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AIIMS hacked



Patient wait: People seen waiting at AIIMS, Delhi as billings are handled manually. Computer servers at the institute are down after hackers targeted them six days ago. SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA (REPORT ON PAGE 10)

SIA to get 25.1% in AI as part of Vistara merger deal with Tata

Jagriti Chandra
NEW DELHI

Singapore Airlines will get a 25.1% stake in Air India and make an investment of ₹2,059 crore in the Tata-owned airline as part of an agreement to merge their joint venture Vistara with

the larger Indian carrier. The merger will allow the Tata group to consolidate the different airlines it owns under an enlarged Air India group. Earlier this month, Air India also fully bought out budget carrier AirAsia India from Malaysia's AirAsia Aviation

Group and said it would combine it with AI's low-cost Air India Express unit. Tata Sons purchased both Air India and Air India Express from the government in January.

CONTINUED ON
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Doubling court strength won't end pendency: SC

Judiciary is overburdened because of the system, says Chief Justice of India Chandrachud; he points out that it is already difficult to find good lawyers to fill judicial vacancies in High Courts

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Tuesday said that increasing the number of judges will not demolish the perennial problem of pendency, noting that it is already difficult finding good lawyers to accept the call to the Bench in High Courts.

The court said that a public interest litigation (PIL) petition seeking to "double" the number of judges in the High Courts and the district judiciary was a rather "simplistic" solution to arrears.

At one point, Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud asked petitioner-advocate Ashwini Kumar Upadhyay whether he wanted the Supreme Court to increase its judicial

QQ This kind of petition will not be heard by the American Supreme Court. That is also the reality of our judicial system... that we have widened access to the Supreme Court to a point that is becoming dysfunctional

D.Y. CHANDRACHUD,
Chief Justice of India

strength to 70 from the current 34.

Mr. Upadhyay said that the judge-population ratio in developed countries was 50 for every million. Mr. Upadhyay said that there were at least 10 crore cases pending in the district judiciary alone.

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the American Supreme Court. That is also the reality of our judicial system... that we have widened access to the Supreme Court to a point that is becoming dysfunctional.

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"Then let me tell you something. This kind of petition will not be heard by

"overburdened because of the system". He added, "If we apply the brakes, we will be absolutely clear of arrears."

"The American Supreme Court does not hear lawyers on whether you should admit a case for hearing. The U.K. Supreme Court decides which 180 cases they have to hear," the CJI observed orally.

Chief Justice Chandrachud recounted how, when he was the Chief Justice of the Allahabad High Court, he had received a letter from the Law Minister to increase the judicial strength in the court by 25%. "I said 'good heavens, I cannot fill up my 160 and you want to increase from 160 by 25%', the CJI said.

CONTINUED ON
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IN BRIEF



Gujarat Phase 1 campaign ends

AHMEDABAD
Campaigning for the first phase of Gujarat Assembly election to be held on December 1 ended on Tuesday evening. As many as 788 candidates are in the fray for 89 seats in 19 districts in Saurashtra and south Gujarat. » Page 11

Will empower RWAs financially, says Kejriwal

NEW DELHI
With only five days to go for the MCD elections, AAP chief Arvind Kejriwal on Tuesday promised political and financial powers besides the status of "mini councillors" to the city's RWAs. » Page 2

OPPORTUNITIES » PAGE 3

Gehlot, Pilot share a platform ahead of yatra's State entry



United front: K.C. Venugopal with Ashok Gehlot and Sachin Pilot in Jaipur on Tuesday. PTI

The Hindu Bureau
JAIPUR

Days after Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot made some stinging remarks on his former deputy Sachin Pilot, the two Congress leaders appeared together in a show of soli-

darity here on Tuesday. Both of them affirmed that former party president Rahul Gandhi's Bharat Jodo Yatra, entering the State on December 4, would be an "outstanding success".

CONTINUED ON
» PAGE 10

Nadav Lapid 'abused' invitation to IFFI panel: Israeli envoy



Kallol Bhattacharjee
Devesh K. Pandey

NEW DELHI

Filmmaker Nadav Lapid has "abused" Indian hospitality by referring to the film *The Kashmir Files* as "propaganda" and "vulgar", the Israel's Ambassador to India has said.

In an "open letter" to Mr. Lapid, the Israeli envoy, Naor Gilon, equated the film on the exile of the Pandit community from the Kashmir Valley with Steven Spielberg's Holocaust classic *Schindler's List* and urged the filmmaker to "justify" his criticism of the film.

"In Indian culture, they say that a guest is like God. You have abused in the

worst way the Indian invitation to chair the panel of judges at @IFFIGoa as well as the trust, respect, and warm hospitality they have bestowed on you," Mr. Gilon said.

CONTINUED ON
» PAGE 10

Betting for exotic meat, gambling dens in Manipur descend further into illegality

Rahul Karmakar
GUWAHATI

Betting in parts of Manipur has literally gone wild.

Police and forest officials in the State's Ukhral town have been scanning "gambling dens" following reports of wild animals – dead or alive – being offered as prizes for raffle draws. Ukhral is about 80 km northeast of the State capital Imphal.

Wildlife activists based in the town said there have been instances of people buying raffle draw tickets ranging from ₹100 to ₹500 to try their luck to win exotic meat. The larger or rarer the bird or animal or body



Wild wager: Binturong (or bearcat) is among several offerings of exotic meat at Ukhral's gambling groups. GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

part, the higher the price of the ticket.

"Such cases of gambling with a wildlife twist have been happening under the very noses of the authorities, particularly on a 5-km stretch where the Mini Se-

cretariat is located," an activist said, declining to be named.

Apart from wild boars and deer, animals such as binturong (an arboreal mammal also known as bearcat), squirrels and flying foxes (bats) have been found to be on offer. Different types of birds such as the grey-sided thrush and tragopans (often called horned pheasants) have also been spotted. The Blyth's tragopan is the State bird of adjoining Nagaland.

"We are scanning the public places where such cases [of raffle draws] have been reported from. We have not detected any case after the report," Shannigan Shaliwo, the divisional forest officer said.

other, he added.
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MCD polls: three contestants, each with something different to offer

At least 1,350 candidates are in the fray for the December 4 civic polls in the city. While most of them have been active in mainstream politics, some do not fit the bill of a typical politician. **Mehul Malpani** spoke to three such candidates who come from humble backgrounds and stand out for their uniqueness



SCRAP DEALER

The BJP, in its efforts to win over Pasmanda Muslims (the socially disadvantaged majority of India's Muslims), has fielded four candidates from the community. One of them is 50-year-old **Irfan Malik** contesting from Chandni Mahal (Ward No. 76).

Mr. Malik says, as a Muslim, he never experienced any kind of discrimination in his party. He joined the BJP 10 years ago and is a scrap dealer by profession. Mr. Malik is confident of becoming the first-ever BJP councillor from Chandni Mahal. Garbage and clean water are the two issues ailing his ward, he says.



SANITATION WORKER

After finishing his shift at 3.30 p.m. at Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), where he works as a sanitation worker, **Jitender Kumar**, CPI (ML) candidate from Lado Sarai (Ward No. 154) starts his poll campaign.

A resident of Kusumpur Pahari slum near Vasant Vihar, Mr. Kumar has been working on the JNU campus for nearly 18 years on a contract basis. Mr. Kumar says the private agency he works for has sent him a show-cause notice objecting to his candidature. His family has also expressed reservations about his political foray. "I am not going to back down from serving the poor even if I'm fired," the 37-year-old says.



TRANSGENDER

From north-west Delhi's Sultanpuri (A) ward AAP has fielded **Bobby Kinnar**, a transgender candidate known for helping the homeless since her teenage years. The 38-year-old candidate, also known as 'Bobby Netaji', says growing up she often found herself at the receiving end of slurs over her identity.

"The people of the ward, who have showered so much love on me, are the biggest source of strength for me. My goal is to promote education in my ward. I want to generate resources to help people get a better education. I work for everyone, not just people from my own community," said Ms. Bobby.

HC grants 'last opportunity' to Centre to respond to pleas on Jamia violence

The Hindu Bureau

NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Tuesday granted "one last opportunity" to the Centre to submit its response to a plea seeking transfer from Delhi Police to an independent agency the investigation into the cases related to

violence on the Jamia Millia Islamia (JMI) campus in December 2019. Police personnel had entered the campus to control students' protests against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act. A Bench of Justices Siddharth Mridul and Talwant Singh asked the Centre to file within a week its reply to the application seeking the setting

up of a Special Investigation Team (SIT) to probe alleged police atrocities during the protests.

The court was hearing a batch of petitions moved by lawyers, students of JMI and residents of Okhla in south Delhi against "erring police officers". It posted the matter for next hearing on December 13. Delhi Police had

earlier defended its decision to enter the university, saying it was done to control the "aggravated form of unlawful assembly". Advocate Colin Gonsalves, appearing for petitioner Nabila Hasan, said at the time of the incident, the students were holding peaceful protests but police "attacked them mercilessly".

Will financially empower RWAs if AAP wins: Kejriwal

RWAs say they should be strengthened without having to take sides; CM jolted after we promised participatory roles for RWAs: BJP; BJP has deployed all its might to fight an *aam aadmi*: Kejriwal

The Hindu Bureau

NEW DELHI

With only five days left for the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) elections, Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) chief Arvind Kejriwal promised political and financial powers besides the status of "mini councillors" to the city's Resident Welfare Associations (RWAs).

Addressing a press conference here on Tuesday, the AAP chief said, "People would not have to chase politicians anymore to get their work done. We will provide funds to the RWAs to help them run their offices." The Delhi CM said the intent behind this scheme is to decentralise power and make "every city-dweller a Chief Minister".

The AAP national convener addressed Delhi's voters after a break of over a week, during which he was campaigning for the Gujarat Assembly election. The Delhi CM went on a door-to-door campaign in



The intent behind the scheme is to decentralise power, said Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal. PTI

Chirag Delhi and clicked selfies with people. He said the BJP has deployed seven CMs and 17 Cabinet Ministers to fight an *aam aadmi*.

BJP's MCD election management committee chief Ashish Sood said the BJP in its manifesto made a commitment of giving a participatory role to the RWAs in the functioning of the MCD.

"The same got a huge response from the RWAs,

which jolted the Chief Minister forcing him to return to mohalla sabhas and RWAs," he said.

Welcoming the announcement, joint front president of east Delhi RWAs B.S. Vohra said, "Cash assistance should not be given to RWAs; it can cause a law-and-order situation. The money should rather go to the Sub Divisional Magistrates (SDMs) and the RWAs must be kept in the

loop about the work being executed. More importantly, this concept should be apolitical in nature. We should not be made to ask for votes for any party."

Atul Goyal, who heads United Residents Joint Action (URJA), said, "The idea to make the RWAs the torch-bearers of AAP is highly objectionable. The RWAs are non-political organisations and should remain so."

Trilokpuri murder: FSL team searches house for samples

The Hindu Bureau

NEW DELHI

A team of the Forensic Science Laboratory (FSL) reached Trilokpuri in east Delhi on Tuesday to collect samples from the refrigeration

tor and bathroom of the house where a 45-year-old man was allegedly stabbed to death by his wife and stepson in May this year.

The accused, who were arrested on Saturday last, had allegedly dismem

bered the body of the victim, Anjan Das, into 10 pieces and stored them in their fridge before dumping them in a field less than a kilometre from their house. The mother-son duo had allegedly drained

the blood of the victim in their bathroom.

A senior police officer said the FSL team will analyse the samples collected from the house and provide a report to police on whether they match with

the DNA sample of Anjan's children from his first wife in Bhagalpur, Bihar.

Sources said the police have still not recovered the weapon of offence used by the accused to stab and dismember Anjan's body.

Mehrauli murder: Aftab's narco test likely tomorrow

The Hindu Bureau

NEW DELHI

Murder accused Aftab Poonawalla was subjected to the fifth round of polygraph test on Tuesday, and is likely to undergo a narco-analysis test on Thursday, police officers said.

Assistant Director of Forensic Science Laboratory, Rohini, Sanjeev Gupta said Aftab came to the FSL office around 10 a.m. and returned to Tihar jail by around 3 p.m. "He cooperated in the tests; we will send the report to the Delhi police in two to three days," Mr. Gupta said. Aftab

A senior FSL official confirmed that Aftab will undergo the narco-analysis test on Thursday. "The report of the polygraph tests will be submitted around the same time," the official said.

Aftab's narco test will be conducted inside the Tihar

jail in the presence of FSL and police officers. On Monday, some sword-wielding men attacked a police van in which Aftab was being taken to the FSL's office. The attackers claimed to be from a right-wing outfit, Hindu Sena. They were not able to enter the van and harm Aftab as police personnel promptly dispersed them.

Security has been beefed up outside the FSL office in Rohini in the wake of Monday's incident, sources said. Paramilitary personnel have been deployed outside the laboratory to prevent any mishaps or anti-social activities, the sources added.

DCP (Rohini) G.S. Sidhu said two persons have been arrested and a case under IPC sections pertaining to obstructing a public servant from discharging duty has been lodged against them.

Check past records of drivers, police tell Uber

The Hindu Bureau

NEW DELHI

Delhi Police on Tuesday asked Uber to verify the past records of drivers before onboarding them and suggested that a mechanism be put in place to check their alcohol consumption levels.

Delhi Traffic Police Additional Commissioner Mahesh Chandra Bharadwaj, speaking at Uber's safety feature launch, said that drunken driving has been a major factor in violations of traffic rules in the city.

Mr. Bharadwaj said a mechanism should be put in place to determine whether or not a driver is drunk.

"We do the testing through an alcohol meter. Can Uber fix something closer to steering so that if a driver is drunk a notification for the same is received," he said.

Air Marshal P.V. Iyer (retd.) launches book on fitness

The Hindu Bureau

NEW DELHI

"When you're young, you don't worry about old age, that's how the problem starts," Air Marshal PV Iyer (retd.) said on Tuesday while launching his book 'Fit At Any Age' at India International Centre.

Mr. Iyer, 93, who runs eight km a day, penned his journey to fitness in the book and shared anecdotes from his life to ex

plain how he became motivated to work out daily.

Start early
He also writes about why it's important to work out and why one's journey towards fitness should start early.

The author said he started his fitness journey at the age of 47 before which he did not have any inclination towards fitness and working out everyday.

"This book explains

how adhering to a culture of fitness can keep illnesses at bay. Exercising strengthens the heart and cleans the blood vessels," Mr. Iyer said.

"One needs to move regularly, you cannot sit idle," he said, adding that an idle body is a devil's dean.

Mr. Iyer, who supports a vegan lifestyle, said that it is important to maintain healthy eating habits and consuming a diet that is low on fat and rich in fiber.

| Timings | |
|--------------------|-----------|
| DELHI | |
| WEDNESDAY, NOV. 30 | |
| RISE 06:56 | SET 17:25 |
| RISE 12:49 | SET 00:00 |
| THURSDAY, DEC. 01 | |
| RISE 06:56 | SET 17:25 |
| RISE 13:24 | SET 00:12 |
| FRIDAY, DEC. 02 | |
| RISE 06:57 | SET 17:25 |
| RISE 13:56 | SET 01:14 |

| Delhi Weather | max | min |
|---------------|-----|-----|
| Delhi City | 27 | 07 |
| Safdarjung | 27 | 07 |
| Palam | 25 | 11 |

Delhi Palam Today
27°C The weather will be dry. Shallow fog and mist will occur in slight cold morning. Day will be comfortable. Night also will be slight cold and hazy.
Delhi Palam Tomorrow
27°C A dry weather to continue. Morning will be cold with shallow fog and mist. Day will be comfortable. Night will be slight cold and hazy.
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THE HINDU
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More stringent anti-conversion Bill tabled in Uttarakhand Assembly

Press Trust of India
DEHRADUN

The winter session of the Uttarakhand Assembly began on Tuesday with a more stringent anti-conversion Bill among ten legislations tabled in the House.

To be called Uttarakhand Freedom of Religion (Amendment) Act, 2022, the Bill seeks to make unlawful conversion a cognisable and non-bailable offence punishable with imprisonment for a term of at least six months to a maximum of five years. The offender will also be imposed with a fine of ₹10,000 to ₹25,000.

"No person shall convert, either directly or otherwise, any other person from one religion to another by use or practice of misrepresentation, force, undue influence, coercion, allurement or by any fraudulent means," the draft Bill said.

BJD, BJP resort to man-to-man marking to win Padmapur bypoll

With under a week left for polling, there is massive community mobilisation by parties to win this high-stakes Odisha seat

Satyasundar Barik PAIKMAL (ODISHA)

In 10 years of her marriage, Subarna Suna, 35, in Bartunda gram panchayat of this migration-prone block has hardly seen her husband Rajamohan returning home unscheduled in the middle of seasonal employment in brick kilns in other States. But, this time she hopes to see him in the first week of December.

In a region where there have been alleged incidents of attacks on migrant workers for refusing to migrate after taking wage advances, Satrughna Tandi and his wife, residents of Katangpali village under Mithapalli Gram panchayat, have delayed their annual migration to a brick kiln in Telangana by a fortnight. "This time, we have been allowed to stay till December 5 to cast our votes," they said.

The usual goodies are showered on the marginalised population as every vote of over 2.5 lakh electors counts in the Padmapur bypoll which will set the tone of the political



Tough fight: Poll campaign billboards seen at Padmapur in Bargarh district of Odisha. BISWARANJAN ROUT

battle for the State and general election in 2024.

With less than a week left for the all-important by-election, political parties – mainly the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the Biju Janata Dal (BJD) – are carrying out man-to-man marking of votes in Padmapur constituency, which shares its border with Chhattisgarh.

The by-election was necessitated following the death of Bijay Ranjan Singh Bariha, former MLA of Padmapur. His elder daughter Barsha Singh Bariha has been fielded by the BJD, in a bid to primarily garner sympathy votes. The BJD has fielded Pradip

Purohit, a farmer leader and former MLA. The bypoll appears to be a straight fight between the BJP and the BJD candidates, although Congress candidate Satyabhushan Sahu, a veteran party leader, is trying his best to corner a large chunk of votes using his experience.

Defeat in a decade
The bypoll gained huge traction especially after 'demoralised' BJP went on to win Dhammagar bypoll earlier this month. While the BJP lost all bypolls held after 2019 election, the Dhammagar defeat had also marked first by-election loss for the BJD in more

than a decade.

At the foothills of Gondhamardan, considered the abode of presiding deity Lord Nrusisinghanath here, about 2,000 people belonging to Gond tribe gathered under the banner of the BJD to discuss the future of the community's future.

"Total number of Gond voters in three blocks – Padmapur, Paikmal and Jharbandh – are 20,000 to 22,000. Our votes would be crucial in deciding the poll outcome. We have been promised financing for building a temple for our deities near Nrusisinghanath Temple," said Basant Dharua, who is president of Gond Samaj in Padmapur sub-division.

