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Lok Sabha disrupted as Opposition seeks debate on Bihar SIR

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Parliament did not function on Monday with Opposition parties disrupting the Lok Sabha over demands for a discussion on the special intensive revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in Bihar.

When the House convened in the morning, Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla began proceedings with the Question Hour. However, the Opposition members disrupted and began protesting.

Mr. Birla reminded them that ever since the Monsoon Session had begun, the House could not pass any Bill due to repeated disruptions. He said if the members had any issue, they could meet him for a discussion but allow the Question Hour to proceed as many important issues are raised during the time to which the government

replies.

"I will give each of you enough time to raise your issues like I did in the past, but please allow the House to run," he said, adjourning the House till 2 p.m.

The Opposition floor leaders, including Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi, had last week written to the Speaker seeking a debate on the SIR.

Shortly after the adjournment, around 11.30 a.m., the Speaker met Opposition floor leaders in a bid to break the deadlock. However, the talks did not yield any result as the latter remained firm on a discussion on electoral reforms while making a concession that they will not insist on naming the debate after the SIR of electoral rolls.

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'DIFFICULT TO ANALYSE'
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Centre hits back after Trump threatens more tariffs on India

Tariffs 'paid by India' will be substantially raised as it keeps profiting from Russian oil, says U.S. President

MEA says U.S. 'actively encouraged' Russian imports since war in Ukraine, points at EU's trade with Russia

T.C.A. Sharad Raghavan
NEW DELHI

Less than a week after he announced a 25% tariff on imports from India "plus a penalty", U.S. President Donald Trump on Monday once again raised the issue of India buying oil from Russia and profiting from it. He stated that he would be "substantially" raising the tariff "paid by India to the USA". It should be noted that such tariffs are paid by importers in the U.S., rather than the country on which the tariffs are levied.

The Indian government hit back at Mr. Trump's statements and also criticism from European countries on India's trade with Russia, saying that such "targeting of India" was "unjustified and unreason-

able". In a statement, the government pointed out that not only did the U.S. encourage such trade previously, both the European Union and the U.S. continue to actively trade with Russia at levels significantly higher than India's.

"India is not only buying massive amounts of Russian Oil, they are then, for much of the Oil purchased, selling it on the Open Market for big profits," Mr. Trump posted on the social network Truth Social. "They don't care how many people in Ukraine are being killed by the Russian War Machine. Because of this, I will be substantially raising the Tariff paid by India to the USA. [sic]"

The Ministry of External Affairs responded to the statement, saying that the U.S. had previously "ac-

They [India] don't care how many people in Ukraine are being killed by the Russian War Machine. Because of this, I will be substantially raising the Tariff paid by India to the USA
DONALD TRUMP, U.S. President

It is revealing that the very nations criticising India are themselves indulging in trade with Russia. Unlike our case, such trade is not even a vital national compulsion
MEA STATEMENT

tively encouraged" the import of Russian oil.

"India has been targeted by the United States and the European Union for importing oil from Russia after the commencement of the Ukraine conflict," the official spokesperson of the Ministry of External

Affairs said. "In fact, India began importing from Russia because traditional supplies were diverted to Europe after the outbreak of the conflict. The United States at that time actively encouraged such imports by India for strengthening global energy markets sta-

bility." The MEA's statement added that India's oil imports from Russia are meant to ensure "predictable and affordable energy costs" for the Indian consumer. "They are a necessity compelled by the global market situation," it added. "However, it is revealing that the very nations criticising India are themselves indulging in trade with Russia. Unlike our case, such trade is not even a vital national compulsion."

The MEA said that the European Union in 2024 had a bilateral trade of €67.5 billion in goods with Russia, in addition to a trade in services estimated at €17.2 billion in 2023.

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INDIA AND THE TRUMP ERA
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IN BRIEF



Delhi CM tables AAP-era CAG reports in House

NEW DELHI
Chief Minister Rekha Gupta on Monday tabled two Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) reports in the Assembly on the performance of the previous Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) government. However, no discussion regarding the reports was held. » Page 2

J&K Police to be blamed for hate against Kashmiris'

SRINAGAR
The Forum for Human Rights in J&K on Monday blamed the police's "hasty and incorrect information for triggering hate speech and actions against Kashmiris" after the Pahalgam terror attack. » Page 7

Siraj sizzles as India pulls off a dramatic victory at The Oval to level the series



Mission accomplished: India's five-wicket hero Mohammed Siraj celebrates after dismissing England's Gus Atkinson to seal a narrow victory at The Oval on Monday, helping the visitors share the honours 2-2 in the five-match series for the Anderson-Tendulkar Trophy. GETTY IMAGES

Shayan Acharya
LONDON

It took India 56 minutes and 53 balls to mop up England's lower-order and clinch an incredible six-run win on the final day of the fifth Test at The Oval on Monday. The maiden Anderson-Tendulkar Trophy series ended 2-2.

After 25 days of riveting action, the best was saved for the last as Shubman Gill's men rode on Mohammed Siraj's sensational spell to pull off a remarkable victory.

Chasing a target of 374, the hosts required 35 runs with four wickets in hand on Day Five. England was looking for a Test series win against India at home after a gap of seven years – it had

last won 4-1 in 2018. But, Siraj and Prasidh Krishna proved a lethal combination as the visitors tasted their third success at the iconic venue, the previous ones coming in 1971 and 2021.

It was a litmus test for an Indian team in transition, but the young side showed heart and character as it fought back from tough situations to share the honours. Siraj, who sent down more than 1,000 deliveries in the series, sparked on an overcast morning as India began a new era in style. He was named Player-of-the-Match.

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Shibu Soren, key tribal voice and former Chief Minister of Jharkhand, dies aged 81

Amit Bhelari
PATNA

Former Jharkhand Chief Minister and Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM) co-founder Shibu Soren passed away in Delhi on Monday. He was 81.

Mr. Soren had been undergoing treatment for kidney-related problems at the Sir Ganga Ram Hospital in Delhi for more than a month. His son, Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren, announced the death in a post on social media platform X. "Respected Disha Guruji has left us all... I have become shunya [zero] today," Mr. Hemant said. He broke down as party workers raised slogans hailing his father, who



SHIBU SOREN (1944-2025)

played a key role in the creation of Jharkhand.

Talking to presspersons in Delhi, Mr. Hemant described his father as a "great man".

"He was like a protective shade for Jharkhand and the tribals. That shade has

left us today. We will always remember him," the Chief Minister, who was accompanied by his wife Kalpana Soren, said, adding that Mr. Soren's legacy would live on.

Mr. Soren was born on January 11, 1944 in Nemra village of undivided Bihar, which now comes under Ramgarh district of Jharkhand.

He co-founded the JMM along with A.K. Roy and Binod Bihari Mahto in 1973. The JMM soon became the primary political voice for the demand for a separate tribal State and got support across the Chotanagpur and Santhal Pargana regions.

He served as Chief Minister of Jharkhand three

times, but never completed a term. He was elected several times to the Lok Sabha from Dumka. As a key figure in the United Progressive Alliance government, he also served as Union Coal Minister.

Leaders cutting across party lines paid tribute to Mr. Soren. President Droupadi Murmu, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi, and Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge visited the Sir Ganga Ram Hospital and paid tributes to the veteran tribal leader.

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CM VK A ND-NDE

SAD protests against Punjab govt.'s land pooling policy

INBRIEF



No Marathi versus non-Marathi tension in Maharashtra: CM

There is no Marathi versus non-Marathi tension in Maharashtra and no injustice is being done to either of them, Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis said on Monday as he advised his party colleague and MP Nishikant Dubey against wading into the emotive language issue. Talking to reporters, mr. Fadnavis maintained controversy over language is being created in the State for political reasons. To a question about controversial remarks made last month by BJP Lok Sabha MP Nishikant Dubey on the language issue raging in Maharashtra, the CM advised his party colleague to exercise caution. PTI

Haasan's Sanatana Dharma comment sparks controversy

Actor, Rajya Sabha MP and founder of Makkal Needhi Maiam, Kamal Haasan, has landed in a political row for his remark against Sanatana Dharma at an event in Chennai on Sunday, facing backlash from Bharatiya Janata Party members and Sanatana Dharma supporters on social media. Mr. Haasan, participating in a event of a charitable organisation that has helped over 6,700 first-generation graduates realise their dream of higher education, urged youngsters to wield education as their weapon. "In this war, only education has the power to change the nation. It's the only weapon that can break the chains of dictatorship and Sanatana," Mr. Haasan said.

TMC cites remarks of Malviya to charge BJP with 'othering' Bengalis

West Bengal's ruling party accuses ruling party at the Centre of 'systematically promoting xenophobia'; Tamil Nadu CM backs Mamata Banerjee, decries 'assault' on non-Hindi languages

Shiv Sahay Singh
KOLKATA

A day after a communication from Delhi Police describing Bangla as 'Bangladeshi language' evoked strong criticism from the Trinamool Congress (TMC), Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader Amit Malviya's remarks on Monday that there is no language called "Bengali" sparked outrage in political and social circles. Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin also expressed solidarity with his West Bengal counterpart Mamata Banerjee on the Delhi Police letter dated July 29. "This is a direct insult to the very language in which our national anthem was written," he posted on X on Monday.

Mr. Malviya, who heads BJP's IT cell and is co-observer of the party's West Bengal unit, took to social media on the language used by the officer-in-charge of the Lodhi House police station while seeking translation of documents in a case related to suspected Bangladeshis



Cong. workers taking out a march in Kolkata on Monday against 'harassment' of Bengali-speaking migrants in BJP-ruled States. PTI

from Banga Bhawan in the national capital.

