGC qualifications will be applicable:-
• A person possessing the highest level of competence, integrity, morals and institutional commitment is to be appointed as Vice-Chancellor. The person to be appointed as a Vice-Chancellor should be a distinguished academician, with a minimum of ten years' of experience as Professor in a University or ten years' of experience in a reputed research and/or academic administrative organization with proof of having demonstrated academic leadership.
• The age of the applicant should not be more than 67 years as on the closing date of receipt of application.
• The appointment shall be for a period of three years.
Procedure for appointment
• The appointment will be made from a panel of names recommended by the Search-Cum-Selection Committee.
• Reputed academicians may also nominate the name of the candidates for the post of Vice-Chancellor.
• The search-cum-selection committee may consider the name of any academician who may not have even applied and who fulfills the requisite qualifications for the post of Vice Chancellor.
• The Advertisement and Format of Application are available at Department of Higher Education Website (<https://pbhe.punjab.gov.in>) and University Website (<https://www.punjabiversity.ac.in>).
• Applications of eligible individuals received by post through candidates/nominators, in the prescribed proforma shall be considered. Such applications should reach by **22.07.2024 at 4:00 P.M.** by Registered/Speed Post to:
**Secretary, Higher Education
Government of Punjab
Room No. 710, Seventh Floor,
Punjab Civil Secretariat-2
Chandigarh (0172-2742691)**
*Application for the post of Vice-Chancellor, Punjabi University, Patiala, should be superscribed on the envelope. The application should reach the above address on or before 4:00 P.M on 22.07.2024.
This department is not responsible for postal delay.
**Secretary Higher Education
Government of Punjab**
NA/12/23795/2023/35190

एनएमडीसी
NMDC LIMITED
(A Government of India Enterprise)
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NOTICE FOR INVITING TENDER
Tender are invited for the following items for Bacheli Complex Post Bacheli - 494553 Dist. Dantewada (CG) as per details furnished in the Tender documents.

Description of item	Display & Download of Tender document	Last Date/ Time for submission of Offer	Time of Tender Opening	Tender Fees in Rs.	EMD (in Rs.)
Open Tender No: NMDC/Bacheli/ Material Management/2/24-25/ET: 263 Date: 02.07.2024					
Supply of Emergency Medicines for a period of ONE year from the date of Contract (Further extendable by ONE more year) to our NMDC APOLLO CENTRAL HOSPITAL, BACHELI	02.07.2024 to 23.07.2024 upto 3:00 PM	23.07.2024 upto 3:00 PM	23.07.2024 upto 3:30 PM	NII	Rs. 2,00,000/-

The detailed information of the tenders can be obtained from our website <http://www.nmdc.co.in> under Tender Section, Central Public Procurement (CPP) portal www.eprocure.gov.in and MSTC portal <https://www.mstcecommerce.com/>. Bidder may submit their offer through ON-LINE Tender ON MSTC PORTAL only.
THE PROSPECTIVE BIDDERS SHOULD DOWNLOAD THE TENDER DOCUMENTS AND SUBMIT THE ONLINE OFFER THROUGH MSTC PORTAL ONLY WITHIN THE DUE DATE AS MENTIONED ABOVE.
Note : Any addendum/corrigendum/bid clarifications/time extension shall be issued on the above said websites only & will not be published separate. Prospective Bidders should visit the above websites from time to time to note the corrigendum, if any, **contact for further query on 07857-230751, 09406489851**
Dy.General Manager (Materials)

INBRIEF



Delhi HC orders RS MP to pay ₹50 lakh to ex-diplomat

The Delhi High Court on Monday directed Trinamool Congress leader and Rajya Sabha Member of Parliament Saket Gokhale to pay ₹50 lakh to Union Minister Hardeep Puri's wife and former Indian diplomat, Lakshmi Puri, for his defamatory posts on X. Mr. Gokhale had in June 2021 questioned how Ms. Puri could have bought a house for 1.6 million Swiss Francs in Geneva. The court noted "allegations of financial impropriety dent the very foundations of a person's reputation. This is more so if the person has occupied, or is associated with another person who occupies, high public office".

CBI books former HEC MD and others for corruption

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has registered a corruption case against a former chairman-cum-managing director of Heavy Engineering Corporation (HEC) Limited, Avijit Ghosh, his two junior colleagues and others. The First Information Report has been instituted based on the findings that a preliminary enquiry initiated against Mr. Ghosh and others to probe the allegation that in 2015-2019 they entered into a criminal conspiracy with CNIITMASH, a joint stock company of Russia, with the intention to cheat government exchequer by floating manipulated Expression of Interest (Eoi).

Attack on Muslims increased after Lok Sabha polls: CPI(M)

Flagging the attacks on minorities over the past couple of weeks, the CPI(M) Central Committee in a statement at the end of a two-day meeting in Delhi said that "communal assaults" have sharpened after the Lok Sabha results, where the BJP fell short of majority. Condemning the attacks, the Central Committee called on party units to hold protests against such incidents. "Such sharpening of communal assaults following the reversals suffered by the BJP highlight the fact that the Hindutva communal forces are intensifying their attempts at polarisation with a renewed vengeance," the committee said.

India, Pak. exchange lists of civilian prisoners, fishermen

India and Pakistan on Monday exchanged the lists of civilian prisoners and fishermen in each other's custody, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said and added that 2,639 Indian fishermen and 71 civilian prisoners have been repatriated from Pakistan since 2014 as a result of New Delhi's sustained efforts. Under the provisions of the bilateral Agreement on Consular Access 2008, such lists are exchanged every year on January 1 and July 1, the MEA said in a statement. "India and Pakistan today exchanged, through diplomatic channels simultaneously at New Delhi and Islamabad, the lists of civilian prisoners and fishermen in each other's custody," it said.

NEET retest result published; all candidates get new ranks

Only 812 turned up for the retest conducted for 1,563 candidates; their new scores and withdrawal of grace marks have led to a change in ranks of all; many continue to complain of rank inflation

Maitri Porecha
NEW DELHI

The retest of the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (NEET) for admission to undergraduate medical programmes conducted by the National Testing Agency (NTA) on the orders of the Supreme Court has hardly made a dent in the overall ranks of the larger pool of aspirants.

After the NTA came under fire for arbitrarily awarding grace marks, the agency said it would withdraw these and issue a retest option for 1,563 candidates, of which only 812 turned up for the test on June 23.

The scores were declared on June 30, and withdrawal of grace marks and the retest scores have led to a revision of ranks for all the over 23 lakh candidates.

Nitin Sinmar, 21, who gave his fourth attempt at NEET, scored 665 marks out of 720 for which he had



Stir continues: Students protest against the NTA and NEET at Jantar Mantar in New Delhi on Monday. SHASHI SHEKHAR KASHYAP

got the 17,495th rank. After the revised ranks were uploaded on the NTA website, his rank was revised up by 26 positions to 17,469.

He said it did not make much of a difference. "This is because in my third attempt, I had scored 635 out of 720 and my rank was 11,880. This year, even with a better score, my rank has slipped 5,589 positions," he said.

"At this rank, I will not get admission in a good

medical college in the State quota in the first round."

Tushar Sen, 17, who scored 640 out of 720, was shocked to see that his rank was 39,428 and even after the revised ranks were announced, it improved by only 38 positions.

"According to last year's records, I was expecting my rank to be between 8,000 and 9,000. Even if my rank had changed by 500 or 600 positions, then it would have been helpful,

but such a small revision does not make a difference," Mr. Sen said. He was expecting admission in a good State medical college in Haryana but has now lost hope.

Krishan Sharma, parent of an aggrieved NEET candidate, said it is important that the Education Ministry and the NTA should put the data of the top 50,000 candidates in the public domain.

"We want to analyse if the toppers are concentrated in clusters or are randomised across centres," Dr. Sharma said.

A section of parents demand that the data of candidates who applied for NEET when a special window was opened for the third time, be made public. "We believe that approximately 24,000 more candidates were squeezed in when a special window was created at the end before the NEET-UG was due. We want their result data analysed separately," Dr. Sharma said.

Motorcycle theft in Gwalior is first case registered under BNS

Mehul Malpani
BHOPAL

Soon after the Bharatiya Nyay Sanhita (BNS) came into effect on Monday, a motorcycle theft in Madhya Pradesh's Gwalior district became the first case to be registered under the new criminal code, Union Home Minister Amit Shah said.

According to the local police, an FIR under Section 303(2) [theft] of the BNS was filed at 12.24 a.m. at the Hajira police station at Gwalior, based on a complaint given at 12.15 a.m.

Section 303 reads: "Whoever, intending to take dishonestly any movable property out of the possession of any person without that person's consent, moves that property in order to such taking, is said to commit theft."

Union Home Minister Amit Shah, at a press conference in Delhi, also confirmed that the first case under the BNS was filed at Gwalior.

Three new criminal laws, including the BNS, came into effect on Mon-

Three new criminal laws, including the BNS, came into effect on July 1, replacing the British-era laws

day and replaced the British-era laws. The BNS replaces the Indian Penal Code, the Bharatiya Nagrik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS) replaces the Code of Criminal Procedure (Cr.PC), and the Bharatiya Sakshya Adhiniyam (BSA) replaces the Indian Evidence Act.

Gwalior Superintendent of Police Dharmvir Singh told *The Hindu* that a motorcycle was allegedly stolen in the Hajira area between 12.05 a.m. and 12.10 a.m. and a case was registered regarding the same.

Mr. Singh said that the police is currently working to locate the stolen vehicle and nab the accused. As per the FIR of the case, Saurabh Narvariya filed a complaint regarding the theft of his bike worth ₹1.80 lakh.

Mr. Narvariya said the motorcycle was stolen from outside his house.

Bombay HC hears petitions against fact-check unit

The Hindu Bureau
MUMBAI

The Bombay High Court on Monday began hearing arguments presented by Maharashtra along with Solicitor-General Tushar Mehta on the IT Amendment Rules, 2021, which were challenged by satirist Kunal Kamra, the Editors Guild of India, the Association of Indian Magazines, and the News Broadcasters and Digital Association, seeking a stay on the notification of formation of a fact-check unit (FCU).