Prior to candidate selection, a section of Binjhal tribe, which Bijay Singh Bariha belonged to, met Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik urging him to nominate a member of Bariha family.

Ms. Bariha, who is married to the son of a BJP leader in Puri, returned home to fill her father's shoes.

Similarly, a delegation of farmer community Kulta Samaj in Bargarh district

met Mr. Patnaik and urged him to provide one acre and financial assistance for building a Dharmasala (a low-cost boarding facility for pilgrims) at Puri. Bargarh, also have a significant vote share in Padmapur constituency. Meher Samaj, another community, from Bargarh district too met the Chief Minister. It is stated to be the BJD's attempt to bring all communities to back its candidate.

Home Singh Majhi, a leader of Gond community and BJD leader, has been in touch with his tribe. "Members of Gond tribe have been cautioned not to divide the community on political lines. It is all BJD's propaganda to influence the bypoll," said Mr. Majhi. Tribals constitute over 35% of Padmapur voters.

As the political climate is heating up, income tax officials on Monday conducted raids on the premises of businessmen having close association with the BJD. In what was seen as a counter action, Goods and Services Tax officials went after business houses with BJP links.

'Don't use any weapon to glorify, threaten someone'

Vikas Vasudeva
CHANDIGARH

The Punjab Police on Tuesday said that while a person can carry a licensed weapon, it should not be glorified or used in a way to threaten someone, even as the Dal Khalsa dismissed the prevalence of 'gun culture' in Punjab.

Inspector-General of Police (Headquarters) Sukhchain Singh Gill said there is no restriction on issuing new arms licences and carrying them for purpose of self-defence in the State.

The Punjab Police had on November 26 asked people to remove objectionable content promoting 'gun culture' from their social media handles within 72 hours. The three-day ultimatum ended on Tuesday.

Clearing the air over the confusion created about the drive against the glorification of arms, he said, "A person can carry his/her licensed weapon, but should not glorify or display it in a way to threaten someone. Similarly, new arms licences are being issued on a merit basis considering threat perception

Police had asked people to remove content promoting 'gun culture' from their social media handles

after proper verification."

The drive against the glorification of weapons was launched in the State, under which verification of licensed weapons and addresses of the licencees is being carried out.

'No gun culture'

Meanwhile, the Dal Khalsa dismissed all talk of a 'gun culture' prevailing in Punjab. In Bathinda, Dal Khalsa secretary for human rights affairs Imaan Singh Khara said there is no gun culture prevailing in the State and it is the political as well as police leadership backed by a section of the media, which has coined this phrase to defame people of Punjab.

Mr. Khara said Dal Khalsa rejects and registers protest against such an order, which, he said, would further increase insecurity in the people as the government has failed to uphold the rule of law in the State.

For a sweet deal



A long queue of tractor-trolleys loaded with sugarcane waiting at Hata village, on the outskirts of Kushinagar, in Uttar Pradesh, to sell their produce to a private sugar mill on Tuesday. V.V. KRISHNAN

Meghalaya Cabinet approves 7 outposts

Press Trust of India
SHILLONG

The Meghalaya Cabinet on

Tuesday approved a proposal to set up police outposts at seven locations, including the violence-hit

Mukroh village where six people were killed in firing, along the State's boundary with Assam.

Loopholes in Haryana RERA law need to be fixed, says its chief

The Hindu Bureau
GURUGRAM

Haryana Real Estate Regulatory Authority (Gurugram) Chairman, K. K. Khandelwal, on Tuesday said there were certain loopholes in RERA Act and called upon the industry leaders to seek for amendments in the law for the benefit of all the stakeholders.

He was speaking at the Haryana Real Estate Summit 2022 held at Gurugram and attended by real estate industry leaders, policy-makers and bureaucrats. The summit was organised by National Real Estate Development Council (NAREDCO), an apex real estate body that works under the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs.

Mr. Khandelwal called upon real estate developers and builders to come together to seek modifications and up-gradation in the real estate act so that the loopholes could be corrected benefiting all, including the buyers. He ad-

ded that the loopholes had been talked about with a piecemeal approach for long without any consistency on their removal. Mr. Khandelwal suggested to the industry leaders present at the summit to wield their influence under the banner of NAREDCO to the right quarters of the government for necessary changes in RERA Act.

'Form expert group'
Mr. Khandelwal suggested that NAREDCO should form an expert group to study the law in an objective manner and submit its recommendations to the government for corrective measures.

"I have been raising the issue of lacunae in the RERA act for the last couple of years to inspire the industry for necessary corrections during various interfaces with little success because industry leaders did not follow-up the issue with policy makers and that is why changes in the Act have not yet," said Mr. Khandelwal.

T.N. BJP leader alleges security lapses during PM's visit to Chess Olympiad

The Hindu Bureau

CHENNAI

Tamil Nadu Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) president K. Annamalai on Tuesday submitted a memorandum to Governor R.N. Ravi, in which he expressed concern over alleged lapses in the security arrangement when Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited Chennai during the Chess Olympiad in July.

'Metal detectors faulty'
Claiming to be in possession of a communication sent by the Union government to the Tamil Nadu police after the visit, he said most of the hand-held metal detectors, door-frame metal detectors and bomb detectors were not in order and overdue for maintenance or replace-



Tamil Nadu BJP chief K. Annamalai has demanded an impartial probe into the issue.

ment.

The Intelligence wing of the State police, which should have ensured such lapses did not happen, had tried to pass the buck by subsequently writing to police officers in the rank of Superintendents of Police to check such equipment. He recalled that the

BJP had raised serious concerns over the officer heading the State's intelligence wing.

Addressing the media later, he alleged such serious lapses were an indication of the deteriorating law and order situation in the State.

The party urged the Go-

vernor to instruct the State government to conduct an impartial inquiry into the issue. It requested him to take steps to conduct an independent audit of the security arrangements in important places and the quality of the equipment used.

Online rummy

Asked about the State government's criticism of delay by the Governor in granting approval for the Bill to ban online rummy, Mr. Annamalai clarified his party favoured the ban and appealed to Mr. Ravi to grant assent to it.

Contending that the Governor may have had concerns over certain legal aspects of the Bill, he blamed the State government for "conveniently shifting" all the blame onto Mr. Ravi.

Bommai holds consultation on boundary row in Delhi

Karnataka's stand in the border issue is justified, says Chief Minister, adding that he was confident about a 'good outcome'; the case is listed before the Supreme Court for hearing today

The Hindu Bureau

BENGALURU

Karnataka Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai on Tuesday expressed confidence about a "good outcome" in the Karnataka-Maharashtra boundary case and asserted that as per the States Reorganisation Act, 1956, its stand is justified.

Mr. Bommai is in the national capital and held discussions with senior advocate in the State's legal panel Mukul Rohatgi in the wake of the case being listed to come up before the Supreme Court for hearing on Wednesday.



Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and Karnataka CM Basavaraj Bommai in New Delhi on Tuesday. PTI

The important thing is the maintainability of Maharashtra. What should be our objections or arguments to it has been decided, and we are confident that Karnataka's stand is justified," he added.

The border row between the two States dates back to the reorganisation on linguistic lines. Maharashtra laid claim to Belagavi which was part of the erstwhile Bombay Presidency as it has a sizable Marathi-speaking population. It also laid claim to 80 Marathi-speaking villages which are currently part of Karnataka.

On the question of people of more than 42 villages of Jat taluk in Maharashtra, wanting to meet him, with a demand to merge their areas with Karnataka, Mr. Bommai said any decision on this would be taken only after consulting all political parties in the State and legal experts.

The Kashmir Files has been politicised: Raut

Abhinay Deshpande

MUMBAI

Shiv Sena MP Sanjay Raut on Tuesday spoke on the controversy over Israeli filmmaker and jury head of the 53rd International Film Festival of India (IFFI) Natan Lapid for his remarks on the film *The Kashmir Files*.

In his speech at the closing ceremony of the film festival in Goa, Mr. Lapid had described the movie as "propaganda" and "vulgar", and said he was "disturbed and shocked" to see the film being screened at

the film festival.

Supporting the remarks, Mr. Raut said the movie had been 'politicised' and more Kashmiri Pandits suffered after its release. "It was propaganda by one party against another. A party and the government were busy with publicity... but the maximum number of killings in Kashmir occurred after this film was released," he said.

He asked where the filmmakers were when the Kashmiri Pandits were attacked. "Some money earned from the movie should be given to them."



Major drama: YSR Telangana Party chief Y.S. Sharmila on her way to the camp office of Chief Minister in Hyderabad on Tuesday. PTI

YSRTP chief arrested, gets conditional bail after protest attempt

The Hindu Bureau
HYDERABAD

The Hyderabad City Police on Tuesday arrested YSR Telangana Party (YSRTP) chief Y.S. Sharmila Reddy on various charges, including theft, criminal intimidation and public nuisance. She was later granted conditional bail.

Ms. Sharmila was at the centre of a high drama during the day after she called for laying a siege to Pragati Bhavan, the Telangana Chief Minister's camp office at Punjagutta, to protest against the violent developments during her padayatra in Warangal on Monday.

Her SUV was vandalised and the caravan she has been using for the padayatra was set on fire by TRS activists in Warangal (Rural) district, reportedly over her remarks against local legislator Peddi Sudarshan Reddy.

Many YSRTP supporters, who assembled for the gherao, were detained by the police outside the Pragati Bhavan here. Ms. Sharmila, who drove the same vandalised SUV and

was tailed by the damaged caravan, was stopped by the police on Somajiguda Road.

The police who prevented her further movement asked her to get down from the vehicle. However, a firm Ms. Sharmila remained seated at the wheel and locked herself in the SUV.

The police pressed a traffic crane, tied and pulled the SUV with her inside all the way till S.R. Nagar police station, about four kilometres away.

High tension prevailed at the police station too as several activists gathered to protest against the police action. The police resorted to a lathi charge to disperse the crowds.

According to the Punjagutta police's FIR, Ms. Sharmila drove her vehicle in a rash and negligent manner. There was also a huge traffic jam causing inconvenience to others, the FIR read.

She was later produced before a Magistrate. After a hearing, the 14th Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate at Nampally granted her conditional bail.

The Hindu Bureau
KOCHI

The Kerala High Court on Tuesday upheld the appointment of Ciza Thomas as Vice-Chancellor in charge of APJ Abdul Kalam Technological University.

Dismissing a petition filed by the Kerala government challenging the appointment made by State Governor Arif Mohammed Khan in his capacity as Chancellor of the university, Justice Devan Ramachandran noted that the appointment was in order and she was duly qualified to be appointed to the



Ciza Thomas

post. The court directed the Governor to complete the search-cum-selection process for a new V-C within two months. The University Grants Commission informed the court that it would nominate its repre-

sentative to the search-cum-selection committee within two weeks.

It was following a Supreme Court order declaring the appointment of M.S. Rajasree as V-C *void ab initio* that the Chancellor appointed Dr. Thomas as V-C in-charge. The government contention was that the Chancellor should have appointed V-Cs of other universities, the Pro-V-C or the Principal Secretary to Higher Education to the post.

The Governor submitted to the court that his efforts to identify a senior professor from the university had failed as there

were no professors of required qualification to be appointed to the post. The Governor's request for a list of qualified professors from the Director of Technical Education went unheeded and the Director herself refused to take up the post. The Governor was left with the only option of appointing Dr. Thomas after evaluating her credentials, the court noted.

The court expressed concern over the disputes between two Constitutional authorities and its impact on the students and the academic world outside.

What right do you want to protect, SC asks petitioners in Jallikattu case

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Tuesday asked activists what they found wrong in Tamil Nadu's Jallikattu law when it protects animals from "unnecessary pain" and sought to preserve the "culture and traditions" of the people in the State.

A Constitution Bench led by Justice K.M. Joseph pointed to provisions in the law which calls for definitive preventive mea-

sures against cruelty to animals used in the bull-taming sport. The Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (Tamil Nadu Amendment) Act of 2017 and the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (Conduct of Jallikattu) Rules of 2017 also recognised the culture and traditions of the people as part of culture.

Justice Joseph said an Article 32 petition is usually filed to protect the fundamental rights of "persons".

"When is the constitutional right you want to protect here?" Justice Ajay Rastogi, on the Bench, asked the petitioners.

Senior advocate Siddharth Luthra, for the petitioners, said "a mere activity does not give a fundamental right status because of an assertion".

He said there was no material to justify Jallikattu as part of culture. Justice Joseph said an Article 32 petition is usually filed to protect the fundamental rights of "persons".

"When you talk about persons and say animals are entitled to personhood under Article 21, what about plants then," he asked.

Mr. Luthra said animal life was inextricably connected to the lives of humans, and harm caused to them would eventually affect human life, too. He said the Tamil Nadu Act was brought to circumvent the ban on Jallikattu imposed by the apex court.

But Justice Bose said that would be a "permissible activity" of the lawmaker. Court orders were not for all time to come.

'Won't stop Vizhinjam project midway'

The Hindu Bureau
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

The Kerala government on Tuesday made it clear that it would not buckle under any undue pressure from Vizhinjam protesters.

At an expert summit on Vizhinjam seaport organised by the Vizhinjam International Seaport Limited here, several Ministers said that the project will not be stopped midway under any circumstances.

Contrary to what is being reported in some sections that it was Adani Port, Ports Minister Ahamed Devarkavl said Vizhinjam port is not a private-owned but a government-owned facility.

Sky is the limit



Lighting up: An advanced jet trainer Hawk firing flares simulating an attack as part of the Navy Day rehearsal off the coast of Visakhapatnam on Tuesday. Navy Day on December 4 will be attended by President Droupadi Murmu. K.R. DEEPAK

Minor girl raped by her classmates in Telangana

The Hindu Bureau
HYDERABAD

The Telangana police on Tuesday announced the arrest of five children in conflict with law, who allegedly gang-raped their classmate, a 17-year-old girl.

The incident, the police said, first took place in August and continued several times. The accused also recorded the act on their cell-phones, used it to threaten the girl, and later circulated it via WhatsApp.

The police said the five boys were from Classes 9 and 10. They were produced before the Juvenile Justice Board for further procedure.

mechanic, and the duo raped her, said the police. The survivor's friends, along with others, tried to search for her, but in vain.

The next morning, she was found by her friends. The survivor was later taken to a hospital, where the doctors examined her and informed the police.

C.K. Baba, DCP, south east division, and his team, tracked down the accused, based on the booking details, and arrested them within two hours of the incident being reported.

The Bengaluru police are now checking the background of the accused to ascertain whether they were involved in similar offences.

Device which can convert any normal bed into an 'ICU' to be deployed in six States

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Dozee, a contactless remote vital parameter monitoring (RPM) device which can convert any normal bed into a step-down ICU, will be deployed in six States.

Around 400 units of Dozee which has been developed by a city-based startup, Turtle Shell Technologies Private Limited, will be deployed in public healthcare systems across Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, and Sikkim. This device is being deployed under the Aaro-



According to the World Bank, ICU beds in India stand at only 1,25,000 for a population of 1.4 billion. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

gya Daksh scheme which is a joint initiative between Centre for Cellular and Molecular Platforms (C-CAMP) and SBI Foundation. Dozee is India's first contactless RPM device.

Three Manchester United fans live the dream, meet their idol Wayne Rooney in Mumbai

M. P. Praveen
KOCHI

When three Malayali friends made their way to Mumbai last weekend, they were at best hopeful for a meeting with their idol, the legendary Manchester United player Wayne Rooney.

Being hardcore Manchester United fans, getting to meet Rooney, the all-time top scorer for the club, was a chance they could hardly ignore, no matter how long a shot it appeared.

"We knew that Rooney was in Mumbai as part of the television coverage of the FIFA World Cup. We tried to contact his team over email and Instagram



On cloud nine: The three Manchester United fans meeting Wayne Rooney in Mumbai. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

but in vain," says Akash Keavan, chairman of the Manchester United Supporters Club Kerala. He was accompanied by two fellow fans Vimal Mohan and Sanil Sani. Then they came to

know that a group of fans from the Manchester United Supporters Club Mumbai, the first official fan club of Manchester United in India, were about to meet Rooney. Sanil who had a friend in that group

IN BRIEF



President inaugurates Gita Mahotsav in Kurukshetra

President Droupadi Murmu on Tuesday inaugurated the International Gita Mahotsav-2022 in Kurukshetra in Haryana and launched 'Nirogi Haryana', a health check-up scheme, and an e-ticketing system of public road transport facilities. She also laid the foundation stone for a medical college and hospital in Sirs through virtual mode.

Agra, Ghaziabad, Prayagraj get first police commissioners

The three new police commissioners of Uttar Pradesh – Agra, Ghaziabad and Prayagraj – got their first police commissioners. Ajay Mishra, 2003-batch Indian Police Service (IPS) officer has been appointed as police commissioner of Ghaziabad, while Preetinder Singh, a 2004-batch IPS has been appointed as the first police commissioner of Agra. Ramit Sharma, a 1999-batch IPS officer has been given the charge of Prayagraj.

Maharashtra rail station bridge restored after accident

The restoration work has been completed on the foot over bridge (FOB) at Balharsh railway station, a portion of which collapsed resulting in the death one person in Maharashtra's Chandrapur district, a railway official said on Tuesday. The work on the FOB was completed on Monday night and the structure has been opened for passenger movement, he said. A 48-year-old woman died and 12 persons were injured as they fell on railway track after a pre-case slab of the FOB connecting platform 1 and 2 fell on November 27. At least 90 labourers were deputed in shifts to complete the restoration work and 10 officials supervised the task. PTI

Kerala woman raped by bike taxi driver, associate in Bengaluru

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A 23-year-old woman was allegedly raped by a motor bike taxi driver and his associate when she hired the service to get dropped at her friend's place in Electronic City in Bengaluru on Friday night.

The survivor, a free-

lance employee from Kerala, had come to the city on work.

After a meeting, the survivor booked the motor bike taxi. The accused, who stayed close to the destination, took advantage of the situation and went to his girlfriend's house before calling his associate, a mobile phone

mechanic, and the duo raped her, said the police. The survivor's friends, along with others, tried to search for her, but in vain.

The next morning, she was found by her friends.

The survivor was later taken to a hospital, where the doctors examined her and informed the police.

C.K. Baba, DCP, south east division, and his team, tracked down the accused, based on the booking details, and arrested them within two hours of the incident being reported.

The Bengaluru police are now checking the background of the accused to ascertain whether they were involved in similar offences.

The moment they met bearded idol will remain etched in their memories forever. "Being a Manchester United fan means you are in eternal love with Rooney. No other player wearing that badge has given us so much joy," says Mr. Vimal about the moment.

The global attention of the love for football in the State during this World Cup season also seems to have helped their cause. For, Rooney already seemed to have heard about Kerala and its foot-ball-crazy people.

"We were able to click photographs with him," says Sanil. Rooney also gave a short video addressing fans in the State, he added.