"There is, in fact, no language called 'Bengali' that neatly covers all these variants. 'Bengali' denotes ethnicity, not linguistic uniformity. So when the Delhi Police uses 'Bangladeshi language', it is a shorthand for the linguistic markers used to profile illegal immigrants from Bangladesh - not a commentary on Bengali as spoken in West Bengal," he said.

Several Trinamool leaders condemned the remarks, with the party proceeding to accuse the BJP of

"systematically promoting xenophobia and othering, with Bengalis being deliberately targeted across States", and calling for such "dangerous narratives" to be resisted.

"BJP is hell-bent on erasing one of the richest, oldest, constitutionally recognised languages of India just to whitewash Delhi Police's bigoted profiling tactics. This is linguistic fascism, plain and simple. We dare BJP to erase Bengali from the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution," said Trinamool spokesperson Kunal Ghosh. West Bengal

Minister Sashi Panja described Mr. Malviya's assertion as a "calculated attempt to erase, belittle, and vilify the culture, history, and pride of Bengal".

The Trinamool criticism comes at a time when the ruling party in West Bengal is raising its pitch, calling for a 'language movement' and invoking "Bengali *asmita* (pride)" over the 'targeting' of migrants from the State in BJP-ruled States.

'Not inadvertent'

Mr. Stalin said statements such as those issued by Delhi Police were not inadvertent errors or slip-ups but exposed "the dark mindset of a regime that consistently undermines diversity and weaponises identity". In the face of this "assault on non-Hindi languages", Ms. Banerjee stood as a shield for the language and people of West Bengal, who would not let this attack pass without a fitting response, the Tamil Nadu CM said.

(With inputs from The Hindu Bureau in Chennai)

Shah meets Bengal BJP MPs, kick-starts poll preparations

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The BJP on Monday got down to poll preparations for the upcoming Assembly election in West Bengal, with Union Home Minister Amit Shah meeting the party MPs from the State, the special intensive revision (SIR) of voter list and seats reserved for Scheduled Castes and Tribes coming in for special mention.

The meeting comes in the background of a drive by various BJP-ruled States to identify what they term "illegal Bangladeshi migrants", and the controversial circular issued by the Delhi Police about people speaking "Bangladeshi" language.

According to an MP present at the meeting, Mr. Shah emphasised that as and when the SIR takes place in West Bengal, the party needs to be prepared for it. The Election Commission (EC) had last week directed West Bengal's Chief Electoral Officer Manoj Agarwal to immediately begin preparations for an SIR of electoral rolls in the State, which heads to poll next year.

"Apart from this, Amit bhai was clear that the is-



Home Minister Amit Shah arriving to attend the Monsoon Session of Parliament on Monday. PTI

sues of women safety following the R.G. Kar [rape-murder] incident need to be kept front and centre as well as assessment of the BJP's performance in SC/ST reserved seats," said a source.

Present at the meeting were West Bengal BJP president Samik Bhattacharya and BJP general secretary in-charge of the State, Sunil Bansal. Mr. Bhattacharya said general issues with regard to poll preparations were discussed.

Meeting with MLAs

Mr. Shah also held a meeting via video conference with district-level leaders of West Bengal BJP as well as party MLAs to speak about poll preparations there.

West Bengal, Kerala, Assam and Tamil Nadu go to polls early next year.

Bihar domiciles to be given priority in recruitment of govt. school teachers: Nitish Kumar

Amarnath Tewary
PATNA

Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar on Monday said domiciles will be given preference during the recruitment of teachers for State government-run schools.

The announcement comes ahead of the upcoming Assembly election. Without sharing specifics, such as the proportion of vacancies that will be reserved for domiciles, the CM said in a post in Hindi on X: "The Education Department has been instructed to make necessary amendments and give priority to the residents (domicile) of Bihar in the recruitment of teachers."

The policy will be implemented in time for the fourth instalment of the Teacher Recruitment Exam (TRE) scheduled later this year, said Mr. Kumar. He added that the offi-



Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar handing out an appointment letter to a teacher in Patna. FILE PHOTO

cials concerned have been directed to conduct the Secondary Teacher Eligibility Test, meant for aspiring secondary school teachers, before holding TRE 5.0.

"Since the formation of the government in November 2005, we have been continuously working to improve the education system. A large number of teachers have been appointed to strengthen the

system," the CM added in the social media post.

The decision follows a number of similar announcements made by the Nitish Kumar-led National Democratic Alliance government, which includes making domicile mandatory for accessing the 35% reservation for women in State government jobs, in the run-up to the State election.

Consent of women employees must for night shift in Odisha

Satyasundar Barik
BHUBANESWAR

Cornered and concerned over women safety, the Odisha government issued a notification on Monday outlining measures to create a safer workplace environment for them, including a ban on employing adolescents during night shifts.

The notification by Labour and Employee's State Insurance Department stated that consent of women employees willing to work at night would have to be taken in writing.

GPS tracking

Other steps are adequate transportation facilities with GPS tracking system, biodata and police verification of each driver for night shift, and whether driver is employed directly or through service provider. "The employer will pro-

vide washroom and drinking water facilities near the workplace where such women employees are employed, with provisions of closed-circuit television surveillance and proper lighting, including the passages towards conveniences," the notification said.

Helpline numbers

Dedicated telephone numbers of the establishment along with government toll-free helpline number for women (181) and Labour and ESI Department Helpline number 18003456703 will have to be displayed prominently at the establishment and inside vehicles used for transportation of workers, it said. "The employer will ensure that there will no be less than eight consecutive hours of rest between the last shift and the night shift," the notification further elaborated.

Absurd to link SIR in Bihar with Tamil Nadu, avoid false statements: poll commission

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

Rejecting the contentions linking the special intensive revision (SIR) in Bihar with the "adding" of about 6.5 lakh voters in Tamil Nadu, the Election Commission (EC) has said the SIR had not yet been rolled out in Tamil Nadu. "It is, therefore, absurd to connect the SIR in Bihar with Tamil Nadu. Such peddling of false statements with respect to the SIR should be avoided," it said in a social media post.

The post, seeking to check facts in light of the charges made by former Union Minister P. Chidambaram, said there was no need for political leaders to spread "false information" with respect to the SIR being conducted by the EC at the national level. "As far as voters, who have perma-



INDIA bloc MPs staging a protest against SIR outside Parliament. FILE PHOTO

nently shifted from Bihar to other States and are 'ordinarily residents' in those States, are concerned, the exact figures can be known only after the SIR has been conducted," the EC said.

Referring to provisions in the Constitution and the Representation of the People Act, 1950, the EC said the enrolment of voters was with respect to the constituency in which they

are 'ordinarily residents'. As for the claims of enrolment of 6.5 lakh voters in Tamil Nadu, the Commission termed them "false figures".

Roll registration

Citing Article 19(1)(e) of the Constitution and Section 19(b) of the Representation of the People Act, the EC said every person who was 'ordinarily resident' in a constituency shall be entitled to be registered in the electoral roll of that constituency.

"Therefore, a person originally belonging to Tamil Nadu, but is ordinarily residing in Delhi, is entitled to be registered as an elector in Delhi. Similarly, a person originally belonging to Bihar, but is ordinarily residing in Chennai, is entitled to be registered as an elector in Chennai," the EC explained.

Despite HC order, rural employment guarantee scheme remains stalled in Bengal

NEWS ANALYSIS

Shiv Sahay Singh
KOLKATA

While directing the resumption of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) in West Bengal, a Division Bench of the Calcutta High Court, led by Justice T.S. Sivagnanam, spoke on June 18 about drawing a line between past actions and future steps to be taken to implement the scheme. The Division Bench, while resolving the three-year imbroglio, pointed out that the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) "does not envisage a situation where the scheme will be put into cold storage for eternity".



Workers at Tuima village in West Bengal's Purulia district standing near an unfinished pond. The Centre had stopped the release of MGNREGS funds to the State from March 2022. FILE PHOTO

Despite the High Court order to resume the scheme from August 1, 100 days of guaranteed wage employment to rural households has yet to start, and it seems that neither the Centre nor the State is keen to resume it.

The funds have been stalled since March 2022 over allegations of corruption in the implementation of the scheme. The Centre invoked Section 27 of the

MGNREGA, 2005, which allows for stoppage of funds for violation of rules in implementation of the scheme by the State.

The suspension of MGNREGS has dominated the politics of the State for the past three years.

Before the 2024 Lok Sabha poll, Trinamool Congress (TMC) leaders paraded MGNREGS beneficiaries in New Delhi and highlighted that the Centre

was depriving the workers of the State of their rightful dues. However, after the High Court's June 18 direction, the response of the ruling party has been lukewarm.

In several public gatherings between June 18 and August 1, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee gave no hints on the resumption of the 100-day work. Instead, she spoke about Karmashree Prakalpa, a scheme aimed at providing at least 50 days of wage employment to each job card holder in every household in a financial year.

After the court's direction, the TMC can't use the "Centre's deprivation" card any more. However, it continues to highlight that the Centre owes ₹3,000 crore to the State under the scheme. The pending

funds are related to past work and has nothing to do with the resumption of work under the scheme. Once work begins, payment receipts will be generated and the Centre will have to directly pay the workers. Several States have pending payments under MGNREGS, and pending wages is not a hindrance in starting new work under the Act.