Tie-breaker judge, Justice A.S Chandurkar, heard the arguments by Mr. Mehta who stressed that the FCU identifies content as fake and the intermediary but did not remove it. "A disclaimer should be put to inform the users, and if they do neither, the only consequence is that the aggrieved party must join the court where defence is available. Fact check is a known phenomenon. Private companies have it, can the government have it



too? The answer is not difficult. This is a very clear law that the government can only say that it is false or misleading about government. The government is not the arbitrator. The intermediary will take the call. The government will say that as per my records whether the said content is wrong or not."

Mr. Mehta emphasised that the government wanted the users to have remedies for defamatory content. Balancing freedom of speech with others' rights was essential, he said. The court will continue to hear the arguments on Tuesday.

After scorching June, surplus rainfall predicted in July

Jacob Koshy
NEW DELHI

Rainfall in July – typically the rainiest of the four monsoon months – is likely to be 'above normal' or greater than 106% of the 28 cm that is usual for July, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said on Monday. After 'below normal' rainfall in June, the surplus rainfall in July is expected to help agriculture and boost prospects for kharif sowing.

Nearly all of India is expected to see surplus rainfall except for eastern, northeastern, and northwestern India, IMD Director-General M. Mohapatra said at a press conference.

The magnificent July rain is premised on a 60% chance of the emergence of a La Nina – the converse of an El Nino – and the cooling of the central equatorial Pacific by a degree or more. Historically, 20 of the 25 years since 1950 that have seen 'below normal' rain in June have resulted in 'normal' or 'above normal' rain in July, Mr. Mohapatra said.



People use a makeshift raft to help a toddler move to safety following heavy rain in Nagaon district of Assam on Monday. PTI

"Above-normal rainfall can significantly benefit agriculture and water resources but also bring potential risks such as flooding, landslides, surface transport disruptions, public health challenges, and ecosystem damage. To manage these risks effectively, it is essential to reinforce infrastructure, utilise IMD's early warnings, enhance surveillance and conservation efforts, and establish robust response systems in vulnerable sectors," the agency said in a press statement.

Were the forecast to bear out, it would bring significant relief from what would be one of the most

intense spells of heatwaves to have scorched the country from March to June.

Heatwave days

The IMD made public statistics showing that this summer, India experienced around a total of 536 'heatwave' days when counted across all 36 meteorological subdivisions – the highest since 2010.

In June alone, India experienced 181 such heatwave days. To be sure, the IMD divides India into 36 meteorological subdivisions, and a heatwave on the same calendar day registered in, say, five subdivisions, are counted as five 'heatwave days'.

'Stop religious gatherings enabling conversion'

Ishita Mishra
NEW DELHI

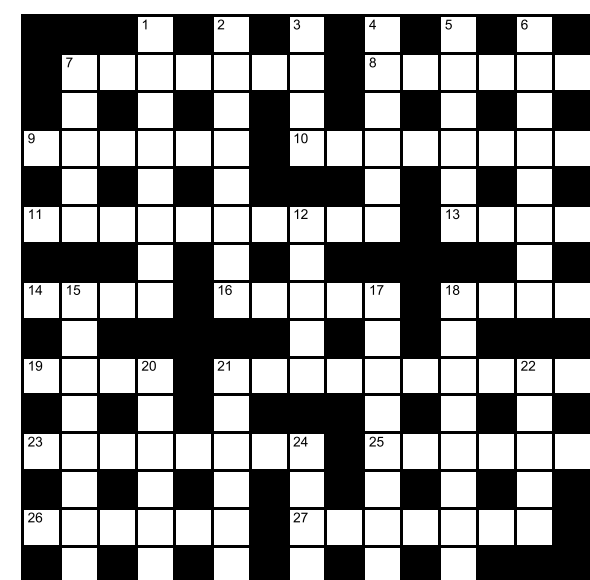
Rejecting the bail application of a person accused of religious conversion, the Allahabad High Court on Monday observed that the majority population of the country would be in minority one day, if conversion at religious congregations is not stopped.

Justice Rohit Ranjan Agarwal, who was hearing the bail plea of one Kailash booked under Section 3/5 (1) of the U.P. Prohibition of Unlawful Conversion of Religion Act, 2021, said Article 25 does not provide for religious conversion but only provides freedom of conscience and free profession, practice, and propagation of religion.

The court noted that serious allegations have been made against the accused, who, according to the complainant, was taking people from her village to attend religious gatherings in New Delhi, and most of them never returned home.

THE CROSSWORD+ 14216
(set by Saral)

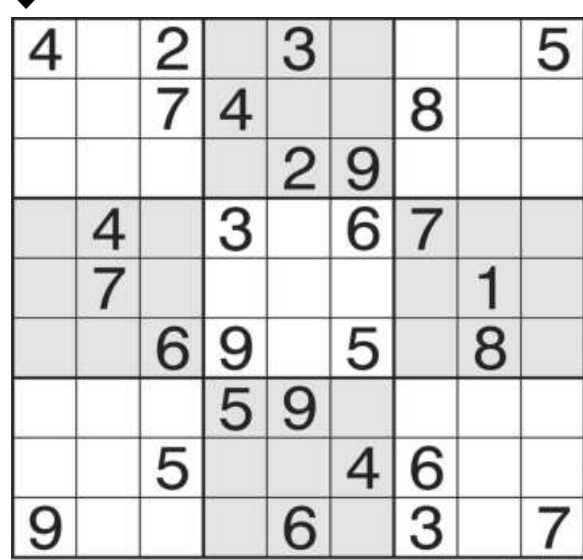
To solve this puzzle online, get across to our crossword site. @ <https://qrgo.page.link/jjptn>



- 14 Masters from the beginning arranged competitors' exercise schedule (4)
 - 16 Rotating reel in circles (5)
 - 18 Changing skin colours (4)
 - 19 Summons with wrong RTI (4)
 - 21 Rascal parking in new sector in military school, say (5,5)
 - 23 Show off power in defence (3,5)
 - 25 Losing head, monarch thrashed reporter (6)
 - 26 A great deal of money in old gaming house (6)
 - 27 A work in front of department is clumsy (7)
- Down**
- 1 Huge oriental tailless rat below northern gate (8)
 - 2 Composition on the radio, almost complete and relaxing (8)
 - 3 That man getting red basil, basically an aromatic plant (4)
 - 4 Setting clues including one for cleanse (6)
 - 5 Very cold times, Indian eagle finally kept in enclosure (3,3)
 - 6 Star acting heartlessly, takes chance (8)
 - 7 Hansell also regularly turning up for dance (5)
 - 12 A worthless duck (5)
 - 15 Naval commander is rehearsing at first, organising festival (8)
 - 17 Wager fires Spooner, resulting in delays (8)
 - 18 Cold rain destroyed warship (8)
 - 20 Disagreement at home for light meal (6)
 - 21 Mostly container with trace of nickel, a chemical element (6)
 - 22 Big-headed prince with staff crossing Uruguay (5)
 - 24 Spirit of the land (4)

- Across**
- 7 Frank caught involved in crime before (7)
 - 8 Pest in place near bar (6)
 - 9 Priest inside cycle rickshaw (6)
 - 10 Soldier about to divide baked breads for units (8)
 - 11 Cover arrived containing Ohio university banner (10)
 - 13 Old international model in flight (4)

SUDOKU



Solution to previous puzzle

F	L	A	S	O	N	S	I	M
R	M	N	N	T	I	A	E	
A	D	A	P	T	A	T	I	A
P	T	H	F	M	K	S	R	
P	R	O	S	E	C	U	T	O
E	L	F	R	O	M	E		
O	D	N	A	T	H	R	T	
C	S	E	L	E	A	V	E	
G	U	C	H	E	W	I	N	D
U	R	D	P	O	O	A	E	
R	A	I	S	H	E	L	L	
S	B	L	R	E	A	E		
E	Y	E	L	I	D	S	E	

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

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



FAITH
Making the weapons happy

The eleventh mantra of Apratiratha Sukta talks of weapons. Maghavan in the verse can be interpreted as a reference to Vishnu and so the weapons (*ayudhaani*) being spoken of are His, said V.S. Karunakarachariar in a discourse. Furthermore, the weapons can be taken to be specifically referring to those of Lord Trivikrama of the temple in Thirukkovalur, in Tamil Nadu. Here Trivikrama holds the conch in the right hand and the chakra in the left. This is to place the impression of these two weapons on the shoulders of devotees, a required initiation ritual for Sri Vaishnavas. The Lord gladdens His weapons, when He uses them to bring people into the Sri Vaishnava fold. The word *ayudhaani* is plural. If one takes into consideration only the chakra and conch, how can the plural usage, instead of the dual, be explained? The answer to this objection is that if these two main weapons of the Lord, namely the chakra and conch are happy, then automatically all His other weapons too will be happy. In Tamil pasurams and in the works of Vaishnava Acharyas, we find a reference only to the chakra. But such references are taken as encompassing all His weapons.

For example, the Acharya Nadadur Ammal said the impression of the chakra conferred the status of Sri Vaishnava on an individual.