More vaccine choices

Development of an intranasal vaccine against COVID-19 is a welcome initiative

NEARLY three months after Bharat Biotech's emergency use approval for primary vaccination of adults, the vaccine has now been given emergency use approval as a heterologous booster in adults over 18 years. Unlike Covaxin, an inactivated vaccine, the intranasal vaccine uses a viral vector platform that utilises a recombinant adenovirus as a vector. As a heterologous booster, the intranasal vaccine was tested on around 875 participants, immunised earlier with two doses of either Covaxin or Covishield. Among the advantages intranasal vaccines have over vaccines is that they can potentially prevent SARS-CoV-2 infection at the point of viral entry in the respiratory tract. They are also far easier to administer. As in the case of the intranasal vaccine for primary vaccination, the booster dose too was tested only for safety and immunogenicity, but not efficacy. Unlike the vaccines tested early in the pandemic, evaluating the efficacy of a new vaccine for primary vaccination and heterologous booster at this stage of the pandemic might be very challenging as a vast population has been already vaccinated and/or naturally infected, especially with the Omicron variant.

However, even higher immunogenicity need not necessarily translate into higher efficacy, particularly the ability of the vaccine to prevent infection. The SARS-CoV-2 virus has now acquired an even greater ability to evade existing immunity and cause an infection. Since the intranasal vaccine does not have the virus spike protein with newer mutations, it is important to study within a defined time period the effectiveness of the intranasal vaccine to prevent infection and severe disease and death when used as the primary vaccination and as a booster dose. Alternatively, the vaccine's effectiveness can be tested in human challenge studies. Studying this becomes important as the results of an intranasal vaccine in the phase-1 trial using the Oxford vaccine – an adenovirus-vector vaccine – originally developed for intramuscular administration, elicited antigen-specific mucosal antibody responses only in a "minority" of participants, and the antibody levels were far lower than from a natural infection. The Oxford vaccine, as an intranasal vaccine, did not elicit "consistent mucosal antibody response nor a strong systemic response". The demand for vaccines for primary vaccination has been reducing since the third wave peaked in end-January while those for boosters has been low even when available for free for 75 days beginning mid-July. Yet, the development of an intranasal vaccine, a new vaccine platform for India, is welcome, and having a safe and effective vaccine that can prevent infection remains a high priority.

Oil no bar

Maduro should mend ties with the West and join talks with the opposition

THE Biden administration's decision to ease sanctions on Venezuela and allow Chevron to return to its joint venture oil fields marks the end of Washington's maximum pressure campaign aimed at ousting President Nicolás Maduro. Former President Donald Trump took U.S. sanctions to the extreme by barring oil companies from operating in the South American country, which has the world's largest oil reserves, and recognising Juan Guaidó, the self-declared unelected acting President. This policy had little impact on Venezuela's political crisis, for two reasons: first, Mr. Guaidó never managed to mobilise enough political capital to shake Mr. Maduro's regime, powered by the Bolivarian grassroots movement; and then, the regime found a way to work around the sanctions by selling its heavy crude at a discounted price to China and other countries. The Biden administration followed the Trump line in its initial months, but started holding talks with Venezuela in March, a few weeks after the Russian invasion of Ukraine. While the U.S.'s official narrative is that the decision to ease sanctions was part of a larger political reconciliation process within Venezuela, the catalyst seems to be Ukraine and the energy crisis. Sanctions on Russia have pumped up prices. Mr. Biden's attempts to revive the Iran nuclear deal have not succeeded so far. The move by Saudi Arabia and its allies to slash oil production has also mounted additional pressure on prices. The only option now to get more oil into the market is to allow Venezuela to do so.

To be sure, the easing of sanctions comes with riders. Chevron can produce oil from its fields in Venezuela, but the oil should be exported only to the U.S. Also, the sale proceeds should be used to pay back state-owned Venezuelan oil company Pdvsa's debt to Chevron (some \$4.2 billion), and the licence can be cancelled any time. Even so, Mr. Maduro can claim victory in the U.S.'s clear U-turn. He has offered to begin talks with the opposition, but has not made any major concession beyond that. The U.S. move could also prompt European countries to revisit their policy towards Caracas. The return of foreign companies would allow Venezuela to ramp up its oil production. Mr. Maduro seems to have survived western attempts to isolate him, but his bigger challenge is to ride out the storm at home. The window of reengagement is his opportunity. He should embrace it with steps to address the critical failings of Venezuela's economy, partly because of his own policies, mend ties with the West, and join serious talks with the opposition.

Settling the language for cooperative federalism

Cooperative federalism and 'cultural chauvinism'. The latter expression found mention in an editorial comment recently and bears repetition: "This latest effort to impose Hindi raises once again and quite retrogressively the issue of cultural nationalism at a time when it is least required. India has remained uniquely unified despite the infinite multiplicities of its cultures...."

Language is an essential ingredient of identity. The question of expressing national identity in a linguistically diverse society anxious to jettison or reduce the use of English as the language of the colonial power was passionately debated by the Constitution-makers and even linked to 'national prestige'. It was an uneasy compromise reflected in the wording of Part XVII (Articles 343-351).

Spelling it out

Article 345 leaves it to the State to choose its language for official purposes. In actual practice, several States and Union Territories continue to use English. Article 348 stipulates that all proceedings of the Supreme Court and 'of every High Court' and of Bills, etc. in Parliament shall be in the English language. The Eighth Schedule and the periodic additions to it (now numbering 22) spell out the diversity and complexity of the language landscape as do the Official Languages Act of 1963 and its Rules made in 1976 and amended in 1987, 2007 and 2011.

The question of Official Language brought forth 'passionate dissents' in the Constituent Assembly and the drafting of the Constitution. It covered language of legislatures; language of the courts and the judiciary, and language of the official work of the Union. Educational institutions of "national importance" and those of "scientific and technical education financed by Government of India" were in the Union List and education "including technical, medical and universities" were in the Concurrent List.

Some ambiguity inevitably crept into it. Thus Article 351 directs the state, in the development of Hindi, to draw upon other languages in the



Hamid Ansari

is the former Vice President of India, 2007-2017

composite culture of India. These include Hindustani that does not find a mention in the Eighth Schedule.

A dissent that surfaces from time to time

This passionate dissent – beginning with the B.G. Kher Commission – continues to this day and surfaces from time to time. It assumed a violent form in 1965 in Tamil Nadu, where violent disturbances led to more than 50 deaths. This year, the reactions from Tamil Nadu and Kerala have been sharp and unambiguous. The Hindu reported on November 27 that 'an 85-year-old DMK functionary ended his life in Salem on Saturday' purportedly over the Central government's imposition of Hindi in Tamil Nadu.

Unlike other parliamentary committees, the committee on official language, though consisting of 30 members of Parliament, is headed by the Home Minister. Its mandate is to review the progress made in the use of Hindi for official purposes, and to make recommendations to increase the use of Hindi in official communications. It submits its report to the President of India, who forwards its recommendations to the two Houses.

It is understood that, so far, only the recommendations of the reports up to the ninth in the year 2010 have been forwarded to the Houses of Parliament. The 10th and 11th reports have been submitted to the President and are not in the public domain.

The Home Minister's press conference in October announcing the completion of the 11th Report, highlighted some of its recommendations on language of instruction and examinations in technical courses. This touched off an animated debate on its resulting implications and its practicality in terms of the availability of standard books and course material, and of teachers qualified to communicate it adequately. A related matter is the competence in Hindi language of candidates undertaking examinations in it and competing in equal measure with those whose mother tongue it is.

At the root of the debate is the bigger question of identity in a diverse society. Nowhere in it was the suggestion that diversity, including linguistic diversity, is to be subsumed in linguistic uniformity.

The 'national language' issue

The allegation of 'cultural chauvinism' emanates from the apprehension that the transition from English along with Hindi as the Official Language of the Union to it being the national language and to bring it about through such procedural devices such as the language of instruction and examination and of textbooks to the detriment of students whose mother tongue is not Hindi. Its implications for competitiveness in the job market are evident.

It is to be recalled that the language of the chapter on Official Language is definitive and limits itself to the language of the Union. It does not mention a national language. There is no mention of it in the section on Directive Principles of State Policy or of Fundamental Duties. In fact, Article 344(3) stipulates that 'the just claims and interests of persons belonging to the non-Hindi speaking areas in regard to the public services' shall be considered by the President.

In this context, what are the courses open to the federal government in the context of the zeal reflected in the Home Minister's remarks? The constitutional course would be to opt for the language of Article 345, that allows each Legislature to use of Hindi, or to choose its language, for all official purposes. This would hinge on electoral success in terms of the official programme of the party in power. Its absence, by the same token, would make the matter politically contentious, even acrimonious.

Would not such a course, if adopted, be prudent for longer term political harmony implied in cooperative federalism, more so because English is now accepted as the language of discourse across continents, and its colonial past is a matter of distant history?

The constitutional course would be to opt for the language of Article 345, making it prudent for longer term political harmony implied in cooperative federalism

A spymaster who now has the Pakistan Army's reins

Lieutenant General Syed Asim Munir has taken over as Pakistan's new Chief of Army Staff (COAS) from General Qamar Javed Bajwa, who retired on November 29 after a six-year-long tenure. Gen. Munir will inherit a lot of political and economic mess from his predecessor. Therefore, his foremost task will be to restore the sullied image of the Pakistan Army, resolve internal differences, and generate confidence in the country's political establishment by displaying neutrality. As a part of this, he may devise hawkish policies on national security matters in the near term.

Gen. Munir is the 17th Army Chief of Pakistan. A graduate of the 17th batch of the Officers Training School at Mangla, he was commissioned into the 23rd Battalion of Pakistan Army's Frontier Force Regiment. His experience ranges from leading Force Command Northern Areas in Gilgit-Baltistan to heading both the Military Intelligence and Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI). Notably, he was the ISI chief during the Pulwama suicide attack in Kashmir in February 2019. It is expected that he will follow a hard-line policy vis-à-vis India.

Fixing civil-military relations
Under Gen. Bajwa's leadership, the military establishment brazenly interfered in political 'engineering' by first installing the Imran Khan-led Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf's (PTI) 'hybrid' regime in 2018, and then allegedly removing him from power in April this year. However, it only ensured persisting political instability in Pakistan. Since his ousting, Imran Khan and the PTI have been on the offensive, launching a campaign against the 'imported' coalition government of the Shehbaz Sharif-led Pakistan Democratic Movement and the military establishment. This has caused serious damage to civil-military relations. Mr. Khan has openly accused Gen. Bajwa and other senior Army officers of 'illegally' removing the PTI government, attempting to assassinate him, and being involved in the mysterious killing of a pro-PTI journalist Arshad



Sameer Patil

is a Senior Fellow at Observer Research Foundation and served in the National Security Council Secretariat



Sarral Sharma

is a PhD Scholar at Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi and served in the National Security Council Secretariat

As the 17th Army Chief of Pakistan, General Syed Asim Munir faces challenges in ensuring political stability and elevating people's perception of the Army, while India needs to wait and watch

Sharif in Kenya last month. Interestingly, such are the political dynamics of Pakistan that when Mr. Khan was in power, former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif had blamed Gen. Bajwa for plotting against him, politicising the judiciary and installing a "selected and incompetent" PTI government.

These developments have raised the Pakistani political class's long-held fears about the military establishment's intentions. The political instability has also taken its toll on the Pakistani economy, which is now facing the risk of default. This has caused unprecedented political and public backlash against the Army leadership. So, restoring the Army's pole position and providing a semblance of order in civil-military relations will likely be Gen. Munir's top priority as the new COAS. In the long run, he will also prioritise maintaining the military's supremacy over civilian institutions in Pakistan.

Securing Pakistan

As part of restoring the Army's image and mobilising public opinion in its favour, he may follow in the footsteps of his predecessors by launching a new military operation in the Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP)-affected tribal areas in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. Gen. Raheel Sharif and Gen. Bajwa had initiated military operations – Zarb-e-Azb (2014) and Radd-ul-Fasaad (2017), respectively, to mark their presence and consolidate power as the new COAS. Already, there are calls for military intervention in the Swat Valley and erstwhile Federally Administered Tribal Areas agencies to control growing militancy and provide security to the local population.

More importantly, Gen. Munir will have to decide the future of the peace dialogue with the TTP, which has stalled after the Pakistani government dilly dallyed on accepting the militant group's demands. The Afghan Taliban regime in Kabul, which has played an active role in mediating between the Pakistan Army and TTP, has achieved little success. This has frustrated Islamabad and Rawalpindi, exacerbating the

already strained ties due to the unresolved differences over the Durand Line, separating Pakistan and Afghanistan. In recent months, there have been frequent and violent border clashes between the two neighbours over Pakistan's fencing of the Line.

Toughening India policy

On India, COAS Munir is unlikely to follow the lead of Gen. Bajwa, who, guided by his security calculations, had been instrumental in agreeing to a ceasefire on the Line of Control (LoC) in February 2021. The ceasefire has largely held. As Gen. Munir has taken charge, the LoC may get active again in the coming months, post-winter. While there are enough pressing domestic matters to keep Gen. Munir preoccupied, he may be keen to signal India that he means business and that New Delhi should not exploit Pakistan's current predicaments.

India will prefer to wait and watch. Given Gen. Munir's ISI portfolio at the time of the 2019 Pulwama attack, there is a concern that cross-border terror activities will see a spike, particularly in Jammu and Kashmir. The easing of international pressure on Pakistan in the form of its exit from the Financial Action Task Force's 'grey list' may be an enabler. Gen. Munir may, therefore, utilise his operational and intelligence expertise in formulating a rejigged, possibly hawkish, policy on India.

To sum up, Gen. Munir will carry his predecessor's baggage for the foreseeable future of his tenure. He will face multiple challenges in bringing political stability and elevating people's perception of the Army. The faltering economy will be his greatest challenge, and his priority would be to ensure that the Army is not blamed for economic mismanagement and grave shortages of essential commodities in Pakistan. If everything fails, he could use the known diversionary tactics to rally key stakeholders behind the Army as the only 'saviour of Pakistan'.

The views expressed are personal

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

China lockdowns, protests

It is a bit surprising that anti-lockdown protests have erupted in China, posing a great challenge to President Xi Jinping. The most surprising element has been the bold manner in which students are reacting to the strong measures in a democratic way. It is also clear that people are yearning for freedom and democratic principles.

J.P. Reddy,
Nalgonda, Telangana

It is surprising to know why China is unable to open its doors and why there is a very low adoption to vaccination in the 80-plus years population. In this regard, India has come up with a very good strategy of learning to live with the

virus, in the form of mass information dissemination on precautions, and vaccination drives. In spite of being the epicentre of COVID-19, China has neither found the definite cause nor has it taken transparent steps to curb spread. This affects not only the citizens of China but also countries that have geographical borders with China, besides its trade partners. China's President Xi Jinping and his council need to amp up their efforts to mass vaccinate Chinese citizens, and open the doors rather than just clamping down on mass protests.

M. Lakshmi Narayanan,
Bengaluru

In their own ways, both China and the U.S. are

examples of poor handling of this pandemic. COVID-19 is, first and foremost, a disease and the top priority should have been to institute effective clinical measures for patients, based on early treatments and known symptoms. There was no way the spread could be stopped, either only by vaccines, like the U.S. believed, or the military methods of China on the population. And their people have been paying a huge price. If it is mortality and hospitalisations in one case, it is a frozen and frustrating social life in the other. India too, initially, could not escape this fate for long months. Once it changed course, largely due to the initiative of thousands of individual

doctors, the virus was steadily consigned to the margins. Both the U.S. and China have ignored this successful clinical experience in another largely populated country.

M. Balakrishnan,
Bengaluru

It will be interesting to see how China, a great power, is going to grapple with this internal challenge. While imposing emergency lockdowns may be essential or a desperate measure, it is difficult to quell an outrage when life is thrown out of gear. The might of China is under challenge. Harsh methods will backfire and appeasing the populace requires finesse which China does not possess. Might is no longer right.

China is staring down the barrel.

V. Lakshmanan,
Tirupur, Tamil Nadu

Inflammatory remark

A teacher from a prestigious institute in Manipal being suspended for allegedly calling a student a terrorist shows how hate is enveloping society. It is such a trend that needs to be defeated. Every person has a right to live in dignity.

Safal Rasheed,
Chandhanathope, Kollam, Kerala

No strong voice

The primary reason for continuing domestic violence is that women are prisoners of a regressive societal mindset, especially in the rural areas. Indian society is still to fully accept

the law and the fact that men and women enjoy equal rights under the Constitution. The root of the problem lies in the patriarchal mindset, which refuses to yield. The fault also lies with the education system. Financial insecurity is another important reason why women do not raise their voice against domestic violence. In the end, the police need reforms.

Kosaraju Chandramouli,
Hyderabad

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EWS are well represented in higher education

As the heated political debate following the Supreme Court judgment upholding the 10% quota for Economically Weaker Sections (EWS) has almost settled now, we look at the empirical basis of the quota. The simple question that we examine here is whether the EWS quota is backed by evidence. To answer this, we look at the principal justification for the EWS quota and whether the available evidence justifies it.

The Constitution (124th Amendment) Bill claims that the EWS from the general category have largely remained excluded in higher education institutions due to their financial incapacity. Thus, exclusion or under-representation in higher education is the primary justification for the EWS quota. And so, we examine the available evidence to ascertain the extent of representation of EWS from the general category in higher education institutions.

EWS representation
To do this, we developed a novel data base of higher education institutions which were ranked under the National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF). We compare the representation of EWS students in 457 higher education institutions in 2019, just before the EWS quota was introduced, and in 528 institutions ranked in 2022, the latest year for which data are available. We arrived at these numbers after removing the duplications, as some institutions are ranked in several categories. For example, if an institution was ranked in both the 'engineering' and 'universities' categories, we included it only in the latter category as the former is a subset of the latter.

Do the NIRF data provide the proportion of EWS students studying in these premier higher educational intuitions? Not directly. Instead, the data enable us to estimate the share indirectly. In its data submission format, the NIRF asked the participating



Sunny Jose
is RBI Chair Professor at Council for Social Development, Hyderabad. Views are personal



Bheemeshwar Reddy A.
is Assistant Professor, Department of Economics and Finance, Birla Institute of Technology and Science Pilani, Hyderabad campus. Views are personal

education institutions to provide details of the number of currently enrolled 'economically backward students' defined as "students whose parental income is less than taxable slab". To avoid duplication, the format specifies that the economically backward students should be treated as a separate category and not be counted in the socially backward categories, and vice versa.

The taxable slab of parental incomes corresponds closer to ₹8 lakh, the income cut-off to avail of the EWS quota. The Ajay Bhushan Pandey Committee, appointed to examine the EWS income criteria, argues that "considering that the currently effective income tax exemption limit is around ₹8 lakh for individuals, the committee is of the view that the gross annual income limit of ₹8 lakh for the entire family would be reasonable for inclusion into EWS". Hence, these economically backward students can be considered the reasonable proxy for the EWS students from the general category.