The State government, however, is not accepting applications from individuals seeking work. In the past six weeks, thousands of people have approached the authorities expressing their willingness to work under the scheme but there seems to be no clarity on whether MGNREGS will resume or not.

The Centre, on the other hand, has not also shown any willingness to

comply with the High Court order and continues to hide behind Section 27 of the MGNREGA, blocking the release of funds, and thereby systematically depriving workers of their legal right to employment. West Bengal Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leaders, who have publicly opposed the resumption of the scheme, do not want the State government to get any allocation under it before the Assembly poll.

Looming migrant crisis

Both the Central and State governments are unwilling to resume the scheme even when West Bengal is facing a huge migrant crisis, with millions leaving the State in search of work. While the fate of the scheme and workers hangs in balance, West Bengal is heading for Assembly poll in 2026. The

resumption of the scheme could have provided succor to millions of workers in the State but may no longer serve the political interests of the TMC and the BJP. It was the Paschim Banga Khet Majoor Samity (PBKMS), a union of agricultural workers that approached the High Court seeking resumption of MGNREGS. The union put up a legal fight for three years to ensure that work under the scheme can start again.

The PBKMS blames "wilful inaction by both the governments" for not resuming the work. Demanding immediate implementation of MGNREGS in West Bengal, the PBKMS says that non-resumption of work is a "blatant non-compliance of a High Court order, and is illegal, unjust, and unacceptable".

BJP's ally IPFT seeks SIR in Tripura on the lines of Bihar

Press Trust of India
AGARTALA

The Indigenous People's Front of Tripura (IPFT), an ally of the ruling BJP in Tripura, has demanded a Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in the northeastern State on the lines of Bihar, a senior party leader said on Monday.

The development came days after a delegation of Tripura Motha Party, another ally of the BJP in Tripura, met Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar and demanded SIR in the State.

"The ECI will have to ensure that no genuine citizen of the State shall be disenfranchised from the electoral rolls," the IPFT said.

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- Gevra-Pendra: 155.379 km – **₹7448.52 crore**
- Rowghat-Jagdalpur: 140 km – **₹3,513 crore**
- Kharsia-Dharamjaigarh new railway line: 162.5 km – **₹3,438.39 crore**
- Bilaspur-Jharsuguda 4th line: 206 km – **₹2,135.34 crore** (Chhattisgarh: 153 km, Odisha: 53 km)

- Urga-Dharamjaigarh: 62.5 kms – **₹1686.22 crore**
- Sardega-Bhalumuda: 37 km – **₹21,282 crore**
- Boridand-Ambikapur doubling: 80 km – **₹776 crore**
- Gauge conversion of Kendri-Dhamtari & Abhanpur-Rajim: 67.20 km – **₹544 crore**
- 37 km Durg-Raipur Automatic Signaling – **₹88 crore**
- **148 rail flyovers** and **underpasses** constructed since 2014.
- **100% electrification** of railway network in Chhattisgarh State
- **New MEMU train** service started on Abhanpur-Mandir Hasaud section
- New railway projects extending over **1,103 km**
- Bilaspur-Rajnandgaon 4th line: **178 km**
- Dalli Rajhara-Rowghat: **95 km**



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- Ambikapur-Barwadih: 200 km – **₹9,718 crore**

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Plaint against Adoor over remarks on aid for SC/ST filmmakers

The Hindu Bureau
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Filmmaker Adoor Gopalakrishnan's controversial statements at the Kerala Film Policy Conclave on the Kerala government's project to promote filmmakers from Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (SC/STs) and women filmmakers kicked up a storm on Monday with Ministers, Dalit activists, and filmmakers criticising him for his stand.

Mr. Gopalakrishnan had said the project under which ₹1.5 crore is provided to aspiring women filmmakers and those from the SC/STs would pave way for corruption. They should be given at least three months of intensive training to make films, he had said, calling for a reduction in the amount to ₹50 lakh.

Dalit activist Dinu Veyil filed a complaint under the SC/ST (Prevention of



Adoor Gopalakrishnan

Atrocities) Act with the Museum police here and the State SC/ST Commission against the filmmaker.

Meanwhile, Mr. Gopalakrishnan said he was "not against providing financial assistance to anyone, but the beneficiaries should be provided adequate training before the disbursal of funds."

"I have not insulted anyone. If anyone can prove that I have, I can apologise. I am not responsible for the interpretations of my speech," he said.

Telangana Cabinet examines Kaleshwaram probe report

Ex-CM's involvement led to irregularities and issues with the Medigadda, Annaram and Sundilla barrages, says the one-man commission's report; the project lacked Cabinet consent, it adds

Rajeev M.
HYDERABAD

The Justice Pinaki Chandra Ghose Commission has said the former Chief Minister K. Chandrashekhara Rao was "directly and vicariously" accountable for the irregularities and the illegalities in the planning, construction, completion, operation and maintenance of the three barrages at Medigadda, Annaram and Sundilla forming part of the Kaleshwaram Lift Irrigation Project (KLIP).

"His involvement and directions minutely... is the cause and result of irregularities and the cause of distress to these three barrages," the commission said in its 665-page report which was examined by the State Council of Ministers on Monday. The com-



Crucial find: The commission submitting the report to Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy in Hyderabad on Friday. ANI

mission said it could be categorically held that there was rank irregularity from the stage of conceptualisation of the project till the issuance of administrative approvals on March 1, 2016 for construction of the three barrages.

Irrigation Minister N. Ut-

tam Kumar Reddy explained the highlights of the report. He recalled how Mr. Chandrashekhara Rao claimed in the Assembly that a team of retired engineers was constituted to study the project. But, the report which recommended against con-

struction of the project at Medigadda and other sites had been deliberately suppressed by him and other officials. Moreover, the construction did not receive the consent of the Cabinet.

"Mr. Chandrashekhara has mortgaged the people of Telangana borrowing high interest, low tenure funds from non banking financial institutions," Mr. Uttam Kumar said.

In addition, KCR ensured that the works were commenced before the formal detailed project report was prepared.

The executing agencies L&T, Afcons, and Navayuga "acted hand in glove" with the project authorities. "They should be made liable for repairing the defects at their own cost the Commission recommended," Mr. Uttam Kumar said.

HC says 'no' to contempt action against CPI(M) for censuring court remarks over Gaza protest denial

The Hindu Bureau
MUMBAI

The Bombay High Court on Monday said it chooses to ignore a press note issued by the Communist Party of India (Marxist) condemning the High Court's July 25 observations made while denying the party's plea to stage a protest at Azad Maidan against Israel's ongoing war in Gaza.

The court refused to initiate contempt proceedings against the CPI(M) after senior advocate S.M. Gorwadkar urged the court to take *suo motu* cognisance of the press note.

Dismissing the petition filed by the party challenging Mumbai Police's denial of permission for a peaceful protest in solidarity with Gaza, a Division Bench of Justices Ravindra Ghuge and Gautam Ankhad had observed that Indian political organisations should prioritise domestic issues over international conflicts. The Bench pulled up the petitioners for focusing on matters outside the country and said, "Look at your own country... show patriotism for the citizens of our own country first."

The court had noted that the CPI(M) should ideally be engaging with local civic concerns. "Your party could have taken up issues such as garbage dumping, pollution, drainage, or flooding. Why are you not protesting on these issues... Instead, you want to protest over so-



The CPI(M) had moved court over Mumbai Police's denial of permission for a protest in solidarity with Gaza. REUTERS

omething happening thousands of miles away and showing concern for Palestine and Gaza," the Bench had observed.

'Political bias'

Following the court's observation, CPI(M) had the same evening released a press note, saying, "The Polit Bureau of the CPI(M) strongly condemns the observations... While doing so, the court went to the extent of calling into question the patriotism of the party. Ironically, the Bench appears to be unaware of either the provisions of the Constitution which enshrines the rights of a political party, or the history of our country and our people's solidarity with the Palestinians and their legitimate right to homeland. The observations smack of distinct political bias in line with the Central government."

Dismissing the suggestion to take *suo motu* cognisance, Justice Ghuge noted, "That's their opinion, so let them do that."

Experts to discuss investment potential of Kovaipudur on August 7

The Hindu Bureau
COIMBATORE

The second panel discussion in the "Coimbatore Unlimited 3.0" series will be held in Kochi on August 7. It will cover sectors with investment potential at Kovaipudur in Coimbatore.

The event, presented by G Square and powered by The Hindu Group, on "Reimagining Growth in Coimbatore and Beyond" will fo-

cus on "Coimbatore's Kovaipudur: A Promising Investment Destination".

Coimbatore has emerged as a significant location, shaping the next wave of urban transformation and future-ready investments. With its unique blend of industrial legacy, emerging innovation hubs in the technology space, and a growing appetite for lifestyle-driven infrastructure, it is fast becoming a



model for long-term value creation.

Massive development

Kovaipudur is an area of huge potential for investment in Coimbatore with the presence of educational institutions and upcom-

ing infrastructure projects. The scope for growth is presented by multiple sectors – retail, commercial, hospitality, logistics, healthcare, and so on. Located on the Coimbatore-Kerala road, Kovaipudur is all set to see massive development in the coming days.

The first panel discussion was held on the topic of "Coimbatore in Focus – The Smart Investment Cor-

ridor" in Chennai on July 31.

The speakers will be Junaith Babu, chief operating officer, G Square Group; Raaghav, chief executive officer of A PLUS R Architects and an urban planning expert, government consultant and master planner; Balakrishna, consulting director, PBK Business Consulting, Coimbatore; and Sujatha N.A., marketing manager of

Brookefields. The discussion will be moderated by K. Pradeep, former senior deputy editor of *The Hindu*.