CINCINNATI

3 killed, 2 injured in shooting near University of Cincinnati campus



Five persons were shot, including three fatally, near the University of Cincinnati campus early on Monday. Two persons were taken into custody, including one of the wounded. "There were multiple firearms at the crime scene and two subjects (one of which was also shot) are being detained at this time," the Cincinnati police. AP

KHAN YOUNIS

Israel releases director of hospital it says was used as a Hamas base



Israel released Mohammed Abu Selmia, the director of Gaza's main hospital, on Monday, after holding him for seven months without charge or trial over allegations the facility had been used as a Hamas command centre. He said he and other detainees were held under harsh conditions and tortured. AP

TIRANA

Ismail Kadare, author of *The General of the Dead Army*, dies



Renowned Albanian novelist Ismail Kadare died in Tirana aged 88. Kadare has long been mentioned as a possible contender for the Nobel Literature Prize. He became famous after his novel *The General of the Dead Army* was published in 1963 when Albania was run by the communist government of dictator Enver Hoxha. AP

WASHINGTON

Trump ally Steve Bannon arrives at jail following contempt conviction



Steve Bannon, an influential Donald Trump ally, arrived at a prison on Monday to serve a four-month sentence after he was convicted for defying a congressional subpoena from the committee that probed the January 6, 2021, U.S. Capitol attack. He arrived at a low-security federal prison in Danbury, Connecticut. REUTERS

Taliban to bring up economic curbs at talks

Agence France-Presse DOHA

Taliban authorities said on Monday they would press the international community over economic sanctions as they attended a UN-hosted summit in Doha with special representatives to Afghanistan for the first time.

Writing on X, senior Foreign Ministry official Zakir Jalaly said the Taliban delegation would use the meetings to discuss "financial and banking sanctions" and the "challenges" these pose to Afghanistan's economy.

The talks are being held to discuss increasing engagement with the impoverished country of more than 40 million and a more coordinated response.

U.S. Supreme Court grants 'absolute immunity' to Trump

President enjoys immunity from criminal prosecution for official decisions taken while in office, but there is no immunity for unofficial acts, says Chief Justice John Roberts in the majority ruling

Agence France-Presse WASHINGTON

The U.S. Supreme Court ruled on Monday that Donald Trump enjoys some immunity from prosecution as a former President, a ruling that will likely delay his trial for conspiring to overturn the 2020 election.

The 6-3 decision split along ideological lines comes four months ahead of the election in which Mr. Trump is the Republican candidate to take on Democrat Joe Biden.

Conservative Chief Justice John Roberts, in his majority opinion, said a President enjoys "absolute



Minor relief: Donald Trump has been doing everything in his power to delay the trials at least until after the election. REUTERS

immunity" from criminal prosecution for official acts taken while in office.

"There is no immunity for unofficial acts," Mr. Roberts said, sending the case back to a lower court

to determine which of the charges facing the former President involves official or unofficial conduct.

The three liberal justices dissented, with Justice Sonia Sotomayor saying "nev-

er in the history of our Republic has a President had reason to believe that he would be immune from criminal prosecution if he used the trappings of his office to violate the law."

Facing four criminal cases, Mr. Trump has been doing everything in his power to delay the trials at least until after the election.

On May 30, a New York court convicted Mr. Trump on 34 felony charges of falsifying business records to cover up a sex scandal in the final stages of the 2016 presidential campaign, making Mr. Trump the first former U.S. President ever convicted of a crime.

His sentencing will take place on July 11.

Modi, Stalin and Ranil pay tribute to Sri Lankan Tamil leader Sampanthan

Meera Srinivasan COLOMBO

Leaders on both sides of the Palk Strait paid rich tributes to senior Sri Lankan Tamil leader R. Sampanthan, who passed away in Colombo on Sunday.

In a message on social platform 'X' on Monday, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said he would always cherish fond memories of meetings with him. "He relentlessly pursued a life of peace, security, equality, justice and dignity for the Tamil nationals of Sri Lanka. He will be deeply missed by his friends and followers in Sri Lanka and India," he said of Sampanthan, who was a long-time ally of India.

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin termed his passing a "huge loss", not only for the Tamil people in Sri Lanka but also for the Tamil diaspora across the globe. "After the death of *Ezhatanthai* [iconic Sri Lankan Tamil leader S.J.V. Chelvanayakam] Selva and Navalar [late veteran leader Appapillai Amirthalingam] Amirthalingam, Mr. Sampanthan was a laudable leader in the Sri Lankan politics and no one can easily fill his place," Mr. Stalin said in a statement, extending condolences to party colleagues and Tamil people in Sri Lanka on behalf of Tamil Nadu.

In a two-page statement, Mr. Stalin recalled the Tamil National Alliance (TNA) Leader's peaceful ways of fighting for the rights of the Tamil people, and interest in protecting the Indo-Lanka relations. Further, Mr. Stalin said



In memoriam: Narendra Modi said he would always cherish fond memories of meetings with R. Sampanthan. ANI

Mr. Sampanthan was a friend of late DMK leader and former Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M. Karunanidhi and recalled their multiple meetings to discuss the welfare of the Sri Lankan Tamils.

Posting on 'X', Sri Lankan President Ranil Wickremesinghe said: "I express my deepest condolences on the passing of Mr. R. Sampanthan. As a national leader, he worked tirelessly to bridge the divisions in our country. His loss will be mourned across the nation."

State funeral Meanwhile, the Sri Lankan government offered to hold a state funeral for Sampanthan, according to TNA spokesman and Jaffna legislator M.A. Sumanthiran. "We declined the offer, saying Mr. Sampanthan represented the Tamil people, and their sentiments must be respected. The government has subsequently said they will organise the funeral without military honours," Mr. Sumanthiran told *The Hindu*. The funeral is expected to be held on Sunday in the east-

ern district of Trincomalee, Sampanthan's constituency.

Sri Lanka's Leader of Opposition Sajith Premadasa said Sampanthan's passing marks the "end of an era". "Today, we mourn the loss of Mr. Sampanthan, who served Sri Lanka for over half a century. His dedication to equal rights for all Sri Lankans is a beacon of hope. His fair and just leadership will continue to inspire me and many others," he said on 'X'.

Retired Indian diplomat Ashok K. Kantha, who served as India's High Commissioner to Sri Lanka from 2009 to 2013, called Sampanthan a "towering personality and voice of sanity and moderation", in a social media post. Further, he recalled telling former President Mahinda Rajapaksa and other Sri Lankan leaders that "they should resolve ethnic issue while Sampanthan was around".

In a post on 'X', Mr. Rajapaksa said: "He was an old friend and colleague and we shared many a day discussing various issues." (With inputs from Tamil Nadu bureau)

Christian man gets death sentence for 'hate speech' in Pak.

Associated Press MULTAN

A court in Pakistan sentenced a Christian man to death for sharing what it said was hateful content against Muslims on social media after one of the worst mob attacks on Christians in the eastern Punjab province last year, his lawyer said on Monday, adding he will appeal the verdict.

In August 2023, groups of Muslim men burned dozens of homes and churches in the city of Jaranwala

after some residents claimed they saw two Christian men tearing out pages from Islam's holy book, the Koran, throwing them on the ground and writing insulting remarks on other pages, authorities said. The two men were later arrested.

Ehsan Shan, though not party to the desecration, was accused of reposting the defaced pages of the Koran on his TikTok account, his lawyer said on Monday. He also said he would appeal against the death sentence.

Macron aims to thwart French far-right in election run-off

Agence France-Presse PARIS

French President Emmanuel Macron and his allies were on Monday beginning a week of intense campaigning ahead of the second round of legislative elections to prevent the far-right from taking an absolute majority and control of government in a historic first.

The far-right National Rally (RN) party of Marine Le Pen won a resounding victory in the first round of the polls on Sunday, with Mr. Macron's centrists trailing in third behind a left-



Emmanuel Macron

wing coalition.

But the key suspense ahead of the second round on July 7 was whether the RN would win an absolute majority in the new National Assembly, enabling it to form a government

and make Ms. Le Pen's protegee Jordan Bardella, 28, Prime Minister.

Most projections published by French polling organisations showed the RN falling short of an absolute majority, but the final outcome remains far from certain.

French Prime Minister Gabriel Attal, who is likely to be forced to resign after the second round, warned that the far-right was now at the "gates of power".

"We have seven days to spare France from catastrophe," said Raphael Glucksmann, a key figure in the left-wing alliance.

Sport

France knocks out Belgium, courtesy Vertonghen's own goal



Associated Press DUESSELDORF

Kylian Mbappe and France advanced to the European Championship quarterfinals after Randal Kolo Muani's deflected shot secured a 1-0 win over Belgium on Monday.

Kolo Muani sent in an effort in the 85th minute that looped up off Belgium defender Jan Vertonghen and



Lucky: Muani's shot got deflected off Vertonghen and into the Belgium goal. AP

over stranded goalkeeper Koen Casteels. Mbappe had five shots

but none were on target in a low-quality match between the teams ranked No.

2 (France) and No. 3 (Belgium).

Three-time champion Spain survived an early scare to beat a spirited Georgia 4-1 on Sunday and reach the last eight, coming out on top in an exhilarating encounter that brought an end to the minnows' fairytale run.

La Roja will meet host Germany in the quarterfinals after sending a message of intent in a polished performance, with goals from Rodri, Fabian Ruiz, Nico Williams and Dani Olmo.

The results: Pre-quarterfinals: Spain 4 (Rodri 39, Fabian Ruiz 51, Williams 75, Olmo 83) bt Georgia 1 (Le Normand 18-og); France 1 (Vertonghen 85-og) bt Belgium 0.

Spaniard Alcaraz up and running on 'beautiful' Wimbledon Centre Court

Agence France-Presse LONDON

Carlos Alcaraz said Wimbledon's Centre Court is "the most beautiful court that I have played on" after brushing off the cobwebs to beat Estonian qualifier Mark Lajal in the opening match of his title defence.

The Spanish third seed was taken to a tie-break in the opening set and trailed 2-0 against his unheralded opponent in the second but held his nerve to win 7-6(3), 7-5, 6-2.

"Stepping on this court, the Centre Court, it is the most beautiful court that I have played on," he said. "I still get nerves when I am playing here."

Daniil Medvedev hit 16 aces in his 6-3, 6-4, 6-2 win



Alcaraz. AFP

over Aleksandar Kovacevic.

Former World No. 1 Naomi Osaka claimed her first win here since 2018 when she recovered from a break down in the final set to defeat Diane Parry. She came through 6-1, 1-6, 6-4.