The NIRF 2019 data suggest that EWS students constituted 19% in the NIRF-ranked higher education institutions, whereas students from socially backward groups (Scheduled Castes/Tribes/Other Backward Classes) formed 39%. The proportion of EWS students was higher in colleges (28%) and lower in medical institutes (2%). This variation was equally applicable for socially backward students: 47% in colleges and just 3% in management institutions. Surprisingly, the proportion of EWS students declined from 19% in 2019 to 15% in 2022, three years after the implementation of the EWS quota, but it remains well above the 10% quota.

These higher education institutions comprise both private and government-funded public institutions and therefore require a disaggregated analysis. The share of EWS students in 218 public higher education institutions and 239 private institutions stood at 19% and 20%,

respectively, in 2019. The corresponding share in 2022 is 17% and 13%. Thus, despite being outside the purview of the EWS reservation policy, the share of EWS students is more than 10% in the private NIRF-ranked higher education institutions. The share of socially backward students in private institutions stood at 36% in 2019; it remains unchanged in 2022. Within public institutions, the share of EWS students in centrally funded elite institutions such as the IITs and IIMs was 21%; in 2019; it has dropped to 16% in 2022.

Well above the quota
This shows that EWS students are not excluded or under-represented in premier higher education institutes. An analysis of the Periodic Labour Force Survey data of 2019 also confirms the above pattern. Employing the insight offered by the Palma ratio, a policy-relevant inequality measure, we have trifurcated households into bottom 40% (the poor); middle 50% (middle class); and top 10% (the rich). We consider here only the poor households, as the EWS quota is meant for the poor among the general category. In the bottom 40% households, the proportion of general category, defined as 'non-SC/ST/OBCs', is 18%. About 20% of 18-25-year-olds from the general category from the poor 40% households have enrolled in higher education institutions. To put this differently, they constitute about 24% of all students enrolled from the bottom 40. Similarly, close to 20% of 22-29-year-olds from the general category from the bottom 40 have completed graduation or above. Here too, their share constitutes more than their population share in the bottom 40.

It is thus clear that the share of EWS from the general category in higher education institutions is well above 10%. The available evidence goes against both the justification and the objective of the EWS reservation policy.

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It is thus clear that the share of EWS from the general category in higher education institutions is well above 10%. The available evidence goes against both the justification and the objective of the EWS reservation policy.

Using agencies as political tools

Recent events raise questions about the independence of government agencies

STATE OF PLAY

Ravi Reddy
ravi.reddy@thehindu.co.in



The Telangana government and the Centre have been at loggerheads for a while now. While the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) is making aggressive efforts to expand its influence in the State before the 2023 elections, the Telangana Rashtra Samithi (TRS) is going all out to try and keep its vote base intact. The two parties pulled out all stops to win the recent Munugod bypoll. The TRS finally came out on top, but the outcome has led to an ugly political slugfest, with both the parties using government arms and agencies to 'fix' leaders of the other side.

Days before the bypoll, the TRS left the BJP red-faced by releasing a video in which three persons, purportedly engaged by the BJP, were heard trying to poach TRS MLAs. The recordings also named the National General Secretary of the BJP, B.L. Santosh. The government then constituted a Special Investigation Team headed by the Hyderabad Police Commissioner C.V. Anand to probe the poaching of MLAs. The Chief Minister released "proof" of his allegations and circulated it to the top judiciary and to politicians. The BJP expectedly dismissed the video as "false" and accused the TRS of having "undoubtedly fabricated video and audio content." It then knocked the doors of the judiciary seeking relief from the ongoing probe and succeeded partially.

Soon after this, central investigation agencies, including the Income Tax (IT) Department and the Enforcement Directorate

(ED), began to carry out raids on three Ministers, four MPs and two legislators, all belonging to the TRS. The ED and IT Department carried out simultaneous searches at multiple locations, including the residence of Civil Supplies and Backward Classes Welfare Minister Gangula Kamalakar and the offices of several granite companies in Karimnagar. This was purportedly to probe the alleged violations of the provisions of the Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA), 1999.

The ED also provisionally attached 28 immovable properties and other assets worth ₹80.65 crore belonging to TRS MP Nama Nageswara Rao in the alleged money laundering case against Ranchi Expressways Limited and Madhucon Projects Limited. Mr. Rao is the promoter and director of the Madhucon Group and personal guarantor to the bank loan defaulted by Ranchi Expressways.

The ED also grilled Animal Husbandry Minister Talaasani Srinivas Yadav's office staff and family members in an alleged money laundering case pertaining to a casino business.

The three-day IT raids on the residence, office, colleges and hospital of Labour Minister C. Malla Reddy and his family members capped the dramatic events of the last few weeks. MPs Vaddiraju Ravi-

chandra, Parthasarathy Reddy, and M. Srinivas Reddy as well as legislators Manchireddy Kishan Reddy and L. Rama- na faced raids too. As searches intensified, Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao told party leaders and elected representatives to "stay strong" and not get jittery.

These tit-for-tat acts have led to fear in the TRS and BJP camps. The raids by central agencies appear to be an attempt to hit the financial sources of the TRS leaders ahead of the 2023 elections. At the same time, the TRS too wants to corner the BJP leadership with its narrative that the national party is attempting to poach its leaders. But how far this narrative will succeed remains to be seen as the TRS has equally been involved in poaching candidates of other parties. Since its landslide victory in 2018, the TRS has successfully split the Congress by taking more than a dozen of its MLAs and encouraging defections. It has justified these acts by saying that it invited leaders from other parties in order to achieve "political stability". Rival legislature parties merged their groups with the TRS legislature party. But it will not be easy for the TRS to escape any blame of encouraging poaching and defections that come its way.

What is happening in Telangana is not new. Political parties always look for ways of settling scores with one another. However, what is worrying is that they don't hesitate to misuse government agencies in their political wars. The ED and IT Department as well as State agencies must not only be fair, but also seen to be fair. The events of the past few weeks raise serious questions about their independent functioning and in turn about democracy.

Where does waste originate and go?

Half the municipal solid waste of Delhi went to landfills in 2020-21

DATA POINT

The Hindu Data Team

A recent report titled 'Envi- tats India 2022', published by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, has highlighted the Herculean challenge of disposing of the solid waste generated by the States without harming the environment. By taking Delhi as an example, the report has calculated the "physical supply and use tables" to capture the source and destination of all types of solid waste in the capital city. Data were collected from all the five Urban Local Bodies and the Delhi Pollution Control Committee pertaining to 2020-21.

Delhi data

Chart 1 shows the various sources of solid waste generated in Delhi. Over 40 lakh tonnes of Municipal Solid Waste (MSW) were generated in 2020-21. Municipal solid waste includes garbage (highly decomposable material such as food), trash (bulky items such as tree branches or old appliances), and rubbish (slowly decomposing items such as paper, glass, or metal). According to the report, about 85% of MSW in Delhi was generated by households and 15% by shops and restaurants.

That year, over 13 lakh tonnes of construction and demolition waste were also generated in the city along with over 5.4 lakh tonnes of plastic waste, about 11 thousand tonnes of bio-medical waste, and 610 tonnes of e-waste. Delhi also generated 3,239 tonnes of hazardous waste. Hazardous waste is typically sludge from factories, industrial manufacturing process wastes and batteries.

Table 2 shows the various ways in which the waste was disposed of in Delhi. Half the municipal solid waste went to landfills and the other half was recycled and reused. About 35% of bio-medical waste was incinerated, while the entire

share of construction and demolition waste was recycled. While bio-medical waste is incinerated, the ash generated after the process is sent to the landfills.

It is not known how e-waste is disposed of as there is no treatment and disposal facility available in Delhi for e-waste. According to the report, of the 610 tonnes of e-waste generated in 2020-21, refurbishers collected 28.6 tonnes and bulk consumers collected the rest. Notably, about 22% of plastic waste is converted into energy, while 37% is taken to landfills.

Other States
As the 2020-21 numbers were only available for Delhi, figures from 2019-20 were considered to assess the other States on the share of different types of waste processed. **Table 3** shows the percentage share of various types of waste processed. Across India, 68% of the MSW generated is processed. Himachal Pradesh leads the list with 98% of MSW getting processed, followed by Chhattisgarh at 93%. In contrast, West Bengal processed only 9%. These data were of November 2020. In 2018-19, an average of 2.5 tonnes of plastic was generated per 1,000 population in India.

Across India, 87% of biomedical waste was treated. Seventeen States and five Union Territories have already achieved 100% biomedical waste treatment, while in Bihar and Chhattisgarh just 29% of it got treated, respectively. These data pertain to 2018. Close to 614 tonnes of biomedical waste was generated per day in India in 2018.

Across India, only 45% of the hazardous waste generated was recycled/used. Most States lag in this indicator. Of the 30 States analysed, in 13, less than 50% was recycled/used; and in 22 of them, less than 75% was recycled/used. These data pertain to the 2018-19 period. The hazardous waste generated in the country per 1,000 population was 8.09 metric tonnes in 2018.

Counting the waste

Chart 1 and Table 2 are sourced from "Envi Stats - India 2022", published by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation. Table 3 is sourced from the NITI Aayog SDG Index



Chart 1 | The chart shows the various sources of solid waste generated in Delhi in 2020-21. Over 4 lakh tonnes of municipal solid waste was generated in the capital in 2020-21.

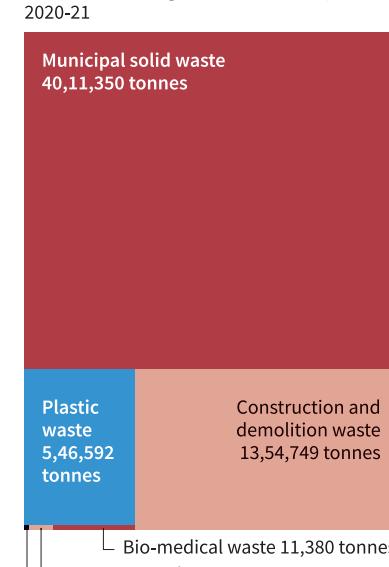


Table 2 | The table shows the various ways in which the waste was disposed of in Delhi in 2020-21. The figures are in % and each row adds up to 100%

| | Landfill | Incineration | Recycling and reuse | Flows to the environment | Exports | Waste to energy | Unknown |
|-----------------------------------|----------|--------------|---------------------|--------------------------|---------|-----------------|---------|
| Municipal solid waste | 50% | 0 | 50% | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Bio-medical waste | 2% | 35% | 31% | 3% | 0 | 0 | 29% |
| Hazardous waste | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 11% | 0 | 89% |
| Construction and demolition waste | 0 | 0 | 100% | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| E-waste | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA | NA |
| Plastic waste | 37% | 0 | 25% | 16% | 0 | 22% | 0 |

MSW: Municipal solid waste | BMW: bio-medical waste

FROM THE ARCHIVES

The Hindu

FIFTY YEARS AGO NOVEMBER 30, 1972

Plan for pleasant send-off to Pak. POW

New Delhi, Nov. 29: Despite the persisting deadlock over delineation, India and Pakistan are not denying themselves the luxury of peripheral courtesies for keeping the appearance of a mutual desire to avoid unpleasantness over marginal issues as far as possible. The impending exchange at Wagha on Friday of the prisoners-of-war taken by either side on the western front during the last conflict is being planned with all the trappings of a convivial social occasion. The Indian Army proposes to entertain the 540 Pakistani prisoners, who include 51 civilians, to a lavish dinner the previous night on the eve of their repatriation. The "burra khana" in military terminology will be followed by a "qawali" programme of Urdu recitations reviving nostalgic memories of happier days in the past. Before they are finally freed on Friday morning at the Wagha checkpost, each Pakistan prisoner will be given a packet of tea, a very scarce commodity these days in Pakistan, as a present from his family from the Indian people. And those who are accustomed to chewing pan will be allowed to take a generous amount of the leaf since it is now a rarity in Pakistan. The Pakistan Army is not lagging behind in making similar arrangements for giving an equally pleasant send-off to the 617 Indian prisoners, who include 10 IAF officers, 89 BSF personnel, four J. and K. militia men and 17 civilians. After haranguing them for nearly an hour before Pakistan's peaceful professions, Mr. Bhutto told the perplexed Indian POWs in Lyallpur on Monday that from them on they were Pakistan's honoured guests, pending the completion of the arrangements for their return to India as free men.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO NOVEMBER 30, 1922

Hospital fees

A Mysore G.O. on the subject of fees payable by in patients in all the hospitals of the State prescribes annas eight per diem for each patient in a general ward. For Indians as special first class patients Rs. 5 for sole occupation of a room and Rs. 2-8 for second class patients sharing a room with others. For European and Anglo-Indians the fees are now raised to Rs. 8 and Rs. 4 respectively. It is presumed that the fees include medical treatment and medicines.

Text & Context

THE HINDU

NEWS IN NUMBERS

Civil aviation sector on a path to recovery from the pandemic

4 In lakh, the average number of passengers to travel by domestic flights for two consecutive days. The numbers stood at 4.09 lakh and 4.05 lakh passengers on November 27 and November 26. Domestic air traffic jumped nearly 27% last month compared to the year-ago period, indicating a recovery in the civil aviation sector, though it is yet to reach pre-COVID levels. PTI

The Bharatiya Janata Party, a favourite for corporate donations

163.54 In ₹ crore, the corporate donations received by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) which is nearly 94% of the total corporate donations received by four political parties in Gujarat in the five years from FY2016 to FY2021, according to a report by the Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR). PTI

Cricketers ready to leave national contracts, says FICA

49 The percentage of international cricketers who are ready to reject their respective country's contracts to become freelance agents for the T20 leagues across the globe, the Federation of International Cricketers' Associations (FICA) stated in its annual report. The Indian players' body is not under FICA and thus their survey doesn't include Indian cricketers. PTI

Migrant worker deaths in Qatar; 'One death is a death too many'

500 The estimate of migrant worker deaths for the Qatar World Cup 2022, according to the secretary-general of Qatar's Supreme Committee for Delivery and Legacy. He said that, "One death is a death too many". Many human rights groups have claimed a death toll of more than 6,000 since the country was set to host the Cup. Agencies

Applications pour in to fill Maharashtra Police Department vacancies

11 In lakh, the number of applications received by the Maharashtra Police for 18,331 posts in the State Reserve Police Force, an official informed. Online applications were invited from November 9 till November 30 to apply for the jobs. High traffic caused the website to slow down, though the issues were rectified, he added. PTI

COMPILED BY THE HINDU DATA TEAM

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On the entry of women in masjids

Why did the Jama Masjid in Delhi prohibit the entry of single women or women in groups inside the mosque premises? Did they later revoke the ban? What does the Quran say about entry of women worshippers inside masjids? What happened at the Haji Ali Dargah in Mumbai in 2011?

EXPLAINER

Ziya Us Salam

The story so far:

Last week, the Jama Masjid in Delhi prohibited the entry of single women or women in groups inside the mosque premises. The authorities reasoned that some women fail to respect the sanctity of the place of worship, making videos there. "When women come alone, they indulge in improper acts, shoot videos. The ban is to stop this," reasoned the Masjid's spokesman. The decision led to an uproar on social media. By early evening, the mosque management clarified that the ban excluded those women coming for worship, or those accompanied by their husband or families. However, many continued to question the unilateral decision of the authorities, forcing Delhi Lieutenant-Governor V.K. Saxena to step in to douse the ire. Following a meeting with the Lieutenant-Governor, the mosque authorities withdrew the ban. Imam Ahmed Bukhari clarified, "The masjid administration does not want to prevent anyone from worshipping inside." Incidentally, the Jama Masjid is otherwise one of the few mosques to allow women worshippers to offer regular prayers.

What is the Islamic law on women's entry?

While there is a clear difference of opinion among Islamic scholars on the right of women to visit a dargah or a cemetery, there is lesser disagreement on a woman's right to offer prayers inside a masjid. Most Islamic scholars agree that a prayer can be offered at home but can only be established in a group, hence the importance of going to a mosque. Most also agree that women have been exempted, not prohibited from going to the mosque, keeping in mind their child-rearing and other domestic responsibilities. In fact, the Quran at no place prohibits women from going to mosques for prayers. For instance, verse 71 of Surah Taubah, says, "The believing



Entry for all: Women gathered at Jama Masjid offering prayers on the eve of Eid-Ul-Fitr on May 2.

men and women are protectors and helpers of each other. They (collaborate) to promote all that is good and oppose all that is evil; establish prayers and give charity, and obey Allah and His Messenger." Wherever the Quran talks of establishing prayer, it talks in gender neutral terms. Before the five daily prayers, a prayer call or azaan is pronounced. The azaan is a general invitation to both men and women for prayers, reminding the faithful, 'Come for prayer, come for success'.

Incidentally, when Muslims go to Mecca and Medina for Hajj and Umrah (lesser pilgrimage), both men and women pray at Haram Sharief in Mecca and Masjid-e-Nabavi in Medina. Both places have separate halls earmarked for men and women. Also, across West Asia there is no ban on women coming to the masjid for prayers. In the U.S. and Canada too, women access mosques for prayers, and even gather there for special Taraweeh

prayers in Ramzan and lessons on religion. The denial of access to mosques for women worshippers is a largely subcontinental phenomenon. In India, only a handful of mosques maintained or owned by Jamaat-e-Islami and the Ahl-e-Hadith sect have provisions for women worshippers. Most mosques while not expressly forbidding women's entry in masjids, have no provision for women to do ablutions for prayer or a separate prayer zone for them. They are built keeping only men in mind. Under the circumstances, they are reduced to a 'men only' zone.

Have there been similar bans before? The short-lived order of the Jama Masjid administration drew parallels with the much more prolonged ban on entry of women inside the sanctum sanctorum of the Haji Ali Dargah in Mumbai. Back in 2011, a grill was put up on the premises of the vastly popular 15th century dargah,

prohibiting women from going beyond it. Following the 'this much and no further' order, some women approached the dargah management for redress. However, with the requests having been denied, they started a campaign, 'Haji Ali for All', winning over more women in the process. Led by the Bharatiya Muslim Mahila Andolan, the women approached the Bombay High Court which ruled in their favour in 2016.

What is the legal issue?

According to the Constitution, there is complete equality between men and women. In the Haji Ali Dargah case too, the High Court quoted Articles 15, 16 and 25 of the Constitution to grant women the desired access to the dargah. There are petitions filed before the Supreme Court wherein access has been sought for women in all mosques across the country. The apex court has clubbed them with the Sabarimala case.

THE GIST

▼ Last week, the Jama Masjid in Delhi prohibited the entry of single women or women in groups inside the mosque premises. This decision led to major backlash, following which the mosque authorities withdrew the ban.

▼ The Quran at no place prohibits women from going to mosques for prayers. For instance, verse 71 of Surah Taubah, says, "The believing men and women are protectors and helpers of each other. They (collaborate) to promote all that is good and oppose all that is evil; establish prayers and give charity, and obey Allah and His Messenger." Wherever the Quran talks of establishing prayer, it talks in gender neutral terms.