The event will be held at Vivanta Ernakulam, Kochi, from 6.30 p.m. Entry is by invitation only. For registration, log on to newsth.live/GUNLCB2025 or scan the QR code.



INBRIEF



Two more arrested for 'vulgar comments' against Ramya

The Central Crime Branch officials arrested two more persons under the IT Act on August 3 for allegedly posting indecent comments against Ramya, actor and former MP, on her social media account. With this arrest, the police have tracked down four accused while efforts are on to track down the rest, who are on the run. Ms. Ramya had shared the Supreme Court observations regarding a murder case in which Kannada actor Darshan is among the accused, which attracted the wrath of his fans who allegedly made inappropriate comments and threats to her.

Six pharma unit workers fall ill after suspected gas leak

Six employees of a pharmaceutical company in Anakapalli district of Andhra Pradesh were hospitalised on Monday after a suspected gas leak at the unit. The incident happened at Lupin Manufacturing Solutions Limited in Parawada. According to Factories Department officials, one shift in-charge is still under observation while the rest are out of danger. Ganisetty Satyanarayana, honorary president of the workers' union, demanded that the government take serious action against the company management, alleging that another worker had fallen ill earlier.

Andhra University flags use of 'forged papers' for admissions

Andhra University has issued a warning notice to its 305 affiliated colleges in north coastal districts, including Visakhapatnam, Alluri Sitarama Raju, Anakapalli and Vizianagaram, to scrutinise candidates' certificates before granting admission to graduate courses. The university took the decision following complaints that some candidates were allegedly getting admission, mostly in arts and science courses, by submitting 'fake intermediate' certificates under the names of institutions in States such as Bihar and U.P.

Commission submits Karnataka SC internal reservation report with 6 recommendations

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The over-three-decade struggle for internal reservation among the 101 Scheduled Castes in Karnataka reached a crucial point on Monday with the one-man commission headed by retired Justice H.N. Nagamohan Das submitting its 1,766-page report with six recommendations.

The government had tasked the commission with recommending internal reservation slicing up the 17% quota among Dalit right (Holeyas), Dalit left (Madigas), Korma, Korcha, Lambani, Bhovi and over 40 nomadic castes based on the August 1, 2024 ruling of the Supreme Court



Justice H.N. Nagamohan Das (retired) submitting a report on internal reservation to Chief Minister Siddaramaiah in Bengaluru. PTI

that cleared the decks for internal reservation by upholding its constitutional validity under Article 14.

The commission considered social and educational backwardness along with adequate representa-

tion in public employment before arriving at a matrix for quota reservation for SCs in public education and employment.

A delegation from the commission, led by Justice Nagamohan Das, met Chief

Minister Siddaramaiah and handed over the report.

For Monsoon Session

"The report will be placed in the next Cabinet meeting and a decision on its future course will be taken. It is likely that the report could be placed before the State legislature during the Monsoon Session commencing on August 11," according to sources in the government.

The commission, after conducting a house-to-house survey across Karnataka between May 5 and July 6, identified 1.07 crore persons hailing from the SC community.

The Dalit left (Madigas) group has become restive and has threatened to

stage a protest from August 11 for its implementation.

The State had stopped recruitment awaiting the report recommendations, causing anxiety among job aspirants.

Though the government asked Justice Nagamohan Das, in January 2025, to recommend internal reservation, the retired judge, in his interim report in March 2025, recommended a State-wide survey to collect data scientifically, as mandated by the court, following which the survey had been conducted.

Internal reservation has been a demand from Dalit left groups, which have accused the Dalit right groups of cornering the benefits of reservation.

Actor Urvashi raises doubts over best actress criterion

S.R. Praveen
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

The National Film Award jury's decision to award Malayalam actors Urvashi and Vijayaraghavan in the supporting actor categories despite them playing lead roles in *Ullozhukku* and *Pookkaalam* respectively had raised eyebrows when the awards were announced last week.

Now, actor Urvashi has raised questions about the criterion on which their performances were considered in the supporting category and not in the main category.

Seeks clarity

Speaking to *The Hindu* on Monday, Ms. Urvashi said



Urvashi

she is not questioning the awards given to any other actor, but wanted clarity on how her performance was considered under the best supporting actress category.

"I don't know if the old rules have changed over there. Earlier, actors who played lead roles were con-

sidered only for the best actor awards," Ms. Urvashi said.

"I am raising this question not for myself, but for the younger generation of actors and for the future generations," she said.

Questioning the repeated instances of actors and films from the South being overlooked, she said her performance in *J Baby* was also recommended by the regional jury, but is unsure of whether the main jury watched it as there was not even a mention of it.

"My questions are to the award jury, not the government. I will certainly accept the award because it is a recognition for the entire team of *Ullozhukku*," she said.

Foreign divers assist in MSC Elsa cleanup

Dhinesh Kallungal
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Over two-and-a-half months after the capsizing of the Liberian-flagged container ship *MSC Elsa* off the coast of Kerala, foreign technicians and divers have arrived at the Kollam port to assist in containing, and extracting oil and other hazardous materials from the ship. The immigration officials posted at Kollam issued the passes for the technicians who were transported to the site from the Kollam port using offshore support vessels.

Oil slicks from the ship were spotted again on Monday, although it was not clear whether the un-

derwater divers had started working on the leakage from the ship. According to State government officials, the Coast Guard team that had been patrolling in the area where oil slicks were spotted.

There were around 640 containers onboard when the ship capsized on its way from Vizhinjam to Kochi on May 24. Among the containers, 13 were classified as hazardous, and 12 contained calcium carbide. The ship also had 84.44 tonnes of diesel and 367.1 tonnes of furnace oil, raising serious environmental concerns.

Currently, Kollam port has been selected as the logistic hub for the diving operation.

Kerala Police search waste plant after stray dog culling plaint

The Hindu Bureau
IDUKKI

The Munnar police on Monday conducted a search at a waste treatment plant owned by the Munnar grama panchayat at Kallar in Idukki following allegations that the local body culled and buried 200 stray dogs there.

Recently, M.M. Keerthidas and M.B. Omana, animal welfare activists at Thodupuzha, submitted a petition to the Chief Minister and the Munnar police alleging that the authorities of the Munnar panchayat had captured 200 stray dogs and buried them in an abandoned well at the waste treatment plant.

Case registered

The complaint also stated that the dogs were captured on July 24 and 25 and transported on panchayat-owned vehicles. Based on the complaint, the Munnar police registered a case against the panchayat authorities.

The Munnar police conducted a search on the waste treatment plant with the assistance of earth movers and only recovered the carcasses of four dogs. Munnar panchayat vice-president Marsh Peter denied the allegations. "The recovered carcasses are of dogs that were recently killed after being hit by a vehicle in Munnar town. "The panchayat never directed anyone to kill or bury dogs," said Mr. Peter.

Around 50 people have been bitten by stray dogs in the hill station in two months, say panchayat officials.

Rights group blames police for backlash against Kashmiris

The Hindu Bureau
SRINAGAR

The Forum for Human Rights in J&K, an independent body co-chaired by former Supreme Court Judge Madan B. Lokur and former Kashmir interlocutor Radha Kumar, on Monday blamed the police's "hasty and incorrect information for triggering hate speech and actions against Kashmiris" after the Pahalgam terror attack.

Releasing its annual report on human rights on the eve of the sixth anniversary of abrogation of special provisions of Article 370 in J&K, the forum noted that J&K Police's incorrect information that two of the terrorists were Kashmiris led to a backlash against them.

"It also created a permissive environment for hate speech and actions, as evidenced by trolling, arrests and illegal demolitions. By the time the National Investigation Agency clarified the terrorists were all Pakistani, one month later, considerable damage had been done," the report stated.

The forum alleged that there was no preventive action to stop the backlash. "Though a backlash against Kashmiris and Muslims was widely anticipated, the Union Home Ministry did nothing to prevent it. Fortunately, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah had his Ministers rushed to other States to appeal to their Chief Ministers to protect Kashmiri residents, after which the backlash dwindled," it claimed.

Court closes corruption case against AAP's Satyendar Jain after CBI finds no evidence

Probe into claims of irregular hiring practices during his tenure as Delhi's PWD Minister fails to find evidence of criminal conspiracy, abuse of power; judgment 'proof of BJP's political vendetta: AAP

Ishita Mishra
NEW DELHI

A special court on Monday accepted the Central Bureau of Investigation's (CBI) closure report in a case against Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader Satyendar Jain related to alleged corruption in awarding a tender to a private company during his tenure as the Public Works Department Minister. The court noted that the CBI probe "found no illegal gains, or wrongful loss to the government", thus proving there was no conspiracy or corruption.

Responding to the deve-



Satyendar Jain

lopment, AAP, in a statement, said, "All the cases filed against AAP leaders are false. With time, the truth will come out."

Special Judge Dig Vinay Singh of the Rouse Avenue Courts said, "When the CBI could not find any evidence

of criminal conspiracy, abuse of power, pecuniary gain, or wrongful loss to the exchequer, and the alleged acts are at most administrative irregularities, no offence under Section 13(1)(d) of the PC Act or criminal conspiracy is established."

The CBI launched an investigation based on a 2019 FIR by the Delhi government's Vigilance Department stating that Mr. Jain had approved the recruitment of a 17-member team of consultants for the PWD through outsourcing, thereby bypassing standard government recruitment procedures.