TOP RESULTS

First round: Men: 16-Humbert (Fra) bt Shevchenko (Rus) 6-1, 4-6, 7-6(2), 6-7(3), 6-1; 23-Bublik (Kaz) bt Mensik (Cze) 4-6, 6-7(2), 6-4, 6-4, 6-2; 10-Dimitrov (Bul) bt Lajovic (Srb) 6-3, 6-4, 7-5; Shapovalov (Can) bt 19-Jarry (Chi) 6-1, 7-5, 6-4; Coric (Cro) bt Alves (Bra) 6-3, 7-6(2), 6-3; 8-Ruud (Nor) bt Bolt (Aus) 7-6(2), 6-4, 6-4; 29-Tiafoe (USA) bt Arnaldi (Ita) 6-7(5), 2-6, 6-1, 6-3, 6-3; 32-Zhang (Chn) bt Janvier (Fra) 7-6(4), 6-3, 6-2; Nakashima (USA) bt 18-Baez (Arg) 6-2, 6-3, 6-4; 5-Medvedev (Rus) bt Kovacevic (USA) 6-3, 6-4, 6-2; Wawrinka (Sui) bt Broom (GBR) 6-3, 7-5, 6-4; Berrettini (Ita) bt Fucsovics (Hun) 7-6(3), 6-2, 3-6, 6-1; 3-Alcaraz (Esp) bt Lajal (Est) 7-6(3), 7-5, 6-2; Monfils (Fra) bt 22-Mannarino (Fra) 6-4, 3-6, 7-5, 6-4; Harris (RSA) bt Michelsen (USA) 3-6, 4-6, 7-6(5), 6-2, 7-6(9).

Withdrawals

Aryna Sabalenka withdrew due to a shoulder injury. She is replaced by Russian lucky loser Erika Andreeva. Russian 22nd seed Ekaterina Alexandrova also pulled out due to illness. She has been replaced by Mexico's Renata Zarazua. Andreeva (Rus) bt Bektas (USA) 7-6(5), 3-6, 6-3. 9-Sakkari (Gre) bt Kessler (USA) 6-3, 6-1; 25-Pavlyuchenkova (Rus) bt Townsend (USA) 7-6(4), 6-1; 28-Yastremska (Ukr) bt Podoroska (Arg) 6-1, 7-6(1); 18-Kostyuk (Ukr) bt Sramkova (Svk) 6-3, 6-2; 14-Kasatkina (Rus) bt Zhang (Chn) 6-3, 6-0; 7-Paolini (Ita) bt Tormo (Esp) 7-5, 6-3; Osaka (Jpn) bt Parry (Fra) 6-1, 1-6, 6-4; Shnaider (Rus) bt Pliskova (Cze) 4-6, 6-4, 7-5; 12-Keys (USA) bt Trevisan (ITA) 6-4, 7-6(4); Sun (NZ) bt 8-Zheng (Chn) 4-6, 6-2, 6-4.

PURIST'S DELIGHT

Sneh Rana calls for more multi-Test tours in the future



B. JOTHI RAMALINGAM

Player-of-the-match Sneh Rana called for more women's Tests. "I think Test cricket is one of the best formats and the more it is played, the better it is for the women's game. The return of multi-day domestic tournament will also help. There should be at least two Tests (in a series)," she said.

ALL-WEATHER STAR

Wolvaardt becomes third woman to score tons in all three formats



B. JOTHI RAMALINGAM

Laura Wolvaardt (122) joined England's Heather Knight and Tammy Beaumont as the only women to score hundreds in all formats in international cricket (ODI: 105 vs Ireland; T20: 102 vs Sri Lanka). "Yeah, a very cool stat. Tests are more naturally suited to my game. So to get the T20 ton earlier this year was a special one," she said.

PIECE DE RESISTANCE

de Klerk stonewalls India on day four, Wolvaardt showers praise



B. JOTHI RAMALINGAM

Nadine de Klerk's 185-ball 61 played a crucial role in denying India the joy of an innings victory. "The character and fight she shows is amazing," Wolvaardt said. "She's a great player for the future and also helps me a lot with the captaincy stuff. She can really take the game away from the opposition," she added.

RARING TO GO

Tryon makes return from injury, returns to T20I squad vs India



GETTY IMAGES

The South Africa women's team for the T20I series against India: Laura Wolvaardt (Capt.), Anneke Bosch, Tazmin Brits, Nadine de Klerk, Annerie Dercksen, Mieke de Ridder, Sinalo Jafta, Marizanne Kapp, Ayabonga Khaka, Masabata Klaas, Sune Luus, Eliz-Mari Marx, Nonkululeko Mlaba, Tumi Sekhukhune and Chloe Tryon.

Spirited South Africa steals hearts, India wins Test

Resilient displays from Wolvaardt and de Klerk deny the host an innings victory; Shafali's double hundred and Sneh Rana's historic 10-wicket match-haul the highlights of the triumph at Chepauk

SA IN INDIA

S. Dipak Ragav
CHENNAI

Despite South Africa skipper Laura Wolvaardt's valiant century (122, 314b, 16x4), India romped home to a 10-wicket win on the final day of the one-off Test at the MAC Stadium here on Monday.

On an overcast morning, South Africa resumed on 232 for two and needed another 105 runs to make India bat again. Though the odds were stacked against the Proteas on a fourth-day pitch with uneven bounce, the visitors showed great character to take the match into the final session after conceding a 337-run lead on the third day.

Wolvaardt, batting on 93 overnight, flicked Sneh Rana to the fine-leg fence to move to 99 and then took a single through the leg-side off Renuka Singh to complete her maiden Test ton. Though she started scratchily on Sunday, the 25-year-old right-hander stuck to her game-plan to score her second century of the tour.

Deepti Sharma gave India an opening at the other end when she trapped Marizanne Kapp leg-before, caught on the back-foot. Soon, Sneh got into the act, removing Delmari Tucker, who was dismissed for a pair, caught at covers. The off-spinner got her 10th wicket of the match when she had Sinalo Jafta caught at slip.

Wolvaardt's vigil ended shortly before lunch when she played down the wrong line to a delivery from left-arm spinner Rajeshwari

Gayakwad that kept low and was trapped in front.

Needing just five more wickets, India would have felt it was inching closer towards an innings win, but Nadine de Klerk (61, 185b, 8x4, 1x6) frustrated the hosts with her gritty stay in the middle, scoring a patient half-century.

While India kept pegging away, taking three more wickets in the second session, de Klerk held fort at the other end, grinding the bowling, as the visitors managed just 34 runs in 29 overs. In the final session, de Klerk cut loose, finding a few boundaries by employing the sweep shot to get to her half-century and helping her side wipe out the deficit. By the time Rajeshwari bowled her, South Africa had a lead of 35 runs, which seemed improbable when India amassed 603 for six in the first innings.

India's openers Shafali Verma and Shubha Sathesh then swiftly knocked off the required runs in under 30 minutes.

SCOREBOARD

INDIA — 1st innings
603 for six declared.
SOUTH AFRICA — 1st innings:
266.
SOUTH AFRICA — 2nd innings
Laura Wolvaardt lwb b Rajeshwari 122 (314b, 16x4), Anneke Bosch lwb b Deepti 9 (18b, 2x4), Sune Luus b Harmanpreet 109 (203b, 18x4), Marizanne Kapp lwb b Deepti 31 (82b, 3x4), Delmi Tucker c Jemimah b Sneh 0 (3b), Nadine de Klerk b Rajeshwari 61 (185b, 8x4, 1x6), Sinalo Jafta c Shubha b Sneh 15 (36b, 2x4), Annerie Dercksen lwb b Pooja 5 (17b, 1x4), Tumi Sekhukhune run out 6 (35b, 1x4), Masabata Klaas b Shafali 2 (33b), Nonkululeko Mlaba (not out) 1 (5b); Extras (b-8, lb-1, nb-3): 12; Total (in 154.4 overs): 373.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-16 (Bosch, 7.4 overs), 2-206 (Luus, 73.2), 3-264 (Kapp, 98.5), 4-266 (Tucker, 99.5), 5-281 (Wolvaardt, 105.5), 6-310 (Dercksen, 120.4), 7-324 (Sekhukhune, 134.3), 8-334 (Jafta, 140.2), 9-357 (Klaas, 151.5).
INDIA BOWLING
Renuka 10-1-30-0, Sneh 40-12-111-2, Pooja 16-7-35-1, Deepti 45-10-95-2, Rajeshwari 30-4-12-55-2, Shafali 3-1-7-1, Harmanpreet 10-0-31-1.
INDIA — 2nd innings
Shubha Sathesh (not out) 13 (26b, 1x4), Shafali Verma (not out) 24 (30b, 3x4, 1x6); Total (for no loss in 9.2 overs): 37.
SOUTH AFRICA BOWLING
Mlaba 5-0-18-0, Tucker 4-2-0-19-0.
PoM: Sneh.
India won by 10 wickets.



Box office: India put on a show with bat and ball on a flat track and in overcast conditions to register a dominant victory in just the second women's Test at the MAC Stadium in Chennai. B. JOTHI RAMALINGAM



On a high: India's 10-wicket win over South Africa caps a season which saw Harmanpreet & Co. beat Test regulars Australia (by eight wickets) and England (by 347 runs) in Mumbai six months ago. The Indian skipper won all three Tests at the helm of the side, equalling Mithali Raj's win tally in the format. EMMANUEL YOGINI



'Grit we showed will do lot of good for this group'

S. Prasanna Venkatesan
CHENNAI

South Africa captain Laura Wolvaardt, speaking after the loss, was appreciative of her team's batting in the match.

"To lose is a bit disappointing. But the character that the group has shown over the last two days is absolutely amazing. To concede 500-something runs on day one, I don't think many people thought it would get all the way to the last session on day four.

"So, just the absolute grit and determination that every single batter had, going out there to see it through until the end was great. I think it'll do a lot of good things for this group," she said.