▼ There are petitions filed before the Supreme Court wherein access has been sought for women in all mosques across the country. The apex court has clubbed them with the Sabarimala case.

What is the Karnataka voter data theft case?

How did the Chilume Educational Cultural and Rural Development Trust acquire personal information of voters? Can the data be recovered?

Darshan Devaiah B. P.

The story so far:

In November 16, Bengaluru's civic body, the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) said in a press release that it had cancelled permissions granted to the Chilume Educational Cultural and Rural Development Trust to conduct house-to-house surveys to help create awareness about the Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) programme. The NGO has been accused of collecting personal information from the public, under the guise of spreading awareness, by impersonating BBMP officials. The Congress-led Opposition has alleged that this was done in connivance with the ruling BJP government. The BJP has however, denied the allegations and

launched a counter-attack alleging that the NGO was first given permission by the previous Congress government.

What is the voter data theft case? In 2018, the Chilume Educational Cultural and Rural Development Trust was granted permission to carry out house-to-house visits to create awareness on how to access online applications via the voters' helpline mobile app. On November 2, the BBMP revoked this permission after receiving several complaints from residents that the NGO was collecting personal details while conducting door-to-door surveys by deputing field level workers. The BBMP has admitted that the personal information of the voters, including Aadhaar number, phone number and voter ID number, was uploaded on an app (Digital Sameeksha) developed by the Trust and not on the

Election Commission's voter registration app (Garuda) or voter helpline. The Opposition has accused the NGO of large-scale electoral fraud, malpractice and manipulation of voters' lists.

What has been the fallout?

The BBMP has registered two FIRs in Bengaluru against the NGO under sections 406 (criminal breach of trust), 419 (cheating by personation), 420 (cheating) and 468 (forgery) of the Indian Penal Code. On November 20, the police arrested Krishnappa Ravikumar, co-founder of the Chilume Trust, who had been absconding since the scandal broke out. The police has also arrested Kempegowda, one of the directors of the Trust and has detained the main software developer of the Digital Sameeksha app. Furthermore, notices have been issued to Revenue officials, who are in-charge of

electoral roll revision and linking of Aadhaar card with electoral rolls. The police are also analysing the app to ascertain what data was collected and for whom it was meant. Electronic devices were recovered from the premises of the offices of the Trust in Malleswaram in west Bengaluru through which the police is attempting to recover the data which has potential for misuse.

What will happen to the data?

Such mass collection of data is violative of the fundamental right to privacy as defined in *Justice K.S. Puttaswamy (retd.) vs Union of India*. The judgment formally recognised the right to privacy as being a fundamental right stemming from the right to life and personal liberty, guaranteed under Article 21 of the Indian Constitution. The data which was collected by the NGO has potential for misuse, according to experts and election-watchers. Activist and electoral rolls analyst P.G. Bhat said that while a probe would act as deterrence, he was sceptical about data recovery. "Any number of copies of the data could be anywhere in the world on the cloud. It is practically impossible to prevent the data from falling into the hands of those who are ready to pay for it. Even before this scandal broke, there have been many improprieties carried out with data from the electoral rolls," he said.

THE GIST

▼ The Chilume Educational Cultural and Rural Development Trust has been accused of collecting personal information from the public, under the guise of spreading awareness, by impersonating BBMP officials.

▼ The personal information of the voters, including Aadhaar number, phone number and voter ID number, was uploaded on an app developed by the Trust and not on the Election Commission's voter registration app (Garuda).

▼ Activist and electoral rolls analyst P.G. Bhat said that while a probe would act as deterrence, he was sceptical about data recovery.

ABSTRACT



A polling official marks the finger of a woman with indelible ink before she casts her vote. AP

The lack of strategic voting: a study of Uttar Pradesh 2017 elections

Trying to find meaning in the Duverger's Law, the authors of this paper take a closer look at the types of voters and voting patterns in the State of Uttar Pradesh to understand mass electoral behaviour in the country

Rebecca Rose Varghese

Heath, O., & Ziegfeld, A., 'Why So Little Strategic Voting in India?', American Political Science Review, Vol 116, Issue 4, November 2022. Pp.1523-1529

Among the many studies conducted on electoral behaviour and voting patterns, Oliver Heath and Adam Ziegfeld's article 'Why So Little Strategic Voting in India?' looks at how despite the many theories on strategic voting, only 1% or less of voters from Uttar Pradesh, the largest State in the country in terms of population, engages in said voting method.

In 2017, State elections were conducted in U.P., with strong competition between the incumbent Samajwadi Party (SP), the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP), and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). The study was conducted by the Indian survey firm Cicero, through a face-to-face survey in February and March 2017, after the 2017 State elections took place but before results were announced. About 3,600 respondents were selected from voter rolls, using a stratified random sampling method from 66 of U.P.'s 403 constituencies.

Duverger's Law and strategic voting
In *Political Parties*, French political scientist Maurice Duverger proposes a hypothesis about the relationship between the number of parties in a country and its electoral system. He explains that a simple majority single-ballot system, favours the two-party system, while in a simple-majority system with a second ballot or in proportional representation, a multi-party system is favoured. Thus, in single-member district plurality voting systems (SMDP) such as in U.P. where the candidate who gets more votes is declared the winner, a two-party system should be preferred. And ideally, strategic voting must take place, wherein a voter despite feeling close to a political party, votes for

a different party, as they feel that the latter party has a better chance of winning. They are expected to strategise their votes, keeping aside their attachment to a party when they feel that their vote would be wasted because their party is unlikely to win in their constituency.

The authors explain that while many studies support this theory, their data revealed otherwise – that strategic voting was almost non-existent in the State. The reasoning given behind such an anomaly by political theorists like André Blais is that voters avoid engaging in strategic behaviour because of a sense of loyalty towards their preferred parties. This prevents them from voting for others. But even this argument is refuted by the authors in their analysis.

Types of voters
Before one understands the voting patterns of the electors in U.P. and the lack of strategic voting in the State, one must look at the different categories of voters that emerge in such an analysis which gives us a better understanding of the general electoral pattern. Among all the voters, there are two types of voters who cannot vote strategically – the 'unattached' voters who express no preference for a particular party and thus cannot vote strategically as they have no preferred party to abandon for strategic reasons; and 'constrained' voters who prefer a party that is not running in their constituency and thus do not have the option of remaining loyal to their preferred party.

Of the voters who can vote strategically, there are four sub-categories – the 'sincere' voter who will vote for their preferred party as they sincerely expect it to come in first or second in their constituency, having no reason to strategically abandon their preferred party; the 'expressive' voter who despite knowing that his preferred party might lose, will vote for them, for expressive and not instrumental purposes; the 'insincere' voter who for whatever

reason, votes for a party other than their preferred party even though they believe that it will win the election; and finally the 'strategic' voter who believes that their preferred party is unlikely to win and thus, votes for another party who they believe will come in first or second in their constituency.

Data from the surveys revealed that close to 28% could not vote strategically as they were either unattached or constrained. A vast majority were sincere voters with the share of strategic voters limited to 1.1% and only 1.6% of the total voters who could vote strategically. The share of expressive voters was less than 0.5%. Thus, the lack of strategic voting can be attributed to the fact that voters sincerely believed that their preferred party would come first or second in their constituency and not their loyalty towards a party that is expected to lose. Of the 55 respondents who believed that their preferred party could lose, 41 (75%) voted strategically, which is higher than most estimates from other countries.

The need for political awareness
Allegiance to a party tends to distort the voter's belief about their party's ability to win in their constituency, dampening their concept of voting strategically. More than 90% of the respondents believed that their preferred parties were likely to win and did not think that their party was uncompetitive, though many of them were statistically proven wrong. This, being said, the voter's objective attitude towards party performance did come into play in the perception of the other parties' performances in the elections. They correlated the distance from contention and beliefs about election outcomes when it came to parties other than the ones they supported. The authors thus conclude that strategic voting was unlikely to affect the election outcomes, even though the voters in U.P. for instance, were willing to vote in accordance with the theory when they expected their preferred party to lose, proving that strategic voting is not a

pressing factor that determines two-party election outcomes in the country.

While this phenomenon is relevant in U.P., it cannot claim to be a pan-Indian phenomenon. In attributing such voting patterns to the mass electoral behaviour in the country, the authors did not consider the range of political awareness and differences in voting cultures in different parts of the country. The authors point to the lack of public opinion polling or proxies for party viabilities, the volatility of party systems where there are no safe seats, the absence of electoral advantage to the incumbents, and the insufficiency of political information that could update the voter's beliefs and political preferences as possible explanations for lack of tactical voting patterns. But they miss out on how political strategies made by voters in a State are largely dependent on the level of literacy, political activism, and general political awareness of the people and how this, in turn, is influenced by the socio-economic and political history of the State.

In Tamil Nadu and Kerala for instance, people tactically vote for either of the two major political alliances, as smaller parties seem non-viable. Accordingly, the smaller regional parties also change their alliance every election season. In Kerala, the smaller regional parties or independent candidates are preferred during panchayat or general body elections, as they are trusted to bring about hyper-local change. During the State Assembly elections, the voters prefer to choose between the two strong alliances (the Left Front and the United Front) while also strategically alternating between the two in most electoral seasons. During the Lok Sabha elections, they prefer to vote for parties that they believe have the ability to form a strong alliance at the national level.

Examples of such strategies in different States are proof that strategic voting can only be followed when there is higher political awareness, which is not uniform across India.



FROM THE ARCHIVES

Know your English

"Sir, can you say 'He emphasised on the point'?"

"No. You emphasise something, but you do not emphasise on something."

He emphasised the point that I made the other day.

He emphasised the importance of freedom from fear.

But you can lay emphasis on something.

He laid emphasis on integrity.

So you emphasise something but lay emphasis on something. The same applies to 'stress'. You stress a point but you lay stress on some point. But you do not stress on something.

He stressed the importance of character.

He laid stress on the importance of character.

In the word 'machine' the stress is on the second syllable.

Our emphasis should be on character and not mere achievements.

"Sir, Mrs. Jaya Nagarajan of Hyderabad wants to know how the words 'expedite' and 'expeditiously' are used."

"'Expedite' means 'to speed up', 'to execute promptly', 'hasten some action or process'."

His rude remarks last month expedited his fall.

This expedites the flowering process.

You will be in trouble unless you expedite things.

You must expedite the despatch of food packets to the people affected by the floods.

'Expeditiously' means 'acting or done with speed and efficiency'.

The government must take expeditious measures to wipe out black money.

Please despatch the books expeditiously.

In American English 'expedite' is used occasionally to mean 'to send out or to despatch'.

'Please expedite the books' would mean 'Please despatch the books' in American English. The word expedite is from Latin ex, from + pedis, feet; it means to free a person's feet from fetters'."

"Ms. Nalini Mohan of Nellore wants to know the pronunciation of 'yacht', sir."

"'Yacht' rhymes with 'lot', 'hot', 'cot'.

The 'c' and 'h' in 'yacht' are silent."

"What is a 'yacht', sir?"

"A yacht is a light sailing-boat built specially for racing". Let's stop here for the day. Goodbye."

"Thank you, sir. Goodbye."

THE DAILY QUIZ

On November 30, 2018, George H. W. Bush, the 41st President of the United States passed away. Here is a quiz on U.S. Presidents

Sindhu Nagaraj

QUESTION 1

Both these Presidents died on the same day. One was previously the nation's Vice President under the other, and the first United States Secretary of State under George Washington. Name both the Presidents.

QUESTION 2

This President was involved in a bribery scandal concerning oil leases. Name the President. What is the scandal called?

QUESTION 3

This was a series of violent civil confrontations in an organised incorporated territory of the U.S. that happened predominantly

during the Presidency of James Buchanan. What is it called? These confrontations happened over which issue?

QUESTION 4

Name the play during which Abraham Lincoln, the 16th President of the United States, was assassinated by a well-known stage actor. Name the theatre where the play was being staged.

QUESTION 5

This President had a nickname, for being a man of few words. Known for his response to the Boston Police Strike, he became the only president to have his portrait on a coin during his lifetime. Name the President and his nickname.



Visual question:

This is the artillery section of this President's Memorial seen on the grounds of the U.S. Capitol. Identify the President. Looking at the image, what was he known for?

Questions (abridged) and Answers to the previous day's daily quiz: 1. This footballer was the coach of FC Barcelona when it won its fifth Champions League title. **Ans: Luis Enrique**

2. This former FC Barcelona president was shot dead by General Franco's troops. **Ans: Josep Sunyol**

3. This former player is famous for scouting and recruiting Lionel Messi to the club. **Ans: Carles Rexach**

4. This former player was part of the 1992 Champions League triumph for the club. This player was the only goal scorer in the final of the 1992 Champions League. **Ans: Pep Guardiola, Ronald Koeman**

5. This player played a record 55 consecutive unbeaten games between the 2010-11 and 2011-12 seasons. **Ans: Andres Iniesta**

Visual: This player represented three countries in international football. **Ans: Laszlo Kubala**

Early Birds: K. N. Viswanathan|Vishi Sinha

Word of the day

Lampoon:

ridicule with satire

Synonyms: satirise, mockery, parody

Usage:

The writer often lampoons the ridiculous statements made by our politicians.

Pronunciation: bit.ly/lampoonpro

International Phonetic Alphabet: lampəʊn

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

From Page One

Doubling court strength won't end pendency: SC

The Chief Justice said that it was difficult to get good lawyers to fill up the existing judicial positions itself. "Try getting judges to fill up the existing positions... then you will know how difficult it is," he said. He said the reality on the ground concerning High Courts ought to be appreciated. "We can't just appoint anybody... Ask the Chief Justice of the Bombay High Court as to how many good lawyers are willing to accept judgeships today," CJI Chandrachud said.

On Monday, Justice Sanjay Kishan Kaul voiced similar concerns about finding good legal talent to join the Bench after he and the CJI had met with the Chief Justices of the High Courts. Justice Kaul had said that 20% of the judicial posts in the High Courts were vacant. Justice Kaul, the second senior-most Supreme Court judge and a Collegium member, had said that the Chief Justices of several High Courts had complained about lawyers being unwilling to accept invitations to the Bench because of the uncertainty posed by the government's inaction.

Justice P.S. Narasimha, the Associate Judge on the CJI Bench, said on Tuesday that it was a "non sequitur to say that you increase the number of judges and pendency will go away. It is not correct". Increasing the number of judges was not the solution, Justice Narasimha said. Mr. Upadhyay said that all matters were pending in the Allahabad High Court for at least 10 years.

'Nadav Lapid abused invitation to IFFI panel'

Mr. Lapid was invited to chair the jury at the International Film Festival of India (IFFI) in Goa where *The Kashmir Files* was screened. The Israeli jury chief lashed out at the film and said, "We were, all of us, [jury members] disturbed and shocked by the 15th film, *Kashmir Files*, that felt to us like a vulgar propaganda movie inappropriate for an artistic competitive section of such a prestigious film festival."

In response, the Israeli envoy indicated that the filmmaker's criticism of the controversial film may affect sentiments in India, stating, "The friendship between the people and the states of India and Israel is very strong and will survive the damage you have inflicted. As a human being I feel ashamed and want to apologize to our hosts for the bad manner in which we repaid them for their generosity and friendship." "You will go back to Israel thinking that you are bold and 'made a statement'. We, the representatives of Israel, would stay here. You should see our DM boxes following your 'bravery' and what implications it may have on the team under my responsibility," he said.

Shiv Sena MP Sanjay Raut on Tuesday the movie had been politicised and more Kashmiri Pandits suffered after its release. "It was propaganda by one party against another," Mr. Raut alleged.

SIA to get 25.1% in AI as part of Vistara deal

"Vistara shall be merged with Air India post receipt of requisite approvals. The transaction is estimated to be completed by March 2024," Tata Sons said in a press statement. In the meantime, "it will be business as usual" for Vistara and its customers, its chief executive officer Vinod Kannan said. With this consolidation, the Air India group has the second-largest domestic market share of 25.9% behind only IndiGo, which controls 56.7% of domestic traffic. The group also has the highest international market share among Indian airlines of nearly 22.7%. It is the only Indian airline to operate both full-service and low-cost passenger services.

"We are excited with the opportunity of creating a strong Air India which would offer both full-service and low-cost service across domestic and international routes. We would like to thank Singapore Airlines for their continued partnership," said Tata Sons chairman N. Chandrasekaran.

"The combination of Tata Sons and Singapore Airlines will provide Air India with the requisite strategic expertise, industry capabilities, access to capital and determination to create an airline that India will be proud of," said Kapil Kaul, chief executive of aviation research and advisory firm CAPA India.

Gehlot, Pilot share a common platform

A meeting to review preparations for the yatra, attended by AICC general secretary K.C. Venugopal, at the Congress 'war room' here brought the two feuding leaders together. While Mr. Venugopal said the Congress in Rajasthan was united, Mr. Gehlot made a mention of Mr. Gandhi's statement describing him and Mr. Pilot as "assets to the party".

"When the message has come from our top leader, we will work in unison in the party's interest," the Chief Minister told reporters after the meeting.

Mr. Venugopal, a Rajya Sabha member elected from Rajasthan, came here on a day's visit apparently to resolve the infighting, bring the two warring factions together and oversee the preparations for the yatra.

EC to hear Shiv Sena dispute over name, symbol on Dec. 12

On November 15, the Delhi High Court had dismissed Uddhav Thackeray's petition against the Commission's order to freeze the party's name and symbol ahead of the byelection

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Election Commission (EC), in an order on Tuesday, fixed December 12 as the date for the first hearing in the dispute over the name and bow-and-arrow symbol of the two warring Shiv Sena factions.

The commission, in interim orders on October 8 and November 12, called for details and documents from both factions by November 23 to bolster their respective claims under

Earlier this month, the EC had allotted flaming torch to the Thackeray group and sword and shield to the Shinde faction

the Election Symbols (Reservation and Allotment) Order, 1968.

On November 15, the Delhi High Court had dismissed former Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray's plea against the EC's October 8 decision this year of freezing the

bow-and-arrow symbol. The petition had also sought an expeditious decision on the part of the commission regarding a decision on the dispute between Mr. Thackeray's camp and the other led by incumbent Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde.

Symbol allotment
While Mr. Thackeray's faction had been allotted a flaming torch, Mr. Shinde's was allowed a sword and shield as interim symbols for the Andheri East As-

sembly byelection won by the Thackeray camp earlier this month.

The election management body had asked both groupings to submit documentation to support their claim to the symbol by November 23 after which the EC had said it would hear the matter.

Both factions have now been further allowed time till 5 p.m. on December 9 to submit any further statement or documents regarding their respective claims, the Commission said.

Two lawyers become Additional Judges of Bombay High Court

Sandeep Phukan
NEW DELHI

Twitter to convey his best wishes to the new judges.

SC criticism

On Monday, the Supreme court had criticised the government for holding up the Collegium recommendations for months together.