However, in its closure

report, the CBI stated that there was "no pecuniary benefit" to the hired persons and the acts of the accused "did not constitute fraudulent conduct".

The report stated that the consultants were hired through a "transparent process" and were examined by a "broad-based committee", consisting of members from the Central Public Works Department, Delhi Metro Corporation and Housing and Urban Development Corporation.

Leader of the Opposition in the Delhi Assembly Atishi termed the judgment a "proof of the BJP's political vendetta".

Kin of Jaipur man abducted in Mali seeks PM's help

The Hindu Bureau
JAIPUR

The family of a cement industry consultant from Jaipur, who was abducted last month in Mali, on Monday sought the intervention of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar to secure his release. The family, struggling with uncertainty, has not received any information on his whereabouts so far.

Prakash Chandra Joshi, 61, was among the three Indian nationals abducted in the Kayes region of Mali, a landlocked country in West Africa, during an armed assault by suspected terrorists affiliated with Jamaat Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslimin, a group linked to al-Qaeda, on July 1. The inci-


dent occurred at Diamond Cement Factory, which Mr. Joshi had joined as general manager on June 5.

Mr. Joshi's daughter, Chitra Joshi, said at a press conference here that though the family had approached the Ministry of External Affairs, the Indian Embassy in Mali's capital Bamako, and other authorities, it had not received any "convincing response". "We have no information about his location or the demands of the abductors," she said.

Following the incident, the MEA said in a statement that the Ministry's senior officials were closely monitoring the situation and remained engaged at various levels to facilitate safe and early release of the Indian nationals.

OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE

DEATH ANNIVERSARIES REMEMBRANCE



P.V. GOVINDA RAO
"A Complete man"
Fondly remembered by
FAMILY MEMBERS
VALASARAVAKKAM

SOUTH EAST CENTRAL RAILWAY
E-TENDER NOTICE

Sr. No. (1) E-Tender No. 61-ST-TENDER-2025, Date: 29.07.2025

Work: "Provision of Control Office Application at Shahdol (SDL) and Chirmiri (CHRM) station of Bilaspur Division."

Tender Value: Rs. 21,12,364.98/- (Rupees Twenty One Lakh Twelve Thousand Three Hundred Sixty Four and Ninety-Eight Only), EMD: Rs. 42,300/- (Rupees Forty-Two Thousand Three Hundred Only), Submission of Tender: upto 15:00 Hrs. on 22.08.2025.

The complete information of above e-tender notice is available over website <http://www.irops.gov.in>. Bids other than e-bids shall not be accepted against above tender.

DSTE/CIC
CPR/10/218 S.E.C.Railway, Bilaspur
South East Central Railway @seccrail



J&K Bank
Serving To Empower

JKB Financial Services Limited
Technology & Development
Department, Corporate Headquarters,
Jawahar Nagar, Srinagar, 190 008

Online Request For Proposal For Appointment Of Internal/ Concurrent Auditors Of The Company

RFP Notice along with Complete RFP document outlining the minimum requirements can be downloaded from and BIDs can be submitted on the Banks' e-Tendering Portal <https://jkbank.abcpocure.com> w.e.f. August 05, 2025, 16.00 Hrs. Tender Document can also be downloaded from Bank's Official Website www.jkbank.com. Last date for submission of Bids is August 20, 2025, 17.00 Hrs.

e-RFP Ref.No. JKBFSL/Appointment-concurrent-Auditors/2025-1483
Dated: 01-08-2025

Registered office : Corporate Headquarters, M.A.Road, Srinagar 190001, Kashmir, India
CIN: L65101JK1935SC000048 ; T : +91 (0)194 2481 930-35 ; F : +91 (0)194 248 1928;
E : info@jkbmail.com ; W : www.jkbank.com



THE HINDU

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EAST CENTRAL RAILWAY
E-TENDER NOTICE

The Senior Divisional Electrical Engineer, East Central Railway, Samastipur for and on behalf of the President of Union of India invites Tender from competent and experienced Contractors having technical expertise, financial solvency through E-Tendering mode of IREPS web portal of Indian Railway for execution of the following works. Tender No. & Date : EL-TRD-ET-11-2025-26.

1. Name of the work with its location : OHE modification work in connection with "Provision of Coaching Complex at NKE with washing pit". 2. Completion period : 1 Year. 3. Approx. Cost of Work : ₹2,49,60,686.93, 4. Earnest money : ₹2,74,800.00, 5. Date & Time for closing of tender : Date of Closing of e-tender at 12:00 hours on 25.08.2025. 6. Website particulars, Notice Board location where complete details of tender can be seen : <http://www.irops.gov.in> DRM (Elec- TD) Office/Samastipur.

NOTE : Any other modification/information related to the above said tender will be uploaded on the Website instead of publish in newspaper.

Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer (TRD)/ ECR/Samastipur
PR/0717/SPJ/TRD/T/25-26/40

PUNJAB STATE GRAINS PROCUREMENT CORPORATION (PUNGRAIN)
AnaaJ Bhawan, Sector-39C, Chandigarh.

NOTICE INVITING REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Request for Proposal is invited for the empanelment of Fortified Rice Kernel (FRK) manufacturers for KMS 2025-26 to supply FRK to Rice Mills in Punjab through Online bids under two bid system. Bids can be submitted till 02:00 PM on 04.09.2025 through <https://eproc.punjab.gov.in>. The Pre-Bid meeting is scheduled on 11.08.2025 at 2:30 PM and the technical bids will be opened on 04.09.2025 at 03:00 PM, both at Conference Hall, AnaaJ Bhawan, Sector 39/C, Chandigarh in the presence of prospective bidders who may wish to be present. The terms and conditions and other details are also available on <http://foodsupp.gov.in>. The date and time of opening of financial bids will be notified online to technically eligible bidders.

Note: Request for Proposal will be accepted through e-procurement portal only. Any further communication will be done through e-tendering site in the form of addendum/corrigendum.

1026/12/2025-26/1920 **MANAGING DIRECTOR, PUNGRAIN**



BRUHAT BENGALURU MAHANAGARA PALIKE
Office of the Executive Engineer, Rajajinagara Division,
Sirji M.Vishweshwaraiah Commercial Complex, 12th
Main Road, 2nd Block, Rajajinagara, Bengaluru - 10.
No: EE/RNR/Kppp/07/2025-26 Date: 04.08.2025

SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION

(Through GOK KPP Portal <https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in> only)

Tenders for the following works on Item rate are invited as **Standard Bid Documents KW-4** by the Executive Engineer, Rajajinagara Division BBMP from the registered contractors of Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike or Equivalent registration with CPWD/KPWD/Railways/MES or any State Government Organizations.

Sl No.	Name of the Approved Works
1.	Comprehensive Development of Roads, Drains, Culverts and Other allied Works in Surrounding area of Ramakrishna Sevanagara Block No.52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57/1, 57/2, 58/1, 58/2, 59, 64, Srirampura Block No.18, 19/1, 20, 27, 28, 29 Errappa Block No.1, 2, 3, 4 in Ward No-129 & Block No.59 in Chamundinagara Ward No-130 Sriramamandira. Estimated Cost: ₹.300.00 Lakhs, EMD Amount: ₹.1.00 Lakhs (₹.3.50 Lakhs online plus Remaining Balance BG/FDR)
2.	Comprehensive Development of Roads, Drains, Culverts and Other allied Works to Indiranagara area Block No. 16/2 & Karekulu area Block No.10 & Sriramanagara Block No.36/1, 36/2 in Rajajinagara Constituency Estimated Cost: ₹.300.00 Lakhs, EMD Amount: ₹.1.00 Lakhs (₹.3.50 Lakhs online plus Remaining Balance BG/FDR)
3.	Comprehensive Development of Roads, Drains, Culverts, Footpath and Other allied Works in Surrounding area of Srirampura Block No.18, 19/1, 20, 27, 28, 29 Errappa Block No.1, 2, 3, 4 and Dayanadanagara 1st Cross to 7th Cross in Ward No-129 Estimated Cost: ₹.300.00 Lakhs, EMD Amount: ₹.1.00 Lakhs (₹.3.50 Lakhs online plus Remaining Balance BG/FDR)

Calendar of Events: (1) Last date for Receipt of Queries upto **14.08.2025** at **4:00 pm**. (2) Pre-Bid Meeting will be held on **12.08.2025** at **3:30 pm**. (3) Tender documents may be downloaded through Karnataka Public Procurement Portal from **06.08.2025** from **4:00 pm**. (4) Last Date for uploading the Filled proposals **19.08.2025** upto **4:00 pm**. (5) Date of Opening of Technical Proposals is **20.08.2025** at **4:00 pm**. (6) Date of Opening of Financial Proposals after approval of Technical proposals through KPFP.