On her experience of captaining the side in the last two Tests versus Australia and India, she said:



Leading the way: Wolvaardt was at the forefront of South Africa's lion-hearted effort. B. JOTHI RAMALINGAM

"Obviously, at the WACA, it was all about pace, bounce, swing, and nip. Whereas, this was all about the spinners and sort of navigating that. I think captaincy-wise, it was quite tricky knowing which fields to set. They had a lot of funky fields that were really hard to bat against. Their spinners were accurate as well."

About the Chennai crowd, she added: "To

have that many people at a Test match was nice. It's awesome how supportive they are of the opposition as well. It keeps it entertaining.

"I think the third day felt like a long time when I was batting out there, but it was nice to see them singing songs, which was quite funny.

"I think there was a (chorus of) 'Laura is scared of Deepti' at one stage!"

T20 triumph one of the sweetest in Indian cricket



Sunil Gavaskar

India's win over South Africa ended its wait for an ICC title. It's been 11 years since India won the 2013 Champions Trophy. Thereafter, the Indian team played well enough to reach the semifinals of most ICC tournaments but hadn't won the trophy.

It's almost like a batter who gets into the 80s and 90s but is unable to score the coveted century. By winning the title in Barbados, India has hit a century and the thirst for a crown has ended.

Once again, it was the bowlers who did the trick for India with Jasprit Bumrah and Hardik Pandya being outstanding again. But for Bumrah's third and fourth over where he got the wickets, Hardik would not have had enough runs to defend while bowling the final over of the match. Hardik, of course, brought India back in the

game by getting Heinrich Klaasen out when the batter looked as if he was single-handedly going to take his team to a title.

Rishabh Pant deserves praise too. This street-smart cricketer realised that an interruption in rhythm and flow was required in the way Klaasen and David Miller were smashing sixes at will. So he called for the physio to treat the knee which had undergone surgery after a horrific car accident a few months back.

He took off his leg-guards and lay on his back as the physio strapped the knee.

By the time he was ready behind the wickets, Klaasen was getting impatient and so chased a slow wide ball from Hardik to be caught behind.

India was back in the contest with that wicket and then Bumrah did what only he can do. Suddenly, the scenario changed and the hunted became the hunter.

Suryakumar Yadav then showed how hungry this team was for a win by taking a superlative catch to send the other dangerman Miller back to the pavilion.

It's been a long wait. True ring the words that the rewards of pa-

the competition and thoroughly deserved to be crowned the champion.

It's been a long wait. True ring the words that the rewards of pa-

tiences are sweet. This is one of the sweetest wins in the history of Indian cricket.

(Professional Management Group).

You always had our hearts. Now you have the Cup too.

Champions. Of a billion hearts.

HSBC | Opening up a world of opportunity

IN BRIEF



Six Indians in T20 World Cup 'Team of the Tournament'

The ICC has picked six Indians in its 'Team of the Tournament' for the just-concluded T20 World Cup.

The team: Rohit Sharma, Suryakumar Yadav, Hardik Pandya, Axar Patel, Jasprit Bumrah, and Arshdeep Singh (all from India); Rahmanullah Gurbaz, Rashid Khan, and Fazalhq Farooqi (Afghanistan); Marcus Stoinis (Australia) and Nicholas Pooran (West Indies); **12th man:** Anrich Nortje.

Raza set to lead Zimbabwe in T20I series against India

Sikandar Raza was on Monday named as Zimbabwe captain team for the five-match T20I series against India, which begins in Harare on July 6.

The squad: Sikandar Raza (Capt.), Akram Faraz, Bennett Brian, Campbell Johnathan, Chatara Tendai, Jongwe Luke, Kaia Innocent, Madande Clive, Madheveru Wessly, Marumani Tadiwanashe, Masakadza Wellington, Mavuta Brandon, Muzarabani Blessing, Myers Dion, Naqvi Antum, Ngarava Richard and Shumba Milton.



Viswanathan Anand claims his 10th title at Leon

Viswanathan Anand turned the clock back in style to win the Leon Masters chess tournament in Spain on Sunday. This was his 10th title in the event, the first one dating back to 1996; the last one came in 2016.

Girmay wins Tour de France stage 3, Carapaz takes lead

Eritrean Binian Girmay sprinted to victory in stage three of the Tour de France on Monday as Ecuador's Richard Carapaz took the Yellow Jersey from overnight leader Tadej Pogacar of Slovenia in Turin.

Ayush Sharma beats Aryan Manchanda, wins men's title

Ayush Sharma beat Aryan Manchanda 6-2, 6-2 in the men's final of the fourth Janmejaya Dash memorial tennis, organised by Neelachall Sports Foundation at the Bal Bharati Public School, Pitampura. Prizes were presented by DCP of West Delhi, Deepak Yadav and Mrs. Sunita Dash.

The results (finals): Men: Ayush Sharma bt Aryan Manchanda 6-2, 6-2; **Doubles:** Dilip Mohanty & Raj Kumar bt Deepak Yadav & Santosh Bhagat 6-2, 6-2. **Boys: U-16:** Gaurav Kumar bt Arnav Arora 8-4; **U-14:** Gyaansh Manchanda bt Lakshya Drall 8-3; **U-12:** Krish Baniwal bt Kabir Dahiya 7-3; **U-10:** Geetansh Saini bt Naksh Shokeen 5-1; Under-8: Daryan Rajpoot bt Atharv Mittal 5-3. **Girls: U-16:** Yashika Shokeen bt Akshita Antil 8-0; **U-12:** Manya Saini bt Darsh Noor Kaur 7-5.

India loses to Malaysia in Asia junior mixed team event

India lost 3-2 to Malaysia in the quarterfinals of the Badminton Asia junior mixed team event at Yogyakarta (Indonesia) on Monday.

The results: Quarterfinals: India lost to Malaysia 2-3 (Sanskar Saraswat & Shrivani Walekar bt Kang Khai Xing & Noraqilha Maisarah 21-16, 13-21, 21-17; Tanvi Sharma bt Siti Zulaikha 21-15, 15-21, 22-20; Pranay Shettigar lost to Mohammad Faiz 21-15, 18-21, 19-21; Navya Kanderi & Shrivani Walekar lost to Bui Ong Xin Yee & Carmen Ting 16-21, 15-21; Bhargav Ram Argela & Arsh Mohammad lost to Kang Khai Xing & Aaron Tai 18-21, 10-21).

Pragg misses out against So on another day of draws

R. Praggnandhaa settled for a draw against Wesley So in the fifth round of Superbet Classic chess in Bucharest on Sunday. D. Gukesh also enjoyed some advantage that slipped away against Nodirbek Abdusattorov of Uzbekistan. The lead positions remained unchanged with Fabiano Caruana still ahead on 3.5 points.

The results (after five rounds): Gukesh 3 drew with Abdusattorov (Uzb) 2.5; So (USA) 2.5 drew with Praggnandhaa 3; Vachier-Lagrave (Fra) 2.5 drew with Caruana (USA) 3.5; Giri (Ned) 2 drew with Firoouza Alireza (Fra) 2.5; Bogdan-Daniel (Rou) 1.5 drew with Nepomniachtchi (FIDE) 2.5.

Markram's South Africa can be proud of its stirring World Cup campaign

The run till the T20 summit clash, with close victories along the way, will hold the Proteas in good stead in future tournaments

CRICKET
K.C. Vijaya Kumar
CHENNAI

A warm March night ebbed away at Dhaka and South Africa had just lost the 2011 World Cup quarterfinal against New Zealand. Graeme Smith trudged into the post-match press-conference hall and an insensitive reporter said: "Earlier you were all called chokers, now they are saying jokers."

Smith, moist eyes and a tremulous voice, handled that question with grace and subsequently explained why the Proteas lost. But the word choke became this constant shadow and an easy cliché that trailed South Africa. But what transpired at Bridgetown on Saturday was never a choke as that would be a lazy inference.

South Africa was done in by a superior Indian team even when a mere 30 were required from the last five overs.

Jasprit Bumrah, Arsh-



So near: South Africa defeated every opponent before falling short in the final. GETTY IMAGES

deep Singh and Hardik Pandya were hard to get away, add Suryakumar Yadav's sensational catch to dismiss David Miller into the mix, and this was all about the eventual champion reiterating a domi-

nant trait.

Yet, Aiden Markram's men can draw inspiration from the manner in which they competed through the ICC T20 World Cup.

An ICC World Cup trophy remains missing in the

South African cupboard but the way the Proteas approached their games in this championship remained exemplary. Like India, South Africa was the other unbeaten squad until the final.

Be it defending champion England or a resurgent Afghanistan, all rivals were cast aside. This is a line-up that lacks the services of AB de Villiers, Faf du Plessis and Dale Steyn, all part of the retired club.

But Markram had men like Quinton de Kock and Heinrich Klaasen to bolster the batting, and a varied bowling quartet of Kagiso Rabada, Anrich Nortje, Keshav Maharaj and Tabraiz Shamsi, to lean upon.

Steady progress
Readmitted to cricket through the tour of India in 1991, South Africa shed its isolation due to those wretched apartheid years, and made steady progress. Always a clear and present danger in global tournaments, somehow the Proteas used to combust on seeing the finishing line. Run-outs would happen or rain-rules would be wrongly interpreted.

Cut to the present, the Rainbow Nation, busy making space for all communities in its sporting edifice, has shown that it can raise hard questions in ICC tournaments.

In the future, a title may be seized but until then Markram's men, once their tears dry up, can remember a superb campaign even if the summit clash did not go as per plan.

BCCI has tripled cash incentive to WC winners

Sports Bureau
MUMBAI

The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI)'s decision to award ₹125 crore to India's T20 World Cup-winning squad, which includes players, coaches, support staff and the selectors, is just a little over three times than the combined figure that was distributed as bonus after the Men in Blue won the 2011 ODI World Cup.