Justice Sanjay Kishan Kaul, the second senior-most Supreme Court judge and a Collegium member, said that the Chief Justices of several High Courts had complained about lawyers being unwilling to accept invitations to the Bench owing to the uncertainty posed by the government's inaction.

AIIMS services remain disrupted for seventh straight day amid alleged ransomware attack on its servers

MMRCL can seek approval to fell 84 trees at Aarey: SC

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday modified its status quo order on felling trees in the Aarey Colony, allowing Mumbai Metro Rail Corporation Ltd. (MMRCL) to pursue its application before the Tree Authority for permission to cut 84 trees for a train ramp at its metro car shed project.

"In such projects involving large outlay of public funds, the court cannot be oblivious to the serious dislocation which will be caused if the public investment which has gone into the project were to be disregarded... Undoubtedly, considerations pertaining to the environment are of concern because all development must, it is well-settled, be sustainable," a Bench of Chief Justice D.Y. Chandrachud and Justice P.S. Narasimha observed.

The court narrated the events which led to the State government's decision to first accept its Technical Committee report of 2015 and then rescind it later after receiving a communication from the Union Ministry of Urban Affairs in March 2022.



Network down: A man carrying his baby outside the AIIMS, Delhi as the server of the hospital is down for the seventh consecutive day. SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

way and the police were examining the AIIMS website apart from checking the database. He said measures would be taken to maintain cybersecurity. However, it was a time-taking process, considering the large volume of data on the website.

Last Wednesday, AIIMS said the National Informatics Centre team working at the institute had informed the institute that the servers were down and that it could be a ransomware attack.

On Thursday, Prashant Gautam, Deputy Commissioner of Police, Intelligence Fusion & Strategic Operations (IFSO), said they received information regarding the ransomware attack on the AIIMS servers and on that basis, a first information report under Section 385 (putting person in fear of injury in order to commit extortion) of the Indian Penal Code and Section 66/66F of the IT Act pertaining to computer-related offences, had been lodged with the IFSO

against unknown persons. There were long queues at the hospital on the first day of the attack as the server was down since morning. Though the situation got better, patients still had to spend more time in queues, according to doctors and nurses. A doctor said on the first day of the attack there was a lot of chaos and confusion, but the situation had improved now. The doctor said earlier appointments could be done online, but now it had to be done manually.

Extremism, terrorism are against meaning of Islam, says NSA

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Muslims clerics have a leading role in educating people about principles of Islam, Doval says

Legal and Security Affairs, Mohammad Mahfud M.D., who held a dialogue with their Indian counterparts and other religious leaders at the India Islamic Cultural Centre on varied topics.

"Indonesia is the world's largest Islamic country and India is home to the third largest Muslim population in the world," he said.

"Extremism and terrorism are against the very meaning of Islam because Islam means peace and well-being. Opposition to such forces should not be painted as a confrontation with any religion. That is a ruse... India and Indonesia, with their experience of multi-faith harmony and co-existence, can send a joint message to the world to eschew violence and conflict," the NSA said.

The Indonesian delegation was led by Coordinating Minister for Political,

BSF all-woman patrol team shoots down Pak. drone, seizes 3 kg of narcotics

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

An all-woman patrol team of the Border Security Force (BSF) shot down a drone that entered the Indian territory from Pakistan in the late hours of Monday. The drone suspected to be carrying narcotics was intercepted by two BSF constables when they were on patrolling duty at Dariya Mansor in the Amritsar district of Punjab along the Pakistan border.

At 11.47 p.m. on Monday, the women troops deployed at the border heard the buzzing sound of a suspected drone coming from Pakistan. The women team fired two illumination bombs and 20 rounds were fired at the drone, a BSF official said. One of the bullets hit the drone and it fell down at a distance.

Recovered material
During the search operation, the BSF recovered a partially damaged hexacopter, an unmanned aerial vehicle weighing 18 kg with six rotors, lying in an agriculture field in Chaharpur village. Around three kg of suspected narcotics was recovered from the drone.



Brought to the ground: The hexacopter shot down near the India-Pakistan border on Tuesday. PTI

rial vehicle weighing 18 kg with six rotors, lying in an agriculture field in Chaharpur village. Around three kg of suspected narcotics was recovered from the drone.

In another instance, the BSF troops intercepted a 20-kg drone in Tarn Taran district along the Pakistan border around 10 p.m. on Monday. The drone was carrying 7.5 kg of narcotics suspected to be heroin.

The BSF, the Punjab Police and the Union Home Ministry have on several occasions flagged the issue of smuggling of drugs from

Yudh Abhyas among five other bilateral Army drills on

Dinakar Peri
NEW DELHI

The Indian Army is currently engaged in bilateral exercises with five countries under way both inside and outside the country meant to improve interoperability with. The 18th edition of India-U.S. Army exercise 'Yudh Abhyas' which is under way at Auli in Uttarakhand, about 100 km from the Line of Actual Control, has entered the validation phase and is set to conclude this week.

Other exercises such as Ex Austra Hind with Australia are under way at Mahajan field firing ranges in Rajasthan from November 28 to December 11 and Ex Agni Warrior with Singapore at Deolali from November 13 to December 03.

The Punjab government had informed a Parliamentary Committee on Home Affairs earlier this year that drones have been sighted over 133 times near Pakistan border in the last two years. It informed that the first recorded delivery of arms/ammunition by drone was in August, 2019.

IN BRIEF



Focus on accuracy over speed, Minister tells media

Information and Broadcasting Minister Anurag Thakur on Tuesday said presenting authentic information was the prime responsibility of the media, stating that with the expansion of social media, fake news had proliferated. Speaking at the opening ceremony of the Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union General Assembly-2022, the Minister said, "While the speed with which information is transmitted is important, accuracy is even more important and should be primary in the minds of communicators." He added the Indian government has promptly established a "fact-check unit" in the Press Information Bureau to counter unverified claims and present truth to the people.

Adani Group bags bid to redevelop Dharavi slums

The Adani Group has won the bid to redevelop Dharavi, one of the largest slum clusters in the world, with an initial investment of ₹5,069 crore. It outbid the DLF Group, which had quoted ₹2,025 crore. S.V.R. Srinivas, chief executive officer of the Dharavi Redevelopment Project, said on Tuesday. The bid by the Adani Group is the initial investment in the ₹20,000-crore project, and according to the bid criteria, the company will have to form a special purpose vehicle. Thereafter, 20% of this initial investment will have to be submitted before signing the development agreement, and an additional 20% on submitting an integrated master plan.

New Sundarbans district to come up, says Mamata

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Tuesday said her government was creating a new district of Sundarbans and working on a master plan with the Centre to prevent river erosion in the region. The Chief Minister was addressing a gathering at Hingalganj in North 24 Parganas district. A proposal for creating a separate district of Sundarbans that is located in the southernmost part of South 24 Parganas and North 24 Parganas districts has been waiting for some time. The Sundarbans with islands, creeks and a mangrove forest, including a tiger reserve, is home to about five million people.

'Govt. not liable to pay for COVID-19 vaccine deaths'

The government cannot be held liable to pay compensation for deaths due to the administration of COVID-19 vaccines, the Centre has told the Supreme Court. "Holding the state directly liable to provide compensation under the narrow scope of strict liability for extremely rare deaths occurring due to AEFIs (adverse events following immunisation) from the use of vaccines may not be legally sustainable," the affidavit said. The government said information was made freely available in the public domain by both the vaccine manufacturer and the Health Ministry. More information could be had on asking health workers at vaccination centres, it said.

Telangana gets recovery notice for taking up works not allowed under MGNREGS

Union Rural Development Ministry asks State government to return ₹151.9 crore spent on construction of platforms for drying fish and grain, in the name of foodgrain storage yards

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Union Rural Development Ministry has served notice on the Telangana government to return ₹151.9 crore spent under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme on construction of platforms for drying fish and grain which is not permitted under the scheme.

A Central team carried out investigations in the State between June 9 and 12. The team visited Kamareddy, Nalgonda, Khammam, Jangaon and Hanumakonda, surveyed 12 gram panchayats in 10 blocks of these districts and carried out sample checks at 47 worksites.

Based on the team's observations, a report was sent to the State asking for clarifications. Following the State government's clarifications, the total amount of recovery was re-



Response to violation: The Centre, in its notice, threatened to take action against the State under Section 27 of the MGNREGA.

duced from ₹154.5 crore to ₹151.9 crore.

The team observed that the drying platforms were built under the name of foodgrain storage building, while no such building was found at the work site. Such platforms, the team noted, were constructed on individual beneficiary lands. This work is not one of the 265 permitted under the MGNREGS. A total of

22,613 such platforms were constructed, and the team found work ongoing on another 17,250.

The Centre, in its notice, threatened to take action against the State under Section 27 of the MGNREGA that empowers it to give directions to the State for the effective implementation of the Act. A similar action was taken earlier this year against West Bengal.

Rural Development secretary Nagendra Nath Sinha dismissed the allegation that only States ruled by the BJP had been targeted. Mr. Sinha told *The Hindu*, "Between August and September this year, we have investigated ongoing works in 114 districts on several counts including tallying the expenditure versus physical reality."

UNDP to help waste segregation workers access govt. schemes

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is helping workers in the waste segregation industry in India to move into the formal economy, by helping them access government welfare programmes.

As part of the initiative, United Nations Under-Secretary-General Usha Rao-Monari will distribute "Jan Dhan" account kits to waste segregation workers on December 1 during her first visit to the country.

The opening of the accounts has been facilitated through the UNDP's plastic waste management programme.

The programme promotes the collection, segregation, and recycling of all plastics to move towards a circular economy.

The programme also ensures the well-being and fi-

A key objective of the programme is to help move the sector from informal to formal

nancial inclusion of the *Safai Sathis* or waste-pickers, by linking them to social protection schemes.

According to the UN agency, a key objective of the programme is to help move the sector from informal to formal. So, the UNDP has been assisting the *Safai Sathis*, who contribute immensely to resource management and yet occupy the lowest rung of the ladder of the circular economy.

This is done by linking the workers to social protection schemes such as the Jan Dhan accounts, Aadhaar cards, Ayushman Bharat, pension schemes and scholarships for children.

India and Bangladesh establish contact as more Kuki-Chin refugees are expected to enter Mizoram

**Vijaita Singh
Kallol Bhattacharjee**
NEW DELHI

Ten days after the first batch of over 270 Kuki-Chin refugees crossed over to India fearing an attack from Bangladesh security forces, government officials estimate that 150 more refugees are expected to seek shelter in Mizoram in the next few days. A source said India and Bangladesh are aware of the unique seriousness of the issue and are in contact with each other.

A senior government official told *The Hindu* that 21 Kuki-Chin members had entered Mizoram on November 27, taking the total number of refugees to 293 so far.

While civil society groups and the State government have made arrangements for the stay of refugees in schools in Miz-



Behind influx: The members of the community fled Bangladesh following a crackdown against the Kuki-Chin fighters.

oram, the Union Home Ministry is yet to take a concrete decision on their repatriation.

A government official said that since India is not a signatory to the United Nations Refugee Convention of 1951 and its 1967 Protocol and does not recognise refugees, undocumented migrants are liable to be prosecuted for violating the Foreigners Act.

The members of the

NITI Aayog proposes decarbonising of industrial emissions

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

CCUS has an important and critical role to play in it, especially for India to accomplish net-zero by 2070.

Mr. Bery said CCUS could enable the production of clean products while utilising rich endowments of coal, reducing imports and thus leading to a self-reliant India economy. "CCUS also has an important role to play in enabling sunrise sectors such as coal gasification and the nascent hydrogen economy in India," he added.

Power Secretary Alok Kumar said the focus should be on research and development, particularly on cutting-edge technologies. "NTPC has taken some R&D projects. Ministry has supported it," Mr. Kumar said.

NITI Aayog Member V.K. Saraswat said that through the technology, CO2 coming from various thermal power plants or industrial plants would be captured.

The report said the key to a successful CCUS implementation was to enact a policy framework that supported the creation of sustainable and viable markets for CCUS projects.

from Jama'atul Ansar Fil Hindal Sharqiya (JAFHS), a fundamentalist organisation of Bangladesh, informed sources have shared with *The Hindu*. Dhaka believes that the Kuki-Chin fighters had arms training but were short of financial resources, which was supplied to them by the JAFHS.

"We believe the religious fundamentalist group had access to finances that it has extended to the Kuki-Chin groups. This fact was revealed by some of the members of the group during interrogation by the anti-terror forces of the Government of Bangladesh," a source familiar with the financial network between various such groups active in the region said. Bangladesh carried out the special armed campaign in October to nab the cadre of the KCNF from the Chittagong Hill Tracts.

FAITH

Gunavaan

Lord Narayana reclines in the Milky Ocean, from where He takes His vibhava avatars. This ocean is like a nursery, where seeds are planted, take root, and the seedlings are later transplanted to a field.

Koortazhvan's Atimanusha stava focuses on the Lord's vibhava avatars, said Elayavilli Sriram, in a discourse. In the very first sloka, Koortazhvan talks of the Lord's quality of 'seela.' This is nothing but the quality we know as sauseelya. It is His most significant quality. In the Ramayana, sage Valmiki asks Narada, who in this earth, may be said to be gunavaan, veeryavaan (person of valour), dharmaavaan (adherent of dharma), kritagnya (one who remembers goodness shown to him), satyavaakya (speaks only the truth), and dhridavrittah (has determination). Gunavaan could refer to any quality, which makes Him virtuous. But what is that particular quality which is His distinguishing feature? That quality is sauseelya, and that is what Valmiki is referring to here, when he says 'gunavaan.'

For all other qualities of the Lord, we say the quality of courage, or the quality of patience. But when we just say guna, without qualifying it further, it is a reference to His sauseelya. It was this quality that made Him befriend Guha and Sugreeva. He even welcomed into His camp Vibhishana, the brother of the demon who had abducted Sita. Not only did He make friends with Guha, but also saw him as yet another brother. Most importantly, whether in the Rama or the Krishna avatars, when He was friendly with simple people, without a high rank in society, He never thought that He was descending to their level and doing them a favour. He was on equal terms with them.

TOKYO

Japan PM wants defence Budget to reach 2% of GDP by 2027



Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida has told his Cabinet to increase defence spending to 2% of GDP by 2027, up from a long-standing level of around 1%. Mr. Kishida announced it to his defence and finance ministers late on Monday, as Japan overhauls its security strategies to address growing threats from China. AFP

DOHA

Qatar announces deal to supply natural gas to Germany from 2026



Qatar on Tuesday announced to send liquefied natural gas to Germany as Europe scrambles to find alternatives to Russian energy sources. Qatar's Energy Minister Saad Sherida al-Kaabi said up to two million tonnes of gas a year would be sent for at least 15 years from 2026, and that QatarEnergy was discussing other deals. AP

SINGAPORE

Singapore lifts gay sex ban, blocks marital equality for LGBTQ people



Singapore's Parliament decriminalised homosexuality on Tuesday, but amended the Constitution bolstering the existing definition of marriage as between a man and a woman, closing the door on equal marital rights for LGBTQ people. The old law penalised relations between gay people with jail time of up to two years. AFP

TEHRAN

Iran Guards General says more than 300 dead in Amini unrest



Iran has for the first time reported that more than 300 people have died in over two months of protests sparked by the death of Mahsa Amini in morality police custody. The Islamic republic has deployed state security forces against what it labels "riots" that broke out after the 22-year-old Kurdish-Iranian died on September 16. AFP

Beijing to defuse protests with carrots and sticks, pushes vaccine

Chinese health officials unveil plan to boost vaccination rates among the elderly, reduce the interval between doses from six months to three. Of the 30 million Chinese population aged 80 and above, 65% had completed three doses, say sources

Ananth Krishnan
BEIJING

China's government on Tuesday said it would launch a new push to vaccinate the elderly - a key step that would enable an eventual easing of the unpopular "zero-COVID" policy - while also pledging to crack down on activities that "disrupt social order".

The ruling Chinese Communist Party leadership has not yet directly commented on the widespread and unprecedented protests over the weekend in cities across China but has appeared to respond with a two-pronged approach to deal with rising public anger over continuing lockdown restrictions.

On Tuesday, health officials unveiled a plan to boost vaccination rates among the elderly, a key metric that the government has cited to justify the "zero-COVID" policy warning that opening up would lead to mass deaths.

Officials said of the 30 million Chinese aged 80



Under watch: A COVID-prevention worker guarding the entrance of a residential compound placed under lockdown in Beijing, China, on Tuesday. AP

and above, 65% had completed the three doses of Chinese vaccines required to prevent hospitalisation and death, up from 40% last month. The push would continue to vaccinate the vulnerable, focusing for instance on nursing homes, and would now reduce the interval between doses from six months to three, the National Health Commission said, even as the country continues to deal with a COVID-19 wave of 40,000 daily cases.

Officials of the commission at a daily briefing indi-

rectly acknowledged the protests and called on local personnel to better respond to "reasonable" requests from the public. Cheng Youquan, an official of the National Disease Control and Prevention Administration, said "the problems highlighted by the public" were "not aimed at the epidemic prevention but focus on simplifying prevention and control measures".

China's security officials have, however, struck a harder tone, reflecting the other side of the response

to the protests. With a heavy deployment of security personnel in many Chinese cities including Beijing and Shanghai, the protests of the weekend have not been reported. On Monday, a gathering in Hangzhou in the east was broken up by a heavy deployment of police.

Maintain stability

On Monday, Politburo member Chen Wenqing who heads the powerful Central Political and Legal Committee that controls law enforcement including

the police, told a meeting of the committee that political and legal organs needed "to resolutely maintain national security and social stability." "It is necessary to resolve contradictions and disputes in a timely manner to help solve the actual difficulties of the people," he said, "and it is necessary to resolutely combat hostile forces, resolutely combat crimes that disrupt the social order, and effectively maintain the stability of the overall social situation."

Several universities have said they will send students home early for the winter break and even pay for their journeys home, in a bid to defuse the protests seen on more than 50 campuses. Police in several cities have also been conducting random checks of smartphones for banned apps such as Telegram, which were believed to have been used to share information and organise some of the gatherings that called for an end to lockdowns.

Chinese billionaire Jack Ma living in Japan, says report

Ananth Krishnan
BEIJING



Chinese billionaire and Alibaba founder Jack Ma has been living in Japan amid the Chinese government's ongoing crackdown on technology companies, according to a report on Tuesday.

The usually high-profile Mr. Ma has stayed away from the public spotlight in China for more than two years and has avoided public engagements, coinciding with regulatory probes targeting e-commerce giant Alibaba and its financial payments arm Alipay.

Mr. Ma has been living in

and security, and "keeping public activities to a minimum".

Mr. Ma limits his engagements to visiting a few exclusive private clubs and spends his time painting and collecting modern art, the report said.

Many wealthy Chinese have left the country since 2020, to avoid the continuing "zero-COVID" pandemic restrictions that have both disrupted life in China and made it difficult for Chinese to travel abroad.