Sd/- Executive Engineer, Rajajinagara Division

Superintending Engineer PMGSY (JKRRDA), Circle Srinagar
NOTICE INVITING TENDER (NIT)
E-NIT 06/S/DB/PMGSY/SGR, etendering 2025-26, Dated 01-08-2025

1. The Superintending Engineer, PMGSY (JKRRDA) Circle Srinagar on behalf of Government of UT of J&K invites the percentage rate/item rate bids, in electronic tendering system, for construction of roads under Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana for each of the following works including their maintenance for five years from the eligible and approved contractors registered with J&K Govt. CPWD, Railways and other States/Central Governments

District	Package no.	Name of the work	Estimated Cost (Rs. Lakh)	Construction	Maintenance	Tender cost Rs.	Period of Completion	Bid Security (Rs. Lakh)
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
Ganderbal	JK16-4009	Construction and maintenance of road L021-(Link) From Sumbal Bala -Surraw Road Km 1st RD 850m to Neek-pati, Category, Stage Complete, Package No JK16-4009, Length = 2.30 km, Carriage way width- 3.75m Under PMGSY IV, Batch I, FY 2025-26, Block Gund PMGSY Division Ganderbal	416.05	33.28	5500/-	18 Months	8.99	
	JK16-4011	Construction and maintenance of road L027-(Link) From NHW-Upperbasti Road KM 2nd RD 350 to Ball Daji, Category New, New Technology Waste Plastic, Stage Complete, Package No JK16-4011, Length = 3.0 km, Carriage way width- 3.75m Under PMGSY IV, Batch I, FY 2025-26, Block Gund PMGSY Division Ganderbal	527.60	42.21	8500/-	18 Months	11.40	
	JK16-4003	Construction and maintenance of road L022-(Link) From Plang to Hayan via Akhal Road Km 5th Rd 500m to Gujarbasti Kumnulla, Category New, Stage Complete, Package No JK16-4003, Length = 1.90 km, Carriage way width- 3.75m Under PMGSY IV, Batch I, FY 2025-26, Block Kangan PMGSY Division Ganderbal	376.70	30.14	5500/-	18 Months	8.13	
Ganderbal	JK16-4007	Construction and maintenance of road L024-(Link) From Kachnambal Pethpora Road Km 2nd Rd 600m to Nard Basti, Category New, New Technology Waste Plastic, Stage Complete, Package No JK16-4007, Length = 2.45km, Carriage way width- 3.75m Under PMGSY IV, Batch I, FY 2025-26, Block-Kangan PMGSY Division Ganderbal	400.08	32.01	5500/-	18 Months	8.64	
	JK16-4016	Construction and maintenance of road L021-(Link) From Dursuma to Anderwan via Yarmuqam Km 5th Rd 700m to Forest Block, Category New, New Technology Waste Plastic, Stage Complete, Package No JK16-4016, Length = 3.60 km, Carriage way width- 3.75m Under PMGSY IV, Batch I, FY 2025-26, Block Lar, PMGSY Division Ganderbal	625.95	50.08	8500/-	18 Months	13.52	
	JK16-4006	Construction and maintenance of road L021-(Link) From Plang to Hayan via Akhal Road Km 1st Rd 780m to Pan-zindara, Category New, Stage Complete, Package No JK16-4006, Length = 2.80 km, Carriage way width- 3.75m Under PMGSY IV, Batch I, FY 2025-26, Block Kangan PMGSY Division Ganderbal	401.05	32.05	5500/-	18 Months	8.66	

1. Date of release of Invitation for Bids through e-procurement: (dd/mm/yyyy) 04/08/2025

2. Name of Work

3. Maintenance Period is five years from the c

4. Date of Issue of Notice Inviting Bid (Date-Month-Year)

5. Period of availability of Bidding Document on website www.pmgstyenders.gov.in -

6. Time, Date and Place of Pre-bid Meeting, (if so required)

6.1 Deadline for receiving Bids online, including on line payment of bid, security and cost of bid document from a scheduled, commercial bank and scanned copy of affidavits. The on line payment of Bid security and cost of Bid document is to be done simultaneous on e- tendering website along with the submission of Bids

6.2 Date of submission of original affidavit.

6.3 Time and Date for opening of Part-I of the Bid (The Technical Qualification Part)

7.1 Time and date of opening of Part-II of the Bid (The Technical Financial Part) of the Bidders who Qualify in Part I of the Bid

8. Last Date of Bid Validity

9. Officer inviting Bids

01-08-2025

From (Date-Month-Year) 04-08-2025 To (Date-Month-Year) 25-08-2025 Time upto / Hour 4:30 PM

(Date-Month-Year) 11-08-2025 Time / Hour 11:30 PM

(Date-Month-Year) 25-08-2025 Time upto / Hour 4:30 PM


(Date-Month-Year) 28-08-2025 (Date-Month-Year) 26-08-2025 Time 10:30 AM Hours

(Date-Month-Year) 04-09-2025 Time 10:30 AM Hours (Or To be notified online)

(Date-Month-Year) 23-11-2025

Superintending Engineer, PMGSY Circle Srinagar, Engineering Complex Rajbagh, Srinagar, Kashmir.

DIPK-4749/25



THE HINDU PRESENTS **SCHOOL BUZZ**
A Newspaper exclusively curated for School Students

FOUNDATION DAY CELEBRATED

Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan's Vidyashram, K.M. Munshi Marg, Jaipur, celebrated their 41st Foundation Day with a special assembly. Principal Ms Preeti Sangwan congratulated students and staff in her welcome address. Reet Makhija spoke about founder Dr K.M. Munshi's vision of Bhavan as a reintegration of Indian culture. Shri V.C. Surana, Chairman of Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan Jaipur Kendra, released the school magazine 'Bhavan Bharati 2025' and urged students to become responsible citizens. Alumna Somya Mathur shared her school experiences. The event featured a classical Kathak dance 'Tarana' and a Hindi poem recital, followed by sapling planting by the dignitaries.

HYDRATION DRIVE CONDUCTED

Delhi Public School Ghaziabad, Vasundhara, successfully conducted a Hydration Drive led by the Community Outreach Club to provide relief from the sweltering summer heat. Principal Dr. Vinod Kumar praised the initiative, highlighting compassion and service. Prior to the drive, students, parents, and staff donated sealed bottled water, tetra pack juices, and packaged nimbu pani. On the day, student volunteers, guided by teachers, distributed refreshments to passersby, offering physical relief and fostering civic responsibility. The school remains dedicated to meaningful community engagement, nurturing compassionate leaders of tomorrow.

INVESTITURE CEREMONY

Jain Bharati Mrigavati Vidyalaya celebrated their Investiture Ceremony and Prize Distribution Function with enthusiasm and reverence. Chief Guest Shri Sunil Khatri, Civil Judge at Tis Hazuri Courts, and Guest of Honour Dr. Komal Nuthra Panchal, renowned gynaecologist and distinguished alumni, were greeted with paintings by students. The event was graced by staff, managing committee members, parents, and students. Newly appointed leaders received sashes, flags, and took the oath of office. Meritorious students of Classes X and XII were felicitated, and scholarships awarded. The school magazine 'Mrigavati' was released. Cultural performances enlivened the event, which concluded with a vote of thanks and the National Anthem.

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A crisis of trust

The ECI must be more transparent and impartial in its actions

The credibility of an electoral system, or democracy in general, is dependent solely on it being seen as fair by all, particularly so by the loser. This is comparable to a judicial dispute or a sporting event on this count. If the losers think they lost only because the process was rigged against them, a crisis of trust develops. The serious charges being raised against the Election Commission of India (ECI) by the Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, Rahul Gandhi, has to be seen in this context. He says that he has plans to disclose more information regarding discrepancies in the 2024 general election. One must wait for the details of those allegations before making any comments on their merits. The ECI has come under attack by politicians earlier too. Narendra Modi, when he was the Chief Minister of Gujarat, had repeatedly questioned the impartiality of the ECI. Many of these charges against the ECI are rhetorical attempts by political parties or leaders to animate supporters. In Bihar, the Leader of Opposition in the State Assembly, Tejashwi Yadav, has alleged his name did not exist on the draft electoral roll which is being revised by the ECI. As it turns out the Elector’s Photo Identity Card (EPIC) number that he thought was his is different from the one in the ECI records, raising a new controversy. Politicians should be raising questions about the electoral process only when there are strong grounds for doing so. Trust in the electoral system is foundational to representative democracy.

That said, the ECI’s recent statements and actions, far from buttressing public trust and enhancing transparency in the process, raise more questions. Its efficiency and its neutrality are on test in the preparation of rolls, scheduling of elections, enforcement of the code of conduct, counting process, and the redress of complaints. The ECI stands charged on each of these counts. Other than protesting that the electronic voting machines (EVM) are beyond tampering, and that political parties should raise objections regarding rolls at the appropriate time, the ECI has refused to come clean on multiple issues. It has not been transparent about the Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT) machine which is one of the three parts that make an Electronic Voting Machine. Unlike the other two parts – the Ballot Unit and the Control Unit – the VVPAT has software that is centrally installed and it is connected to the control unit. The random tallying of the VVPAT with the electronically cast votes is now an extremely arbitrary process. All political parties do not have the equal capacity to monitor the various stages of the electoral process. At any rate, the election process is not a matter of negotiation between parties and the ECI. Political parties have a role to play, but the real question is to ensure that the citizenry at large is reassured of the integrity of the electoral process. The ECI needs to correct its course to ensure that.

Fascinating finale

Neither India nor England deserved to lose this hard-fought series

India’s long cricketing tour of England concluded in a gripping stalemate. A 2-2 verdict, following Shubman Gill’s men snatching a six-run triumph against the host at the Oval on Monday, was an apt reflection of a well-contested Test series that featured five matches. Australia has been conquered a few times in its backyard, but for India, England at home remains a tough opponent. Only thrice has India seized a Test series under the whimsical English skies, with the last series victory coming in 2007. The odds were stacked high too as this was a visiting unit that had lost Rohit Sharma, Virat Kohli and R. Ashwin to retirements. Gill’s men, however, fought hard. In an age in which there are whispers about implementing four-day Tests, this series was a reflection of all that is good with cricket’s traditional format as every contest spilled onto the fifth day. England’s Bazball style did upset India’s best laid plans at times and yet the bowlers found ways to strike back. England was led well by the rousing manner of all-rounder Ben Stokes till he skipped the last Test due to injury. And in Joe Root, England has a batter for the ages, and if he stays fit, Sachin Tendulkar’s record Test aggregate of 15,921 runs may not remain immune.