The BCCI secretary Jay Shah in his statement had not specified the individual amount for each category, as has been the convention in Indian cricket. As per the 2010-11 BCCI annual re-

port, each member of Mahendra Singh Dhoni's squad was paid ₹2 crore, the coaching and support staff members were paid ₹50 lakh each, and the selectors were handed a bonus of ₹25 lakh each.

While the report didn't specify the selectors' bonus, *The Hindu* confirmed the amount with multiple members of the five-member selection panel chaired by K. Srikanth.

Considering the fact that India's support staff comprised a dozen members in 2011, approximately ₹39 crore were distributed as an incentive for winning the ODI World Cup at home.

Singapore wins right to host Ding-Gukesh World chess championship match

P.K. Ajith Kumar
KOZHIKODE

The world chess governing body FIDE announced on Monday that Singapore would host the World chess championship match between defending champion Ding Liren of China and D. Gukesh, the 18-year-old from Chennai, later this year.

Chennai was in fact one of the two cities from India in the race, New Delhi being the other. That Singapore was a neutral venue may have worked in its favour. "We are delighted that for the first time in the history of FIDE, a match



Ready for the battle: Ding and Gukesh will square off for the World crown in November. FIDE

for the World Championship will take place in Singapore," FIDE president Arkady Dvorkovich said.

"Not only is Singapore one of the most iconic global tourist and business hubs, but it is also a thriving

chess centre with great ambitions and talent."

During an interview with *The Hindu* at Gandhinagar, where the World junior chess championship was held recently, Dvorkovich had said that FIDE

was happy to get two bids from the same country and that all the three bids were very strong and competitive.

After choosing Singapore as the venue, the FIDE president thanked the two Indian cities.

"Both cities are renowned chess hubs with a rich history of hosting chess events, and we are confident we will see major chess events there in the future," he said.

If Gukesh wins the title match, to be held between November 20 and December 15, he will become the youngest World champion in history.

Ecuador in quarterfinals at Mexico's expense

Reuters
GLENDALE

Ecuador secured a place in the Copa America quarterfinals on Sunday after grinding out a 0-0 draw with Mexico, which bowed out of the tournament after finishing third in Group B.

Ecuador faces Argentina in the quarters, while Venezuela, which beat Jamaica 3-0, takes on Canada.

Ecuador finished level with Mexico on four points but progresses to the last eight thanks to a superior goal difference.

The results: Jamaica 0 lost to Venezuela 3 (Bello 49, Rondon 56, Ramirez 85); Mexico 0 drew with Ecuador 0.

Sreeja, Archana and Quadri star attractions

UTT DRAFT

Sports Bureau
MUMBAI

Two of India's Olympic-bound women paddlers – Sreeja Akula and Archana Kamath – will be among the major attractions for the eight franchisees during the Ultimate Table Tennis (UTT) Player Draft, to be held here on July 10.

Women's World No. 10 Bernadette Szocs and veteran Nigerian Aruna Quadri are also likely to be sought-after up front in the draft.

A total of 45 players will be picked in the draft, with each team required to comprise six players.

Szocs will make her third appearance while Nina Mit-

telham is set to make her UTT debut. The German will hope to garner interest with Manika Batra having been retained by Bengaluru Smashers. Besides Manika, A. Sharath Kamal (Chennai Lions), G. Sathiyam (Dabang Delhi TTC), Harmee Desai (Goa Challengers) and Manav Thakkar (U Mumba TT) have been retained by their respective franchisees.

The five teams that have retained a player each will have to skip the first round of picking a player of their choice. It means Sreeja – released by the Delhi franchise – may be targeted by Purneri Paltan TT who released Archana.

The two new teams – Jaipur Patriots and Ahmedabad SG Pipers – will pick a player in opening round.

AFI hosts send-off for Paris Olympics-bound athletes

Sports Bureau

Olympic champion Abhinav Bindra inspired the Indian athletes with his presence at a send-off function organised by the Athletics Federation of India (AFI), in collaboration with HSBC India, in Chandigarh on Monday.

Commenting the support of HSBC, the president of AFI, Adille Sumariwalla said, "This partnership over the years has not only helped in enhancing training facilities

and raise performance levels of our athletes in international events but has also encouraged more companies to come forward and support sports development and infrastructure in the country.

"The journey to Paris is a result of collective efforts and hard work. We are confident that our athletes will bring home laurels."

The Head of Wealth and Personal Banking of HSBC, Sandeep Batra, expressed his appreciation for the dedication and commitment

of the athletes.

"Our athletes embody the true spirit of perseverance and excellence.

"As you embark on this journey to the Paris Olympics, the hopes and prayers of 1.4 billion Indians are with you", said Batra.

More than 25 athletes were present in the function, including Parul Chaudhary, Annu Rani, Jyothi Yarraji, Jeswin Aldrin, Praveen Chithravel and Tajinderpal Singh Toor.

Sahaja and Mukund clinch titles

TENNIS
Sports Bureau

Top seed Sahaja Yamalappalli beat third seed Amy Zhu 6-4, 7-6(4) in the final of the \$15,000 ITF women's tennis tournament in Los Angeles, USA.

It was the fourth career singles title for 23-year-old Sahaja. She did not drop a set in the tournament.

Top seed in the men's event in Tianjin, China, Sasikumar Mukund was also able to assert his game

with the title, as he beat Wishaya Trongcharoenchaikul of Thailand 6-3, 6-4 in the final. It was the seventh career singles title for the 27-year-old Mukund.

With Vaidehi Chaudhari having won the title in the \$25,000 event in Taiwan earlier, it was a happy week for Indian tennis.

The results: Finals: \$15,000 ITF women, Los Angeles, USA: Sahaja Yamalappalli bt Amy Zhu (USA) 6-4, 7-6(4). **\$15,000 ITF men, Tianjin, China:** Sasikumar Mukund bt Wishaya Trongcharoenchaikul (Tha) 6-3, 6-4.



Sahaja Yamalappalli.

Against all odds: Dilip's non-linear progression to the top

His extraordinary metamorphosis from a humble mathematics tutor, widely admired for his modesty and unwavering dedication, to an influential mentor for aspiring cricketers and established superstars is heartwarming; his passion for the game is a thread that connects us all



Key figure: Dilip was a crucial component of India's T20 World Cup-winning team. K.R. DEEPAK

Tarun Shastry

Fielding is not just an aspect of cricket; it is the game-changer that can profoundly influence the outcome of a match or even an entire tournament.

While batting and bowling hog the limelight, fielding is as, if not the most important facet. A stunning catch, a lightning-quick direct hit, or a diving stop can shift the momentum of a game in a heartbeat. Its impact reverberates far beyond the boundary, shaping the destiny of players and teams.

The date is June 29 2024. The place is Kensington Oval, Barbados, and the occasion is the Men's T20 World Cup final.

It's a clash between a side that has come agonisingly close to winning the title in recent times and another with a rich history of incredible talent but an inability to turn up in crunch moments, enough to earn the moniker 'Chokers.'

In Barbados, after a scintillating run to the final, it suddenly looked like a familiar script was unfolding. As the elusive World Cup title looked like it was slipping out of India's grasp once more, Hardik Pandya was entrusted by India captain Rohit Sharma with the daunting task of defending just 16 runs off the last over. He had the unenviable task of doing so against South Africa's big-hitting David Miller.

The weight of history was not lost on this moment. An extraordinary century, a devastating spell of bowling, or a championship-winning catch, are not just mere incidents in a match, particularly in a final. They could just prove pivotal in the game's narrative.

A striking example of this is Kapil Dev's remarkable catch to dismiss – arguably, the greatest batter the world had seen – Sir Viv Richards in the 1983 World Cup final. That one simple catch changed not just the course of the final, but the destiny of Indian cricket forever.

Cut to Barbados and in the thick of it all was a player heavily likened to Kapil for his allround prowess. The aspirations of 1.5 billion Indians hinged on Hardik and the field around him to deliver.

Miller began with purpose, going after Hardik off the very first ball of the 20th over, a low, wide full toss outside off heading straight down the ground. On any other day, it would have been curtains for India.

However, in an electrifying turn of events, Suryakumar Yadav pulled off one of the most memorable catches in World Cup history. Racing from wide long-off, he skillfully plucked the ball with extraordinary precision millimeters away from the boundary cushions.

While his momentum threatened to carry him past the ropes, the ace batter had the presence of mind to throw the

ball back in the air. He hopped back into the field of play and completed one of the most important catches of his career, all in a few seconds!

"OUT" said the giant screen. The cameras then instantly panned to one man in particular in the Indian dugout, jumping and punching the air: India's fielding coach, T. Dilip. Five balls later, it was time to say the words once could scarcely believe - India was world champion.

Dilip's quiet hard work behind the scenes would go down to the difference between India holding the trophy and finishing empty-handed from an ICC tournament once more.

Dressing room rituals

India's 2023 World Cup campaign was punctuated by notable moments, both on and off the field. One of the most endearing was the fielding awards ceremony, a unique gathering in the Indian dressing room after every match.

The regular programming on BCCI TV took a delightful turn with the inclusion of captivating behind-the-scenes footage of the fielding medal ceremony.

This was Dilip's brainchild. To recognise and reward exceptional performances on the field, he ensured that the legends of the game from Sachin Tendulkar, Viv Richards, Dinesh Karthik and even a novel use of the spider cam, were involved. The idea was to boost team morale and celebrate the little moments that made India the juggernaut it was in the run-up to the final.

"It is about judging attitude. There are statistics for catches taken and many boundaries stopped, but we look at the overall contribution. An inning has 300 balls; how do you handle them on the field? This is not just about one brilliant catch but the overall effort," Dilip said while acquainting reporters with the ceremony during the ODI showpiece.

The artist

Morale-building was particularly important to Dilip given the tribulations he had to go through in his own career.

As an 11-year-old, Dilip – like many others his age – dreamt of one day donning national colours. However, countless elements came in the way, including the absence of financial assistance and his family's support. Add to that the fierce competition back in the day.

"My journey has been pretty challenging with many ups and downs, but I am happy about where I have reached," Dilip told seasoned Indian spinner R. Ashwin in a chat on his YouTube channel.