International flights are yet to return to normal while all foreign arrivals are still made to undergo quarantine.

Japan for at least six months, the *Financial Times* reported on Tuesday.

He has also kept a low-profile in Tokyo, where he is living with his family, along with his private chef

Five Palestinians killed, Israeli soldier wounded in West Bank

Agence France-Presse
RAMALLAH

and the Army said.

The Army confirmed its

troops had fired on "riots"

who attacked soldiers

in two separate clashes in

the West Bank overnight.

The 20-year-old woman

soldier was "moderately

injured and evacuated to a

hospital for medical treat-

ment" following the sus-

pected car-ramming north of Jerusalem, the Army said. Jerusalem's Shaare Tzedek hospital confirmed the alleged attacker had been killed.

The West Bank has suffered spiralling violence this year, with near daily Israeli Army raids leading to scores of deaths.



General Asim Munir
New Army chief takes charge in Pak.

Press Trust of India
ISLAMABAD

General Asim Munir, a former ISI head, assumed charge as the Pakistan Army chief on Tuesday, at a time when the cash-strapped country was in the midst of a political slugfest between the government and Opposition leader Imran Khan.

General Munir replaced General Qamar Javed Bajwa, who retired after serving two consecutive three-year terms as the Army chief in the coup-prone country, where the military wields considerable power in matters of security and foreign policy.

The new Army chief would have to tackle a host of problems, including the threat from militants. He takes charge a day after the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) called off an indefinite ceasefire agreed with the government and ordered to carry out attacks across the country.

U.K. govt. summons Chinese envoy over journalist's detention

Sriram Lakshman
LONDON

released, and local authorities.

A Chinese Embassy (U.K.) spokesperson said "foreign journalists need to consciously follow Chinese laws and regulations" in a statement posted to the embassy website.

'End of golden era'

Outlining his foreign policy for the first time on Monday night, British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak had said the "golden era" in Britain's relationship with China was over, and that the competition with Beijing needed to be managed, including with diplomacy and engagement. He also said competitors must be met with "robust pragmatism".

"Instead of listening to their people's protests, the Chinese government has chosen to crack down further...including by assaulting a BBC journalist," Mr. Sunak told attendees at a dinner organised by the mayor of London's financial district, the City of London.

Former Conservative party leader and Tory backbench MP, Ian Duncan Smith, said on Monday that Mr. Sunak's planned approach of "robust pragmatism" was "getting pretty close to appeasement".

The FCDO also said it was in touch with Mr. Lawrence, who has since been

IN BRIEF



'ONGC, OIL gas price to be capped at \$6.5 for 5 years'

A government-appointed gas price review panel, led by Kirit Parikh, is recommending a floor and ceiling price for natural gas produced from legacy fields of state-owned firms for five years. Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) and Oil India Ltd. (OIL) will be paid a minimum or floor price of \$4 per million British thermal unit and a cap or ceiling price of \$6.5 as against the current rate of \$8.57, three sources said. PTI

NDTV says Prannoy, Radhika Roy resign as RRPR directors

NDTV Ltd. on Tuesday told the stock exchanges that it had been informed by promoter group entity RRPR Holding Pvt. Ltd. that Prannoy Roy and Radhika Roy had stepped down as directors. In a regulatory filing on Monday, NDTV had said that RRPR had issued 99.5% shares to the Adani group that would give the latter 29.18% stake in the media firm. Adani is also conducting an open offer running up to December 5 for an additional 26% stake in NDTV.

TVS Motor unveils 2023 TVS Apache bike at ₹1.30 lakh

TVS Motor Company rolled out the 2023 Special Edition of its popular motorcycle 160 4V Apache RTR. The motorcycle, in pearl white, is priced at ₹1.30 lakh (ex-showroom Delhi) and available at dealerships across the country. The bike comprises dual-tone seat, adjustable clutch and brake levers and rear radial tyre, among many other features. The bike comprises a 'lightweight bullpup muffler,' enhancing the RTR exhaust, increasing the power-to-weight ratio with one kilogram weight reduction. PTI

Sundaram Home to lift deposit rates from Dec. 1

Press Trust of India CHENNAI

Sundaram Home Finance (SHF) is set to raise the interest rates it pays on fixed deposits with effect from December 1.

SHF said it will increase rates by 50 basis points for trusts, individuals (7.15% against 6.65%) and senior citizens (7.50% against 7%) on deposits for 12 months.

For senior citizens, SHF would revise the rates to 7.50% (7.35%) for tenures of 24 months, 7.80% (7.65%) for 36 months and 8% (7.90%) for 48 months.

"Depositors may find this fourth upward revision attractive," SHF MD Lakshminarayanan Duraiswamy said in a statement.

Finished steel imports from Russia hit 4-year high in April-October

Reuters NEW DELHI

India's finished steel imports from Russia during April-October rose to their highest in at least four years, government data compiled by Reuters showed, underscoring Moscow's bid to divert shipments in the wake of Western sanctions.

Russia's steel exports to India reached 1,49,000 tonnes in the first seven months of the current fiscal that began in April, up from about 34,000 tonnes shipped a year earlier.

Russia accounted for just about 5% of India's total steel imports but was among the top five exporters.



FinMin calls for meet on cross-border rupee trade

Press Trust of India NEW DELHI

The Finance Ministry has convened a meeting of CEOs of banks, including top six private sector lenders, on December 5 to discuss ways to promote cross-border trade using the rupee instead of the U.S. dollar.

Sources also said the meeting to be attended by other stakeholders, including senior officials of External Affairs and Commerce Ministries, will review the progress made so far.

Financial Services Secretary Vivek Joshi will be chairing the meeting. It is likely to see attendance from representatives of the Reserve Bank of India and Indian Banks' Association.

Sanctions-hit Russia said to ask India for parts for cars, aircraft

Reuters NEW DELHI

Moscow has sent India a list of more than 500 products for potential delivery including parts for cars, aircraft and trains, four sources familiar with the matter said, as sanctions squeeze Russia's ability to run vital industries.

The list is provisional and it is unclear how many items will eventually be exported, but an Indian government source said the request was unusual in its scope.

India is keen to boost trade in this way, said the source, as it tries to narrow a ballooning trade deficit



with Russia. Some companies have expressed concern, however, about potentially falling foul of Western sanctions.

An industry source in Moscow, who declined to be named because of the sensitivity of the issue, said Russia's Ministry of Industry and Trade asked large companies to supply lists

of raw materials and equipment they needed.

The source added that further discussion would be needed to agree specifications and volumes and that the outreach was not limited to India.

Russia's requests were made weeks ahead of Indian Foreign Minister S. Jaishankar's visit to Moscow starting Nov. 7, two of the Indian sources said. It was not immediately clear what was conveyed by him to Russia during the visit.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government has not joined Western countries in openly criticising Moscow for the war in Ukraine, and has sharply in-

creased purchases of Russian oil that have cushioned it from some of the impact of sanctions.

During the Moscow visit, Mr. Jaishankar said India needed to boost exports to Russia to balance bilateral trade that is now tilted towards Russia.

Western sanctions have crippled supplies of some crucial products in Russia.

Airlines are experiencing an acute shortage of parts because almost all planes are foreign-made.

For aircraft, Russia requested items including landing gear parts, fuel systems, communication systems and life jackets and aviation tyres.

'Slow capital spending by States, CPSEs is still a worry'

Sharp surge in Centre's capex in past 18 months does not imply higher public sector capex, which is what matters for the economy, point out economists at financial services firm Motilal Oswal

The Hindu Bureau NEW DELHI

Despite a sharp rise in the Centre's capital spending, underwhelming capex growth in States and a likely drop in investments by central public sector enterprises, could drag India's total public capital expenditure to a multi-year low.

"The sharp surge in the Centre's capex over the past 18 months or so does not imply higher public sector capex, which is what matters for the eco-

Slowing pace

Weak growth in States' capex and a likely drop in investments by CPSEs could drag overall public sector capex to a multi-year low



- Capex likely to contract for third consecutive year for CPSEs
- Expenditure will remain broadly stable for States
- Public sector capex is likely to fall to eight-year low
- Centre's capex had spiked to 2.3% of GDP last year and rose to 2.5% of GDP for the first half of this year

nomy," economists at Motilal Oswal said in a research note. "While the Centre's capex is budgeted to rise in

2022-23, it is likely to contract for the third consecutive year for CPSEs and remain... stable for States,"

they noted. "Public sector capex is likely to fall to an 8-year low of 5.7% of GDP in FY23," they added. Public sector capex was 6% of GDP in FY22.

The Centre's capex had spiked to 2.3% of GDP last year and touched 2.5% for the first half of this year.

ICRA's study on States' finances showed revenue deficits had narrowed sharply for 18 major States so far in FY23, but capital outlays had risen a mere 2.2% in the first half, a far cry from their aim to raise capex by almost 38%.

N.K. Singh bats for universal health cover

The Hindu Bureau NEW DELHI

Fifteenth Finance Commission chairperson N.K. Singh on Tuesday called for a substantial increase in budgetary allocations for the health sector and restructuring of centrally sponsored schemes to enable greater flexibility for States.

Mooting the inclusion of 'health' in the Concurrent list under the Constitution, Mr. Singh also made a pitch for universalising health insurance to capture 'the missing middle' – people who are not rich enough to buy private health cover nor poor enough to qualify for government schemes.

Avoid complacency
While India's response to the pandemic may have taken the 'world by surprise', it should not lull policymakers into a state of complacency, Mr. Singh cautioned, citing uncertainties and the need to address 'endemic' issues beyond the COVID-19 pandemic.

"There is no getting away from the fact that public outlays in the health sector need to be substantially augmented. We need to enhance public outlays (on health) to 2.5% of GDP by 2025," he said at the CII Health Summit.

This, he explained, would entail a major jump over this year's Budget numbers and require States to target 8% of their budgets towards the health sector, which was 'a daunting challenge'.

MARKETS

MARKET WATCH

| | TUESDAY | %CHANGE |
|-----------|---------|---------|
| Sensex | 62,662 | 0.28 |
| US Dollar | 81.72 | -0.04 |
| Gold | 52,837 | 0.02 |
| Brent oil | 85.11 | 3.11 |

NIFTY 50

PRICE CHANGE

| | PRICE | CHANGE |
|-------------------|----------|--------|
| Adani Enter. | 3878.40 | -7.75 |
| Adani Ports | 878.20 | -0.40 |
| Apollo Hosp. | 4719.20 | -2.65 |
| Asian Paints | 3135.05 | -16.15 |
| Axis Bank | 892.55 | 0.85 |
| Bajaj Auto | 3660.10 | -16.60 |
| Bajaj FinServ | 1632.00 | -20.85 |
| Bharti Airtel | 835.85 | -1.55 |
| BPCL | 339.05 | -1.70 |
| Britannia Ind. | 4285.35 | 72.30 |
| Cipla | 1121.15 | 19.40 |
| Coal India | 227.20 | -2.65 |
| Divis Lab. | 3372.70 | -2.85 |
| Dr Reddys Lab. | 4453.35 | 51.35 |
| Eicher Motors | 3416.10 | -25.30 |
| Grasim Ind. | 1719.25 | 2.20 |
| HCL Tech | 1128.95 | 10.15 |
| HDFC | 2665.25 | 6.55 |
| HDFC Bank | 1597.85 | 2.40 |
| HDFC Life | 584.85 | -1.15 |
| Hero MotoCorp | 2828.25 | 44.75 |
| Hindalco | 435.95 | 4.80 |
| Hindu Unilever | 2634.20 | 109.00 |
| ICICI Bank | 946.75 | 9.35 |
| IndusInd Bank | 1180.60 | -17.25 |
| Infosys | 1629.05 | 5.65 |
| ITC | 342.30 | 2.25 |
| JSW Steel | 732.55 | 16.90 |
| Kotak Bank | 1925.55 | -2.60 |
| L&T | 2050.55 | -13.90 |
| M&M | 1257.10 | 6.40 |
| Maruti Suzuki | 8910.20 | -75.20 |
| NestleIndia | 20121.20 | 305.75 |
| NTPC | 170.15 | -0.25 |
| ONGC | 140.25 | 0.65 |
| PowerGrid Corp | 219.35 | -1.95 |
| Reliance Ind. | 2712.20 | 4.65 |
| SBI Life | 1258.40 | 4.90 |
| State Bank | 608.55 | -0.05 |
| Sun Pharma | 1049.85 | 15.10 |
| TataConsumerProd. | 805.05 | 0.75 |
| Tata Motors | 433.15 | -0.10 |
| Tata Steel | 106.10 | 1.20 |
| TCS | 3397.35 | 2.10 |
| Tech Mahindra | 1074.55 | -2.65 |
| Titan | 2613.75 | 21.50 |
| UltraTech Cement | 6928.90 | 36.60 |
| UPL | 774.85 | -4.80 |
| Wipro | 405.15 | -0.50 |

EXCHANGE RATES

Indicative direct rates in rupees a unit except yen at 4 p.m. on November 29

| CURRENCY | TT BUY | TT SELL |
|--------------------|--------|---------|
| US Dollar | 81.52 | 81.84 |
| Euro | 84.55 | 84.89 |
| British Pound | 97.86 | 98.25 |
| Japanese Yen (100) | 59.05 | 59.29 |
| Chinese Yuan | 11.38 | 11.42 |
| Swiss Franc | 85.84 | 86.18 |
| Singapore Dollar | 59.37 | 59.61 |
| Canadian Dollar | 60.57 | 60.81 |
| Malaysian Ringgit | 18.07 | 18.17 |
| Australian Dollar | 54.88 | 55.09 |

Source: Indian Bank

creased purchases of Russian oil that have cushioned it from some of the impact of sanctions. During the Moscow visit, Mr. Jaishankar said India needed to boost exports to Russia to balance bilateral trade that is now tilted towards Russia. Western sanctions have crippled supplies of some crucial products in Russia. Airlines are experiencing an acute shortage of parts because almost all planes are foreign-made. For aircraft, Russia requested items including landing gear parts, fuel systems, communication systems and life jackets and aviation tyres.

CM YK

CAMARADERIE

Fernandes believed Ronaldo had scored first goal against Uruguay



Bruno Fernandes said he thought Cristiano Ronaldo had scored Portugal's opener. "I celebrated as if it had been Cristiano's goal, it seemed to me that he had touched the ball, my aim was to cross the ball for him. What's important is that we were able to go to the next round," said Fernandes.

CARRYING ON

Pepe becomes third oldest World Cup outfield player



Centre-back Pepe became the third oldest outfield player in World Cup history after he started for Portugal against Uruguay on Monday. Cameroon's Roger Milla remains the oldest aged 42 while playing in USA 1994, while Canada's Atiba Hutchinson (39), playing in this tournament, is also older than Pepe by a couple of weeks.

BIG BLOW

Neymar to miss Brazil's final group game against Cameroon



Neymar will miss Brazil's last group game against Cameroon because of his right ankle injury, the team doctor Rodrigo Lasmar said on Tuesday. Lasmar said Neymar also had a fever on Monday, which "was under control" and would not affect his ankle treatment.

BEARING THE BRUNT

World Cup frenzy puts strain on Qatar's 'Ships of the Desert'



Qatar's camels are working overtime, given the stream of fans for the month-long World Cup. 'Riding a camel on the rolling dunes' is the fans' ideal Instagram moment. Camel handlers are cashing in on the opportunity, making several times more money than they normally would.

Senegal shatters Ecuadorian hearts

The dogged Ismaila converts from the spot for the opener after being chopped down by Piero Hincapie; Ecuador battles back through Caicedo's goal before Koulibaly drives the knife in further with a strike from close range; Netherlands coasts past Qatar to top Group A

FIFA WORLD CUP

Ayon Sengupta
DOHA

The drums rolled, the fans danced, and their team absorbed their energy and expended it on the field. In the end, Senegal managed to rattle Ecuador with its two goals to the latter's one and book a berth in the World Cup's round of 16.

Coach Aliou Cisse, a Senegal legend and now Snoop Dogg lookalike, used the speed of Iliman Ndiaye and Ismaila Sarr in the wings to regularly move beyond the highline that Ecuador maintained. Sarr was dogged and the goal came when Piero Hincapie brought the Senegal winger down like a farmer running his sickle through the wheat crop.

Moments were lost as Senegal, missing its regular penalty-taker Sadio Mane, had a mid-pitch dispute to settle the choice for the important task. Sarr was en-



Point-blank: Senegal skipper Koulibaly fires home the winner and sends his team into the knockouts. GETTY IMAGES

trusted and he kept his cool to sweep it beyond Hernan Galindez.

Senegal dominated throughout and should have been ahead by the third minute as Idrissa Gueye found a gaping hole in the Ecuadorian defence, but he failed to keep his shot on target. It was Boulaye Dia who dragged the next one wide after Gueye had scurried inside the box.

Ecuador, though, found its equaliser as Moises Caicedo was rather fortunate for a flick from a corner to land on his feet and Youssouf Sabaly on the goal-line playing him onside. Goalkeeper Edouard Mendy could just be another onlooker as Caicedo rolled in the goal.

The Senegalese reaction was instant, and its lead was re-secured two minutes later. A free kick from the right bounced off Hincapie, and skipper Kalidou Koulibaly thumped his team back in the lead with a swat of the right boot.

Koulibaly's armband was an homage to Papa

Boupa Diop, the scorer of Senegal's winning goal over defending champion France in Korea-Japan, who had passed away in 2020. And the team of 2022 paid him the perfect tribute by moving into the knockouts like the class of 2002.

Meanwhile, Cody Gakpo netted his third goal in

three games as the Netherlands comfortably beat hosts Qatar 2-0 at the Al Bayt Stadium to secure top spot in Group A.

The results:

Group A: Ecuador 1 (Caicedo 67) lost to Senegal 2 (Ismaila 44-pen, Koulibaly 70). Netherlands 2 (Gakpo 26, De Jong 49) bt Qatar 0.

Final Group A Standings

| | P | W | D | L | GD | PTS |
|-----------------|---|---|---|---|----|-----|
| Netherlands (Q) | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 4 | 7 |
| Senegal (Q) | 3 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 6 |
| Ecuador | 3 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 4 |
| Qatar | 3 | 0 | 0 | 3 | -6 | 0 |

Q: QUALIFIED

Portugal enters the knockout phase

Agence France-Presse
DOHA

Bruno Fernandes scored twice to give Portugal a 2-0 victory over Uruguay on Monday and send it into the knockout stages alongside France and Brazil.

Portugal dominated the first half, but the main drama came after the break. Fernandes created space for himself on the left and curled an inswinging cross into the mixer, with Ronaldo breaking the offside trap to attempt a glancing header.

As the ball nestled in the goal, Ronaldo wheeled away in celebration but FIFA decided he had not touched the ball.

Uruguay coach Diego Alonso threw on forwards Maxi Gomez and Luis Su-

rez as the South Americans belatedly began to exert some pressure, and both came close to an equaliser.