In the distant past, a tour of England featured additional warm-up games against the Counties. The length of the tour helped players rest and regain form. Modern-day players have no such luxuries as a cramped year-long schedule that packs in T20s such as the Indian Premier League, means that every overseas trip becomes a rushed affair. That Jasprit Bumrah could only play three Tests and even Stokes had to skip one at the end, is a reflection of how cricketers have no time to pause and remain injury prone. Seen in that light, Mohammed Siraj turning out for five Tests and bowling with verve and skill, is a huge testament of his fitness. India has much to cherish as Gill amassed 754 runs, and K.L. Rahul and Yashasvi Jaiswal excelled with the bat. Meanwhile, Ravindra Jadeja and Washington Sundar offered depth in the batting order, even if the tail below wilted. The injury to Rishabh Pant was unfortunate but he is bound to return in a while. India missed Mohammed Shami and much hinged on the fiery Siraj, who with 23 wickets, stepped up even as his fellow seamers lost their radar at times. A team in transition is bound to have teething issues. However, through their rugged fight, these players offer hope for better days ahead.

Bangladesh today is abysmally different from the trajectory promised to the people by Professor Muhammad Yunus when he was sworn in (August 8, 2024) as Chief Adviser of the Interim Government. Many myths have been shattered.

The first myth that has unravelled is that Sheikh Hasina’s ouster was the result of a “spontaneous students’ uprising”. It is now accepted that the ‘meticulously designed’ regime change operation was the handiwork of the Jamaat-e-Islami (JeI), the radical Islamist political party that fought against the creation of Bangladesh in 1971. In 2024, as in 1971, the JeI was strongly supported by Pakistan, backed by key external powers including the United States and China. The JeI is the power behind the Chief Adviser, controlling every decision.

The second myth concerns the legitimacy and constitutional validity of the Yunus-led regime. On August 8, 2024 they took the oath of allegiance to the Constitution of Bangladesh. However, this Constitution has no provision for an interim government. Even though the Bangladesh High Court (on December 17, 2024) restored the system of caretaker government, the Yunus-led Interim Government cannot be considered a caretaker government. The Yunus regime has violated the mandated neutrality and non-party requirements of the caretaker government. Members of the Hizb-ut Tahrir, Islami Andolan Bangladesh, and Hefazat-e-Islam have been included as advisers in his regime. In a tweet (now deleted), one of the advisers expressed their desire to establish a caliphate in Bangladesh based on Sharia law, and even spoke about a civil war to achieve this goal. The strongly Islamist ideological leanings and objectives of those who hold the reins of power in Bangladesh have alienated them from the people.

An election delaying tactic

The third myth relates to the raison d’etre of any interim government. Its mandate can only be to ensure that free, fair and inclusive elections are organised within the specified 90-day period, with the participation of all registered political parties. An interim regime is not authorised to take any major decisions, especially those with constitutional significance or implications. Such decisions can be taken only by an elected parliament.

Instead of preparing for elections, the Yunus-led interim regime has initiated a reform process, insisting that this must be completed before the elections. It has set up reform commissions for the Constitution, for electoral reforms, and for police reforms, among others. The JeI is the key protagonist of these reforms, which it hopes will boost its vote share far above the meagre 5% to 10% it has been receiving. This so-called reform process is merely an excuse to delay the elections, a step strongly opposed by the Army and by major political parties such as the Bangladesh Nationalist Party which are



Veena Sikri

is a former High Commissioner of India to Bangladesh

insisting that elections be held by December 2025. This issue is now rapidly coming to a head, and election dates may be announced very soon.

Led by the JeI, the interim regime is unleashing unspeakable violence on the people. Prime targets are the non-Muslim minorities (Hindus, Christians, Buddhists) as well as Muslim religious minorities (Sufis and Ahmadiyyas). Equally vicious has been the violence unleashed against Awami League members and their supporters. Every statue, every building, every institution associated with the Liberation War of 1971 has been destroyed.

Over the months, as this violence has continued unabated, with varying degrees of ferocity, a huge backlash has built up among the people. Awami Leaguers have been jailed in large numbers or just brutally slaughtered. In May 2025, all Awami League activities were banned. While Sheikh Hasina is being tried on charges of ordering attacks on students (during the unrest of July-August 2024), there is deliberate amnesia about the burning and looting (by the mobs) of 400 police *thanas* across Bangladesh, followed by the killing of policemen in the hundreds, even thousands, using these looted weapons. The decision by the interim regime to indemnify itself and all “the students and people who actively took part in the mass uprising of July-August” against harassment or arrest has been sharply criticised within and outside Bangladesh.

A party, its disconnect

The ‘students’ party, the National Citizen Party (NCP), formed in February 2025, is dubbed the King’s Party, owing direct allegiance to Mr. Yunus. So far, the party has no legal status since it is not registered with the Election Commission. At first it included erstwhile members or sympathisers of the Islami Chhatra Shibir (students’ wing of the JeI) and claims ‘it was established to fight for the rights of the student community’. Yet, it has little or no following among university students. On July 16, 2025, NCP leaders held a rally in Gopalganj, the hometown of the Father of the Nation, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, with the reported intention of desecrating his mausoleum in Tungipara.

The NCP was strongly resisted by the local people, staunch supporters of the Awami League. The Bangladesh Army is said to have supported the NCP by firing on unarmed civilians, resulting in the loss of several lives. The Gopalganj incident has caused a furore, with dissatisfaction against the NCP and the Interim regime reaching new highs. A complaint has now been filed with the United Nations, describing this as a genocidal attack on the people of Bangladesh.

Important institutions of state such as the judiciary, the central bank and even the media have been compromised. In August 2024, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court and the Governor of the Bangladesh Bank were surrounded by mobs and forced to resign. This pattern of mobocracy soon became the norm.

Public opinion appears to have turned against the Yunus interim regime — with growing economic distress, the shared refrain seems to be a yearning for the ‘earlier and better times’

The missing link in India’s battery waste management

India, with its focus on decarbonisation, has witnessed rapid electrification, particularly in the realm of electric vehicle (EV) adoption. There are projections that India’s EV lithium battery demand may skyrocket to nearly 139 gigawatt-hours (GWh) by 2035 from 4 GWh in 2023. India’s expanding renewable energy sector is also catalysing demand for lithium batteries, with rapid adoption of battery energy storage systems (BESS) to meet India’s Net Zero goal by 2070. While the growth in EV adoption is desirable, it may impose environmental costs without a robust recycling framework in place. Improper disposal of lithium batteries has severe repercussions, including leakage of hazardous materials into soil and water. Added to this is the growing volume of battery waste, with lithium batteries alone accounting for 7,00,000 of the 1.6 million metric tonnes of e-waste generated in 2022. Recognising these risks, the government notified the Battery Waste Management Rules (BWMR) in 2022 to ensure sustainable management and recycling.

The first problem is the floor price

A cornerstone of the rules is the Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR), which compels producers to fund battery collection and recycling, and aims to close the loop in the battery value chain. Producers rely on recyclers to meet their recycling targets since they do not possess the logistics and the infrastructure for the collection of battery waste. In practice, recyclers must receive a minimum price, known as the EPR floor price, in exchange for EPR certificates that attest that producers have met their recycling obligations. The EPR floor price ensures that recyclers are adequately compensated for their upfront investment in infrastructure, research and development, labour, technology and recycling methods.

Unfortunately, there are certain hurdles, the first being the EPR floor price being too low to sustain the robust recycling of battery waste generated by producers. Proper disposal of



Arun Goyal

is a retired IAS officer. He is a former Secretary to the Government of India and a former Member of the Central Electricity Regulatory Commission

As the first step, it is essential that India ensures the adoption of fair Extended Producer Responsibility floor pricing

lithium battery waste is expensive, requiring advanced processing technologies, safe transportation, and skilled labour to prevent hazardous materials from leaching into ecosystems.

Lithium-ion batteries also have valuable and rare minerals such as cobalt, lithium and nickel, whose efficient recovery can significantly reduce India’s import dependence. In case, the EPR floor price does not adequately cover proper recycling costs, it becomes economically unviable for legitimate recyclers to operate sustainably. As a result, informal and fraudulent recyclers tend to flourish, creating market distortions and perverse incentives for producers. They often issue false recycling certificates or dump hazardous waste – a failure previously witnessed in India’s plastic waste management sector. If left unchecked, such practices may undermine India’s circular economy ambitions. Without fair EPR floor pricing, India faces severe environmental degradation from improper battery recycling or dumping. The financial repercussions are equally alarming. Experts estimate that by 2030, inadequate battery recycling could cost India over \$1 billion in foreign exchange losses.

A resistance to compliance

Large consumer electronics and manufacturers have further complicated the issue by resisting compliance. Large producers’ policies are different for developed and developing countries, allowing corporations to circumvent environmental responsibilities in developing markets. This trend risks undermining the establishment of resilient and sustainable battery ecosystems across the global south.