"Luckily, I was very good at studies, so I could manage with taking tuitions. I used to teach maths to ensure it took care of the financial needs of attending an



It is about judging attitude. There are statistics for catches taken and many boundaries stopped, but we look at the overall contribution. An inning has 300 balls; how do you handle them on the field? This is not just about one brilliant catch but the overall effort

DILIP
on his unique fielding medal ceremonies

academy and playing cricket.

"My father was very clear, 'No sports.' I didn't have that option because he did not know much about sports."

Despite encountering numerous hardships, Dilip's unwavering love for the game propelled him towards the cricket fields of Hyderabad and it took plenty of sacrifices to fuel his ambitions.

There began his journey as a coach for children aged nine and under at a local academy.

Like any other teacher, his satisfaction came from the success of his students.

"During my playing days, I was expecting people to give me inputs about my game, as to what to do and what not to do.

So, I decided that if I get a chance to teach young kids, I will try to help in whatever way I can. When I taught a particular shot and if the student executed the same in the nets or during a match, I would feel delighted and that ignited the spark in me to take my coaching duties more seriously."

In 2004, Dilip decided to enrol in the BCCI Level-1 coaching programme.

"I did a level-1 in 2004; I did not see it as a profession back then. I just wanted to learn something. Surprisingly, I ended up among the top three coaches there. For the next couple of years, I played and coached side-by-side.

"But there came a point where I had to decide on where my future was heading in that particular situation, so I chose coaching and, in 2007, I moved up to level-2."

Dilip quickly found an opportunity to share his expertise as a coach for the under-14 and under-16 teams at the Hyderabad Cricket Academy. His coaching career flourished under the guidance of R. Sridhar, one of India's top fielding coaches.

"In 2008, I was working at the HCA as the U-14 and U-16 fielding coach. At that time, Sridhar was working at the National Cricket Academy (NCA). He used to guide me on what to do and how to do things. He achieved success by going through the grind. Being from the same state, his journey was inspirational for me."

With the inception of the Indian Premier League in 2008, Dilip got his first

breakthrough- a stint with the now-defunct Deccan Chargers in 2009.

"I got to work for Deccan Chargers for three years. I was Mike Young's assistant fielding coach.

"Mike Young (was) a baseball coach. I saw his side-arm throws and way of running backwards to take a catch. I honed those skills by observing and assisting him."

Later that year, Dilip went a step further in his career and realised his dream of joining the NCA as a specialist fielding coach.

"My first goal when I started level-2 in 2007 was to be a coach in the NCA. I never dreamt of being an Indian team coach back then.

"To be practical, I just wanted to be a residential coach at NCA, stay there for one year, and work. That was my goal in 2007, and of course, I got an opportunity in 2009. Over time, the NCA gave me the financial help I needed and the experience to work with professionals.

"Even HCA gave me a position as a coach. Maybe the financial upside was not too high but the experience of working with U-14, U-16, U-19, U-22, U-25, and then the Ranji Trophy team, and working with the players from the state and at the NCA gave me many opportunities to learn what exactly a player requires at the highest level.

"From 2008 to 2019, I was with the NCA. I worked in various national and zonal camps with women, junior boys, and others. I was able to work with players like Shubman Gill and Axar Patel among others during their formative years."

When R. Sridhar concluded his seven-year stint as the Indian team's fielding coach, the side was a changed unit.

It was now a top-notch fielding outfit, with a new intensity and openness to innovation in the field and with the keeping gloves.

When Dilip took over, he was entrusted with maintaining this high standard and ensuring effective player management. This is a key aspect of the team's holistic development and a duty he has essayed to perfection to date.

There may be a 'Dilip' in most cricket lovers, who would have yearned to represent the nation on the cricket field.

His extraordinary metamorphosis from a humble mathematics tutor widely admired for his modesty and unwavering dedication, to an influential mentor for prodigies and established superstars is incredibly heart-warming. His passion for the game is a thread that connects us all.

While we continue to comment on cricket matches from our living rooms and armchairs, he is shaping future cricket stars in the team's dressing room. We dreamt, and he is living our dream.

THE GIST

Fielding is an art. And in the decisive moments of the last over, the aspirations of 1.5 billion Indians hinged on Hardik and India's fielding unit to deliver

Dilip's extraordinary journey to the Indian cricket team as its fielding coach is a testament to his determination and resilience, and a story for the ages

From 2008 to 2019, Dilip was with the NCA. He worked in various national and zonal camps with women, junior boys, and others, and worked with Shubman Gill, Axar Patel, and others during their formative years

Why are scientists looking for the Higgs boson's best friend?

The top quark is the universe's heaviest elementary particle. Each one weighs three-times as much as a copper atom. Its high mass implies that of all elementary particles, it interacts most strongly with the Higgs boson particle — and this makes physicists wonder whether our universe is unstable

Vasudevan Mukunth

Scientists at the world's largest physics experiment have reported the most precise measurement yet of the most massive subatomic particle we know. The finding sounds esoteric but it wouldn't be an understatement to say it has implications for the whole universe.

The Greek philosopher Empedocles surmised 2,400 years ago that matter could be broken up into smaller and smaller pieces until we're left with air, earth, fire, and water. Since the early 20th century, physicists have broken up matter into smaller and smaller pieces to find many different subatomic particles instead — as many as to fill a zoo.

The top quark

Rather than a 'smaller' particle, contemporary particle physicists are concerned with elusive particles.

More energetic particles often break down into ones with less energy. The greater the difference in energy between that of a particle and the products of its decay, the less time the particle exists in its original form and more quickly it breaks down. By the mass-energy equivalence, a more massive particle is also a more energetic particle. And the most massive particle scientists have found to date is the top quark.

It is 10-times heavier than a water molecule, about three-times as much as a copper atom, and 95% as much as a full caffeine molecule.

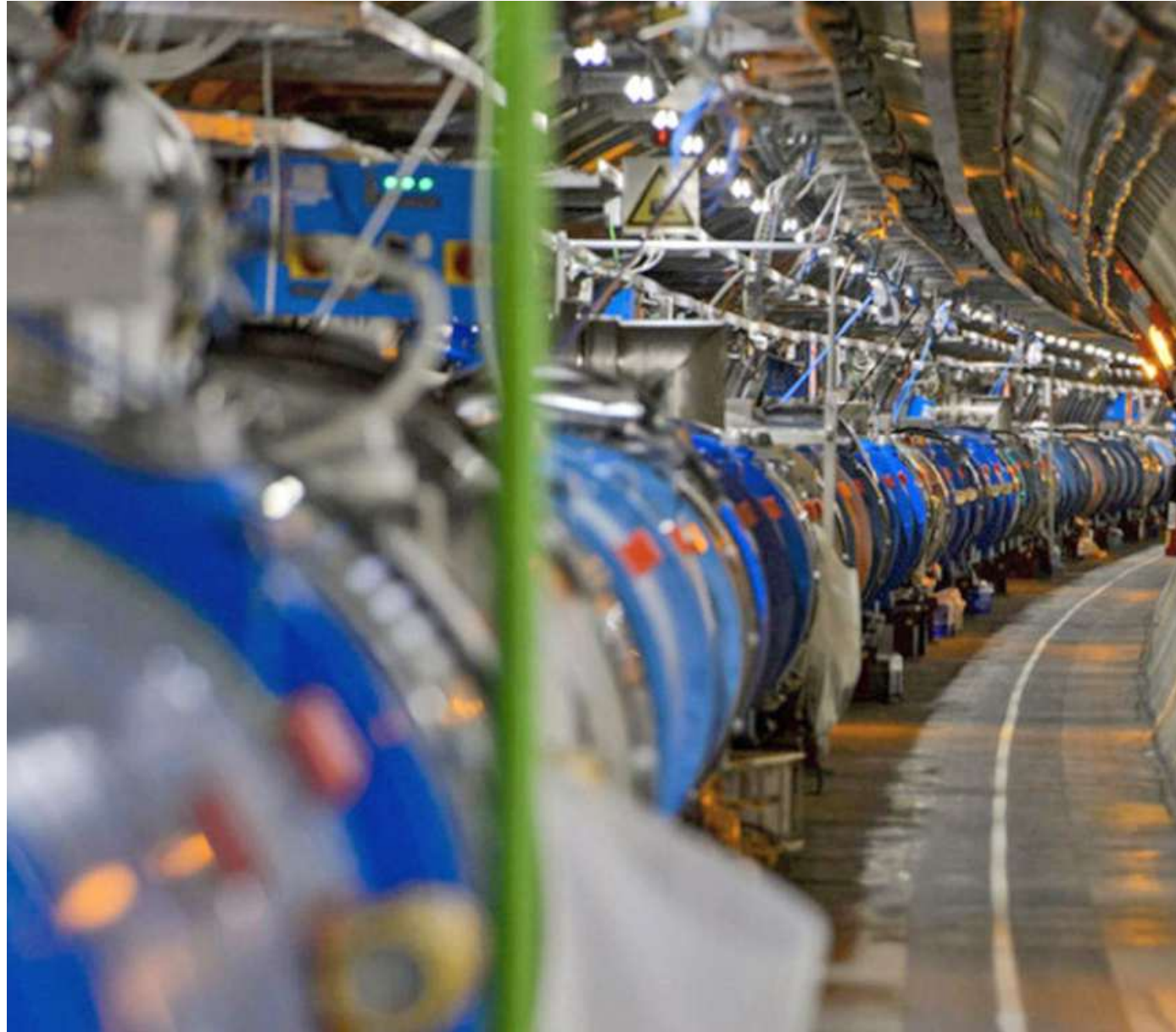
As a result, the top quark is so unstable that it could break up into lighter, more stable particles in less than 10^{-25} seconds.

The top quark's mass is very important in physics. A particle's mass is equal to the sum of masses contributed from multiple sources. An important source for all elementary particles is the Higgs field, which pervades the entire universe. A "field" is like a sea of energy and excitations in the field are called particles. This way, for example, an excitation of the Higgs field is called the Higgs boson just as an electron can be considered to be an excitation of an 'electron field'.