Gomez's rasping drive from 20 yards came back off the post with Costa beaten, while Suarez hit the side netting from close range. With the 90 minutes almost up, Fernandes nutmegged Jose Maria Gimenez, whose trailing hand diverted the ball away from the midfielder and prevented him from finding himself one-on-one with Rochet.

Iranian referee Alireza Faghani awarded the spot-kick after a VAR check and Fernandes sent Rochet the wrong way.

The result:
Group H: Portugal 2 (Fernandes 84, 90+3-pen) bt Uruguay 0.

Group H

| | P | W | D | L | GD | PTS |
|--------------|---|---|---|---|----|-----|
| Portugal (Q) | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 6 |
| Ghana | 2 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 3 |
| South Korea | 2 | 0 | 1 | 1 | -1 | 1 |
| Uruguay | 2 | 0 | 1 | 1 | -2 | 1 |

REMAINING FIXTURES:

DEC. 2: Ghana vs Uruguay; South Korea vs Portugal

Q: QUALIFIED

Argentina chases a win; only an upset will deny France top spot in group

Ayon Sengupta
DOHA

88,966 pairs of eyes transfixed on one player, a record World Cup crowd in 28 years at the Lusail Stadium followed Lionel Messi's every manoeuvre. And Messi, looking to rediscover the euphoria that usually his game brings, suddenly was up from his stupor, scoring and then assisting to restart Argentina's World Cup ride.

But a win against Poland is still needed and draw, too, could be enough if Mexico and Saudi Arabia also end in a deadlock. "We haven't done anything yet. A slip-up like the one the other day can tarnish anything," said Argentine manager Lionel Scaloni, aware of the dangers the Poles possess.

A big win might ensure a top spot in Group C and keep France away from Argentina's path in the round of 16. Two Kylian Mbappe strikes had helped *Les Bleus* to down *La Albiceleste* 4-3 in the same stage four years back.

A draw will see an efficient Poland through. And the Argentines, who were breached by the quick movements of Saudi Arabia in the first match, must be extra cautious while dealing with Robert Lewandowski, the new Bar-



The orchestrator: Argentina will need Messi to come up with another magical performance to ensure its progress. GETTY IMAGES

Iona fulcrum.

The presence of Dutchman Pol van Boekel, who ruled out three Argentine goals for offside against the Saudis, in the VAR console will be another worry as Poland is expected to maintain a similar highline.

Saudi Arabia can become the first team from the host continent to make it to the knockouts if it wins against Mexico, a draw will also suffice if Poland beats Argentina and sends Messi home early.

An Argentine win and a draw for Saudi will bring goal difference in play for Poland (4 points, +2 goal difference) and the Asian giant (3 points and -1 goal difference), but Mexico must win to harbour any hopes of adding to its re-

cord of making it past the group stage in the past seven World Cups.

In Group D, France is already through and only a loss to Tunisia and an Australian win over Denmark will take away its top spot. A reinvented Antoine Griezmann, playing in a deeper role, has been a marker and a carrier forward, Didier Deschamps's excellent answer to the missing pieces of Paul Pogba and N'Golo Kante.

Only a win will keep Tunisia in contention, and even then, it'll need Denmark to at least get a draw against the Aussies. If the other game, the Danes will need a win, while a draw might be enough for Australia unless of course the Tunisians shock the French.

TODAY'S FIESTA

FIFA World Cup 2022

Australia v Denmark

Group D, November 30

Al Janoub Stadium

38 FIFA rank

AUS 1-4 FRA Match 1 DEN 0-0 TUN

AUS 1-0 TUN Match 2 DEN 1-2 FRA

HEAD-TO-HEAD

Australia 1

Denmark 2

Recent meetings

2018 Denmark 1-1 Australia

2012 Denmark 2-0 Australia

WORLD CUP RECORD

3 Wins

4 Draws

11 Losses

0.83 Goals for

1.41 Goals against

1.94 Per match

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KICK-OFF: 8.30 P.M.

TODAY'S FIESTA

FIFA World Cup 2022

Tunisia v France

Group D, November 30

Education City Stadium

30 FIFA rank

TUN 0-0 DEN Match 1 FRA 4-1 AUS

TUN 0-1 AUS Match 2 FRA 2-1 DEN

HEAD-TO-HEAD

Tunisia 2

France 3

Recent meetings

2010 Tunisia 1-1 France

2008 France 3-1 Tunisia

WORLD CUP RECORD

2 Wins

5 Draws

10 Losses

0.76 Goals for

1.85 Goals against

1.53 Per match

© GRAPHIC NEWS

KICK-OFF: 8.30 P.M.

FIFA World Cup 2022

Poland v Argentina

Group C, November 30

Stadium 9/4

26 FIFA rank

POL 0-0 MEX Match 1 ARG 1-2 KSA

POL 2-0 KSA Match 2 ARG 2-0 MEX

HEAD-TO-HEAD

Poland 3

Argentina 6

Recent meetings

2011 Poland 2-1 Argentina

1992 Argentina 2-0 Poland

Men in Blue will hope for rain-free final ODI

The challenge for the visitors will be to post an above-par score on a ground where swing bowlers have ruled the roost in recent times

INDIA IN NZ

Press Trust of India

CHRISTCHURCH

Frustrated by the weather, a desperate Indian team will pray for a rain-free final ODI against New Zealand in its bid to square the series. Scattered showers are forecast. With the series on the line, Shikhar Dhawan and his men will have to really apply themselves at the Hagley Oval, which has traditionally helped seam bowlers and has an average score in the 230 range.

India's first PowerPlay batting has been much talked about and skipper Dhawan knows a sea change in approach is urgently required. Shubman Gill has shown intent in shot selection with scores of 50 and 45 not out, so has Suryakumar Yadav, who is in an incredible vein of form.

But the challenge for In-



Need for speed: Gill, who has had decent scores, will be crucial in India's scheme of things. GETTY IMAGES

dia will be putting up an above par score on a ground where swing bowlers have ruled the roost in recent ODIs. And for that, not just the openers or Surya but the likes of Rishabh Pant also need to step up.

For New Zealand pacers Matt Henry, Tim Southee and Lockie Ferguson, there couldn't be a better

venue to exploit the frailties in India's batting. Tom Latham and Kane Williamson will be the thorn in the Indian bowlers will be looking to blunt.

The teams (from):

India: Shikhar Dhawan (Capt.), Shubman Gill, Suryakumar Yadav, Shreyas Iyer, Rishabh Pant (wk), Sanju Samson (wk), Deepak Hooda, Washington Sundar,

Kuldeep Yadav, Yuzvendra Chahal, Deepak Chahar, Arshdeep Singh, Shardul Thakur and Umran Malik.

New Zealand: Kane Williamson (Capt.), Finn Allen, Devon Conway, Tom Latham, Daryl Mitchell, Glenn Phillips, Michael Bracewell, Tim Southee, Matt Henry, Adam Milne, Jimmy Neesham, Mitchell Santner and Lockie Ferguson.

Match starts at 7 a.m. IST.

IN BRIEF



Parteek's performance helps Giants end Paltan's streak

Parteek Dahiya (19 points) powered Gujarat Giants to a 51-39 victory over Puneri Paltan in the Pro Kabaddi League at the Gachibowli Indoor Stadium in Hyderabad on Tuesday. Giants' victory broke Paltan's five-match winning streak for Paltan. The teams went into the break with Paltan leading 22-21 before Parteek and Giants turned it around in the second.

His 'work done', Ross Brawn decides to retire from F-1

Ross Brawn announced on Monday that he was retiring and leaving his position as managing director of motorsports at Formula One, which he had held since 2017. "My time with Formula 1 is now coming to an end," the Englishman, who turned 68 last week, wrote on the Formula One website adding "now is the right time to retire."

Kiran, Vivaan come up trumps in trap



Manisha Keer, champion Kiran, Shreyasi Singh. KAMESH SRINIVASAN

Sports Bureau

NEW DELHI

Kiran beat Manisha Keer 2-1 in the shoot off for the gold after the two were tied on 30 in women's trap in the 65th National shotgun championship on Tuesday.

With qualification top-pr Rajeshwari Kumari (116) losing the race for the medal round in the semifinals, the 23-year-old Kiran, who trains at the same range under coach Vikram Chopra, was quite at home in the climax, as she beat experienced shooters who had won the national championships earlier.

In men's trap, Vivaan Kapoor prevailed over

Sumit and Ramkumar fuel Indian Oil past ONGC for the title

Kamesh Srinivasan

NEW DELHI

Sumit Nagal and Ramkumar Ramanathan powered Indian Oil to a 2-0 victory over Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) in the final of the 41st PSPB inter-unit tennis tournament on Tuesday.

Sumit overcame a stiff resistance from Vishnu Vardhan for a 6-4, 3-6, 6-1 victory in the first singles. Competing in the Challenger circuit, Sumit was sharp and took charge of the situation on key points. Ramkumar closed the contest with a 6-3, 6-4 win over Yuki Bhambri, who rarely plays singles these days.

Sumit and Ramkumar also set up a title clash in singles, by beating Rohan Bopanna and Yuki respectively.

In the women's event,



Champion: The Indian Oil team — Ramkumar, Divij, Sumit and Bopanna — which emerged victorious. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

the final will be between the top two seeds Ankita Raina and Riya Bhatia.

The results:

Men (semifinals): Ramkumar Ramanathan bt Rohan Bopanna 9-5; Sumit Nagal bt Yuki Bhambri 9-6. **Doubles (semifinals):**

Rohan Bopanna & Divij Sharan bt Udit Gogoi & Chandrasekhar Mohanti 6-2; Vishnu Vardhan & V.M. Ranjeet bt Anup Toppo & Sunny Rajpal 6-1.

Team (final): Indian Oil bt ONGC

Hurley, Archana bowl India u-19 to thumping win

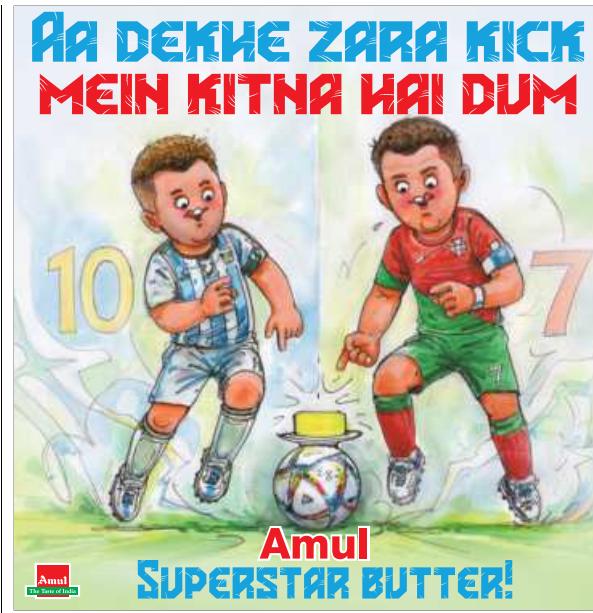
Sports Bureau

MUMBAI

The India under-19 women's team defeated New Zealand under-19 by 110 runs in the second T20 here on Tuesday. Opting to bat, India posted 176 for six in 20 overs before Hurley Gala (three for 18) and Archana Devi (three for 15) and Mannat Kashyap (2/2).

chana Devi (three for 15) shot out the visitors for 66 in 15 overs.

The scores: India under-19 176/6 in 20 overs (G. Trisha 36, Shweta Sehrawat 34, Soumya Tiwari 31, Amie Hucker 2/33, Kayley Knight 2/28) bt New Zealand under-19 66 in 15 overs (Hurley Gala 3/18, Archana Devi 3/15, Mannat Kashyap 2/2).



daCunha/AB/848

India-A takes opening day's honours against Bangladesh-A

Press Trust of India

COX'S BAZAR (BANGLADESH)

The pace-spin combo of Navdeep Saini and Saurabh Kumar impressed as India-A grabbed the opening-day honours against Bangladesh-A in the first 'Test' here on Tuesday.

Opting to field, Saini (3/21), Saurabh (4/23) and Mukesh Kumar (2/25) helped India-A bundle out Bangladesh-A for 112 in 45 overs.

In reply, the visitors finished the day strongly at 120 for no loss.

Yashasvi Jaiswal and skipper Abhimanyu Easwaran were looking good on 61 and 53.

After Saini and Mukesh picked up five of the top six with just 63 runs on the board, the hosts recovered somewhat to cross three figures owing to Mosaddek Hossain's 63. Hossain struck six fours and three

sixes. Bangladesh was reeling at 26 for five at one stage.

When the Indians batted, Jaiswal struck eight fours in his 106-ball knock and Easwaran six fours off 111 balls.

The scores: Bangladesh-A 112 in 45 overs (Mosaddek Hossain 63; Navdeep Saini 3/21, Saurabh Kumar 4/23) vs India-A 120/0 in 36 overs (Yashasvi Jaiswal 61 batting, Abhimanyu Easwaran 53 batting).

LIVE TELECAST

New Zealand vs India: 3rd ODI, Prime Video, 7 a.m.

Australia vs West Indies: 1st Test, day 1, Sony Sports Ten 5 (SD & HD) & LIV, 7.50 a.m.

Vijay Hazare Trophy: (semifinals): Star Sports 1 (SD & HD) & Hotstar, 9 a.m.

Sri Lanka vs Afghanistan: 3rd ODI, Sony Sports Ten 5 (SD & HD) & LIV, 2.30 p.m.

PKL: Star Sports 2 (SD & HD) & Hotstar, 7.30 p.m. onwards

FIFA World Cup 2022: Sports 18-1 (SD & HD) & Jio Cinema App, 8.30 p.m. & 12.30 a.m. (Thursday)

BCCI serves conflict of interest notice on Binny

Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI

members by the association they represent. Sanghvi's name does not appear in the minutes of Gujarat's last AGM while Kamlesh resigned from Maharashtra via Nov. 21.

Ajay Sharma, nominee for the post of treasurer, faces the question that he has not served the stipulated cooling period after being an office-bearer in J&K while Bhaskar Ram was a vice-president in the suspended executive barred by the Delhi High Court.

Harish Kakkar could be disqualified as government employees are barred from holding any post in National Sports Federations.

Vijay Hazare Trophy

Wednesday's semifinals

Karnataka vs Saurashtra; Maharashtra vs Assam

"You are hereby informed that a complaint has been received under Rule 39(2)(b) of the Rules and Regulations of BCCI by the Ethics Officer, BCCI for breach of Rule 38 (i) (i) and Rule 38(2) of the said rules, constituting an instance of conflict of interest on your part."

"You are directed to file your Written Response to the accompanying complaint on or before 20/12/2022. The said response should be supported by a duly executed affidavit," wrote Saran in the notice dated November 21.

Binni had become the 36th BCCI president in October, replacing former India captain Sourav Ganguly.

The 67-year-old played 27 Tests and 72 ODIs for India.

Delhi gets the better of Uttarakhand, makes quarterfinals

NATL. BASKETBALL

Sports Bureau

Mathew 13, Shanaz Muhammed 12, Rahul Sharath 12).

Madhya Pradesh 104 (Prakash Misra 25, Christopher Minhas 15, Rakesh Kumar Sharma 13, Surya Pratap Singh 12) bt West Bengal 93 (Raghav Sehgal 30, Arshdeep Singh 24).

Group C: Tamil Nadu 115 (Muin Bek 20, M Aravind Kumar 19, Baladhaneswar 14, Lokeshwaran 12) bt Mizoram 64 (Vanu Thazhual 22, Zonunsanga 11).

Delhi 104 (Prince Tyagi 39, Manik Ohlyan 22, Abhishek Tyagi 12) bt Uttarakhand 81 (Prashanth Rawat 25, Arjun Singh 18, Keshar Singh 17, Amandeep 11).

Women: **Group A:** Railways 109 (M Pushpa 18, Madhu Kumari 12, Nisha Sharma 12, Dharshini 10, Navaneeta 10) bt Karnataka 52 (Varsha Nandini 14, Pavani Sangwan 11).

Group B: Tamil Nadu 65 (Sruthi 27, Shobhana 12) bt West Bengal 58 (Nivya Raj 21).

Group C: Kerala 91 (PS Jeena 20, Stephy Nixon 19, Minnu Maria 14) bt Uttar Pradesh 59 (Sanju Yadav 22, Sruti Yadav 13).

Group D: Delhi 74 (Raspreet Sidhu 22, Khushi Ahlawat 11) bt Odisha 59 (Lipramayee Satapathy 20, Anuradha Seth 11).

Perfect day for Mamedyarov and Dzagnidze

TATA STEEL CHESS

P.K. Ajith Kumar

KOLKATA

She was on 9/9 in Chennai. Just three months later, in another Indian city, Poland's Olwia Kiolbasa is on 0/3. Sport is like that, of course, as the footballers of Argentina and Germany would also testify.

If the woman who stunned the world at the Chess Olympiad in August lost all her games on the opening day of the Tata Steel Chess India tournament, another won all hers. Nana Dzagnidze of Georgia thus emerged as the early leader in the inaugural edition of the women's event here on Tuesday.

Kiolbasa was, in fact, one of her victims. Her other wins came against Indians B. Savitha Shri and R. Vaishali. The host's best bet, Koneru Humpy, had a fairly good day, on which she faced Ukrainians in every game. The score read Humpy 2 Ukraine 1.



The former World rapid champion scored an important win against Anna Muzychuk, drew with her younger sister Mariya and Anna Ushenina. With two points, she is among the four players in the second position.

The open event also has a leader with a perfect score in Shakhriyar Mamedyarov of Azerbaijan. Following him a point behind is the Indian duo of Arjun Erigaisi, the defending champion, and Nihal Sarin. In the women's event, Nana Dzagnidze (Geo) 3; Anna Ushenina (Ukraine) 2 drew with Dronavalli Harika 2.

The results (third round):

Open: Nodirbek Abdusattorov (Uzb) 1.5 bt Hikaru Nakamura (US) 0.5; Vedit Gujrathi 1 lost to Nihal Sarin 2; D. Gukesh 1.5 drew with Arjun Erigaisi 2; S.P. Sethuraman 0.5 lost to Parham Maghsoudloo (Ira) 1.5; Wesley So (US) 1.5 lost to Shakhriyar Mamedyarov (Aze) 3.

Women: Mariya Muzychuk (Ukr) 2 drew with Koneru Humpy 2; B. Savitha Shri 0.5 drew with Anna Muzychuk (Ukr) 1; R. Vaishali 1.5 bt Vantika Agrawal 1; Olwia Kiolbasa (Pol) 0 lost to Nana Dzagnidze (Geo) 3; Anna Ushenina (Ukraine) 2 drew with Dronavalli Harika 2.

Fletcher's strike gives Neroa win against Kenkre

Sports Bureau

Jourdaine Fletcher struck in the 57th minute as Neroa defeated Kenkre 1-0 in their I-League contest at the Cooperage Ground in Mumbai on Tuesday.</p