All these fields engage with each other in specific ways. When the 'electron field' interacts with the Higgs field at energies much less than 100 GeV, for example, the electron particle will acquire some mass. The same thing goes for other elementary particles. (GeV, or giga-electron-volt, is a unit of energy used in the context of subatomic particles: 1 joule = 6.24 billion GeV.)

If the top quark is the most massive subatomic particle, it is because Higgs bosons interact most strongly with it. By measuring the top quark's mass as precisely as possible, then, physicists can learn a lot about the Higgs boson as well.

"Physicists are intrigued by the top quark mass as there is something peculiar about it," Nirmal Raj, particle theorist and assistant professor at the Indian Institute of Science, Bengaluru, told *The Hindu*. "On the one hand, it is the one closest to the Higgs boson's mass, which is what one would 'naturally' expect before measuring it. On the other, all other [particles like it] are much, much lighter, making one wonder if the top quark is actually an oddball, not a 'natural' species."



A tunnel inside the Large Hadron Collider during maintenance work. AFP

The universe as we know it

But the rabbit hole goes deeper.

Physicists are keen to study the Higgs boson also because of its own mass, which it acquires by interacting with other Higgs bosons. Importantly, the Higgs boson is more massive than expected — which is to say the Higgs field is more energy-laden than expected. And because it pervades the universe, the universe can be said to be more energetic than expected. This 'expectation' comes from calculations physicists have performed and they don't have reason to believe they are wrong. Why does the Higgs field have so much energy?

Physicists also have a theory as to how the Higgs field originally formed (at the birth of the universe). If they are right, there is a small yet non-zero chance that one day in future, the field could go through a sort of self-adjustment that reduces its energy and modifies the universe in drastic ways.

They know the field has some potential energy today and there is a way it could shed some of it to have less and become more stable. There are two ways to get to this stable state. One is for the field to gain some energy first before losing it and more, like climbing one side of a mountain to get into a deeper valley on the other side. The other is if an event called quantum tunnelling happens, whereby the field's potential energy would 'tunnel' through the mountain instead of having to climb over it and



The Greek philosopher Empedocles surmised 2,400 years ago that matter could be broken up into smaller and smaller pieces until we're left with air, earth, fire, and water

drop into the valley yonder.

This is why Stephen Hawking said in 2016 the Higgs boson could spell the "end of the universe" as we know it. Even if the Higgs field is slightly stronger than it is now, the atoms of most chemical elements will be destroyed, taking stars, galaxies, and earthlife with them. But while Hawking was technically correct, other physicists quickly said the frequency of the tunnelling event was 1 in 10^{100} years.

The Higgs boson's mass — $126 \text{ GeV}/c^2$ (a unit used for subatomic particles) — is also just about enough to keep the universe in its current state; anything else and the "end" would happen. Such a finely tuned value is obviously curious and physicists would like to know which natural processes contribute to it. The top quark is part of this picture by virtue of being the most massive particle, in a sense the Higgs boson's closest friend.

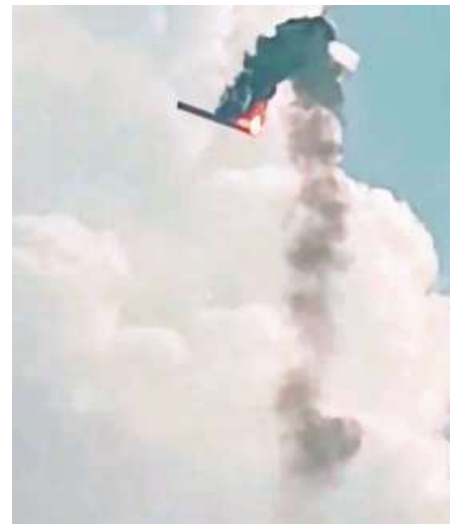
"Measuring the top quark mass precisely has implications for whether our universe will tunnel out of existence," Dr. Raj said.

Finding the top quark

Physicists discovered the top quark in 1995 at a particle accelerator in the US called the Tevatron, measuring its mass to be $151\text{-}197 \text{ GeV}/c^2$. The Tevatron was shut down in 2011; physicists continued to analyse data it had collected and updated the value three years later to $174.98 \text{ GeV}/c^2$. Other experiments and research groups yielded more precise values over time. On June 27, physicists at the Large Hadron Collider (LHC) in Europe reported the most precise figure yet: $172.52 \text{ GeV}/c^2$.

Measuring a top quark's mass is difficult when its lifetime is around 10^{-25} seconds. Typically, a particle-smasher will produce an ultra-hot soup of particles. If a top quark is present in this soup, it will quickly decay into specific groups of lighter particles. Detectors look out for these events, and when they happen track and record their properties. Finally, computers collect this data and physicists analyse them to reconstruct the physical properties of the top quark.

Now researchers will incorporate the top quark's mass measurement into calculations that inform our understanding of our universe's particles. Some of them will use it to also quest for an even more precise value. According to Dr. Raj, precisely measuring the top quark's mass is also key to knowing whether some other particle with mass close to that of the top quark could be hiding in the data.



The first stage of the Tianlong-3 rocket falls back to earth. The smoke from its engine shows the stage's ascent trail following its accidental lift-off. YOUTUBE

Chinese rocket engine goes Awol during hot testing

Reuters

Beijing Tianbing Technology Co. said on Sunday that the first stage of its Tianlong-3 rocket under development had detached from its launch pad during a test due to a structural failure and landed in a hilly area of the city of Gongyi in central China.

There were no reports of casualties after an initial investigation, Beijing Tianbing, also known as Space Pioneer, said in a statement on its official WeChat account.

Parts of the rocket stage were scattered within a "safe area" but caused a local fire, according to a separate statement by the Gongyi emergency management bureau.

The fire has since been extinguished and no one has been hurt, the bureau said.

The two-stage Tianlong-3 (the name is Mandarin for "Sky Dragon") is a partly reusable rocket under development by Space Pioneer, one of a small group of private-sector rocket makers that have grown rapidly over the past five years.

Falling rocket debris in China after launches is not unheard of, but it is very rare anywhere in the world for part of a rocket under development to make an unplanned flight out of its test site and

The two-stage Tianlong-3 is a partly reusable rocket under development by Space Pioneer, one of a small group of private-sector rocket makers that have seen rapid growth recently

crash.

According to Space Pioneer, the first stage of the Tianlong-3 ignited normally during a hot test but later detached from the test bench due to structural failure and landed in hilly areas 1.5 km away.

A hot test is one in which fuel is flowed into the rocket motor being tested and it is allowed to fire in conditions mimicking those during lift-off.

A rocket can consist of several stages, with the first, or lowest, stage igniting and propelling the rocket upwards upon its launch.

When the fuel is exhausted, the first stage falls off, and the second stage ignites, keeping the rocket in propulsion. Some rockets have third stages. India's Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV) has four stages.

Space Pioneer says the performance of Tianlong-3 is comparable to SpaceX's Falcon 9, which is also a two-stage rocket.

In April 2023, Space Pioneer launched a kerosene-oxygen rocket, the Tianlong-2, becoming the first private Chinese firm to send a liquid-propellant rocket into space.

Chinese commercial space companies have rushed into the sector since 2014, when private investment in the industry was allowed by the state.

Many started making satellites while others including Space Pioneer, focused on developing reusable rockets that can significantly cut mission costs.

The test sites of such companies can be found along China's coastal areas, located by the sea due to safety reasons.

But some are also sited deep in the country's interior such as Space Pioneer's test centre in Gongyi, a city of 800,000 people in the central province of Henan.

THE SCIENCE QUIZ

Remembering the spectacular Tunguska event

Vasudevan Mukunth

QUESTION 1

On June 30, 115 years ago, a few people living in a remote part of Siberia saw a bright flash of light in the sky followed by a tremendous shockwave that scorched a swath of trees, and shattered windows and set things on fire hundreds of kilometres away. Name the Russian city over which a similar event occurred in February 2013.

QUESTION 2

The main witnesses of the Tunguska event were members of the area's Evenki tribe. After the event, they closely guarded the blast area because they believed it was caused by a deity named Agda. As a result, expeditions to the site were delayed by more than a decade. What is Agda the god of?

QUESTION 3

In 1921 and then in 1927, Russian scientist _____ led an expedition to the blast site. Bad weather foiled the first attempt but the team succeeded the second time. His team discovered the blast hadn't produced a crater. Fill in the blanks.

QUESTION 4

Scientists believe today the Tunguska event was caused by an asteroid entering the earth's atmosphere and blowing up mid-air. What are asteroids called once they enter the atmosphere?

QUESTION 5

There used to be some debate about whether the Tunguska event was caused by an asteroid or a meteor. Nonetheless, the U.N. said in 2016 that June 30 would be celebrated as X. What is X?

Visual: In 2022, a NASA spacecraft deliberately slammed into the moon of this asteroid (depicted) to check if such a manoeuvre could be used to deflect asteroids from a destructive path towards the earth. Name the asteroid. NASA

- Answers to June 25 quiz:
1. Programming language that C succeeded — **Ans: B**
 2. C attribute that means it describes processes rather than outputs — **Ans: Imperative**
 3. Dennis Ritchie's coauthor of 'The C Programming Language' — **Ans: Brian Kernighan**
 4. American organisation that publishes C standards — **Ans: American National Standards Institute**
 5. C description that means it loosely defines the types of terms — **Ans: Weakly typed**
- Visual: **Ken Thompson**

First contact: Ifran Ali | Sandeep Sukhdeve | Anmol Agrawal | K.N. Viswanathan | Vikram Vicky



Visual: In 2022, a NASA spacecraft deliberately slammed into the moon of this asteroid (depicted) to check if such a manoeuvre could be used to deflect asteroids from a destructive path towards the earth. Name the asteroid. NASA

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

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