Interestingly, adjusting the EPR floor price should not increase costs for consumers. While global metal prices have declined over the past two years, manufacturers have not passed on these savings to consumers, indicating that Original Equipment Manufacturers can absorb higher recycling costs without raising prices. A fair EPR floor price will ensure sustainable

Strict media control has been ensured by peremptorily taking over media houses. Journalists have been imprisoned since the early days of the interim regime, many on charges of murder. Many have lost their jobs, and face penury. This massive clampdown on an otherwise vibrant and comparatively free media has allowed the interim regime to peddle its own version of events to the global media.

Economic distress, a patient India

However, it is difficult to hide the overwhelming economic distress being faced by the people. Growth rates have halved from the robust 6% and more per annum, that was the norm under Sheikh Hasina. Factories have shut down due to poor supply chain management, resulting in joblessness and hyper-inflation. In July 2025, Bangladesh Bank highlighted continuing macroeconomic challenges due to “persistent inflation, uncertainties associated with the forthcoming elections, slowing economic growth and stagnant private investment”.

The economic distress is, in many ways, the direct result of the foreign policy goals set by the Yunus regime. As can be expected, the JeI is not averse to the moniker, ‘client state of Pakistan’, that is increasingly used for Bangladesh. The events of July-August 2024 were preceded and accompanied by vicious anti-India propaganda. Harsh criticism of Sheikh Hasina as a ‘fascist dictator’ was invariably followed by blaming India for the state of affairs in Bangladesh. The mutually beneficial trade and economic partnership between these two neighbouring countries was criticised as being one-sided and unfair.

One year of this unrelenting barrage has now boomeranged on the Yunus regime. Public opinion has turned against it because, except for words, it has provided no succour to the people of Bangladesh. Across the nation, the shared refrain openly describes the ‘earlier times’ as ‘being better’, including the benefits to Bangladesh of their strong economic, trade and investment links with India.

India has shown a lot of patience in dealing with the interim regime. In August 2024, India had conveyed its willingness to continue with and build upon its links with Bangladesh. In April 2025, during the bilateral meeting with Mr. Yunus, Prime Minister Narendra Modi reiterated India’s support for a democratic, stable, peaceful, progressive and inclusive Bangladesh, enunciating India’s people-centric approach to the relationship. Unfortunately, the hand of friendship was rebuffed. Now, a new grouping of China, Pakistan and Bangladesh is sought to be created. Bangladesh must have early free, fair and inclusive elections under a new caretaker government. India is confident that the new elected government, one that truly reflects the wishes of the people of Bangladesh, will work to re-establish a cordial and mutually beneficial relationship with India.

recycling without burdening end users, while fostering a circular economy that benefits industry and consumers.

To protect legitimate recyclers and encourage compliance, India must consider adopting a fair and globally comparable EPR floor price that reflects the real costs of recycling and industry building, and which can ease to market-driven prices when the ecosystem is mature and standardisation is in place. This requires immediate constructive dialogue among policymakers, industry and recyclers to establish a viable pricing structure after analysing global pricing structures and best practices. For instance, the United Kingdom requires producers to pay close to ₹600 per kilogram for EV battery recycling, whereas what is under consideration for India is less than a fourth of that. This is a significant difference even after adjusting for purchasing power between India and the U.K. The EPR floor price for recycling battery waste should cover the full spectrum of recycling expenses, from collection to material recovery, ensuring that recyclers can operate sustainably without resorting to shortcuts. A fair EPR regime will also incentivise battery producers to hold recyclers accountable through audits.

Integrate informal recyclers

Enforcement mechanisms need urgent strengthening in India. This includes implementing robust audit systems, digitising the issuance and the tracking of EPR certificates, and imposing stringent penalties for fraud and non-compliance. Additionally, integrating informal recyclers into the formal sector through training and regulatory support can help eliminate hazardous practices while expanding India’s recycling capacity. This is not just an environmental challenge. It is an economic and strategic imperative. By recalibrating the EPR floor price, strengthening enforcement, and formalising the informal sector, we can transform battery waste from a looming crisis into a catalyst for green growth and a truly circular economy.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Voter ID card issue

The Leader of the Opposition in Bihar, Tejashwi Yadav, ought to have verified his previous records as far as his voter ID is concerned. There seems to have been a ‘mixup of

sorts’. Therefore, he would have to cooperate with the Election Commission of India (ECI). As far as the revision of electoral rolls in Bihar is concerned, is the entire bloc of Opposition parties agitated over the

potential loss of vote banks after the intensive revision of electoral rolls?

Govardhana Myneedu,
Vijayawada, Andhra Pradesh

Pulling off a win

The Indian cricket team has

pulled off an incredible victory over experienced opponent England at the Oval.

The energetic Indian team deserves fulsome credit. The team’s success was also made possible due to

sedulous care of the coach. **K. Chellappan,**
Seattle, U.S.

Cynicism about the survival and the future of five-day Tests is baseless. The road ahead for this old and

original format of cricket is as safe and bright as its new and modern versions.

M.V. Nagavender Rao,
Hyderabad

Letters emailed to letters@thehindu.co.in must carry the postal address.

Text & Context

THE HINDU

NEWS IN NUMBERS

The funds the U.K is investing to prevent illegal immigration

100 in million pounds. This funding package will go towards supporting a new pilot of the “one-in, one-out” U.K. returns agreement, which will see migrants who arrive illegally on small boats returned to France. More than 25,000 migrants made boat crossings to enter U.K. illegally. PTI

Funds disbursed by Rajasthan under investment scheme

765.78 crore. This investment falls under the Rajasthan Investment Promotion Scheme (RIPS) for the 2024-25 fiscal year, a statement said. RIPS 2024 targets priority sectors such as renewable energy, tourism, IT, and women-led startups. PTI

Amount H.P. transferred to farmers after procuring wheat

1.27 in ₹ crore. The Himachal Pradesh government has purchased 2,123 quintals of naturally grown wheat this year to promote natural farming in the State, a spokesperson said. In addition, a freight subsidy of ₹4.15 lakh on the transportation of wheat has also been provided. PTI

Projected drop in India’s exports to the U.S. in FY26

30 in per cent. The additional 25% import duty announced by U.S. President Donald Trump on Indian goods could lead to this decline, the Global Trade Research Initiative said. India now faces a 25% country-specific tariff and an extra penalty on its exports to the U.S. PTI

Number of fleeing civilians killed by Sudan paramilitary

14 These deaths occurred more than 27 months into Sudan’s war. The Emergency Lawyers, which documents atrocities in the war between the Rapid Support Forces and the Sudanese army, said that “dozens more were injured”. AFP

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IAF’s unending fighter conundrum

Why have the MiG-21 fighter jets been called ‘flying coffins’? Why has the induction of Mk-1A jets been delayed? How many jets does the Indian Air Force intend to induct in the next two decades? Are the engines for India’s fifth generation fighter aircraft going to be indigenously developed?

EXPLAINER

Dinakar Peri

The story so far:

After over six decades in service, the MiG-21 fighter jets are set to be retired from the Indian Air Force (IAF) in September this year. The formal ceremony is scheduled to be held at Chandigarh where the jets were first inducted in 1963. With this the fighter strength of the IAF will dip from 31 to 29 squadrons, against the sanctioned strength of 42 squadrons. A fighter squadron typically has 16-18 jets. The IAF is awaiting deliveries of the Light Combat Aircraft (LCA)-Mk1A, which is expected to begin in the next few months after repeated delays. All this at a time when the Chinese Air Force and Navy have fielded around 1,900 fighters including more than 1,300 fourth-generation aircraft, not including trainers, as per a 2024 U.S. Department of Defence report. China has also deployed two Fifth Generation Fighter Aircraft (FGFA), recently unveiled two more advanced jets, and is likely to supply 40 J-35s stealth jets to Pakistan.

What has been the legacy of MiG-21s? Contracted from the erstwhile Soviet Union after the 1962 war with China, the MiG-21s heralded the onset of supersonic aviation in the IAF and was also its first non-western fighter. A total of 872 MiG-21 aircraft have been inducted in the IAF, a bulk of them licence-manufactured by the state-owned Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL). The MiG-21s remained the mainstay of the IAF for several decades and a spate of accidents in the early 2000s earned them the name ‘flying coffins’. Over the six decades, there were over 450 accidents involving the jet. The jets played a key role in the 1965, 1971 wars, the 1999 Kargil conflict, and more recently in the aerial dual with Pakistan on February 27, 2019, a day after the Balakot air strike. During the attack, Group Captain (then Wg Cdr) Abhinandan Varthaman’s MiG-21 was shot down and fell in Pakistan Occupied Kashmir after he shot down a Pakistani F-16, according to the IAF.

In fact, in the absence of an Advanced Jet Trainer (AJT), before the Hawks were inducted in 2008, the MiG-21s were used for stage III training of young pilots for a long time as it was the “most suitable” fighter even though it was considered “sub-optimal” as a trainer. The MiG-21 is also among the most successful fighter jets globally with over 6,000 jets of 12 types flown by over three dozen countries. Currently, there are two MiG-21 Bison squadrons in service – the No. 23 ‘Panthers’ and the No. 3 ‘Cobras’. Incidentally, the No. 3 Squadron has the distinction of being the first to get the upgraded MiG-21 Bisons still in service and will now be the first to get the LCA-Mk1A. With the MiG-21s out, the MiG-29s are the last of the MiG series in service which together with the SU-30MKI remain the last of Russian-origin fighters.

What is the current status of the IAF? Besides the MiG-21s, a majority of the current inventory, that is the early variants of the Jaguars, Mirage-2000s and Mig-29s, will start going out by the end of the decade. This leaves the SU-30MKI in service, the LCA variants planned to be inducted, and the Medium Role Fighter Aircraft (MRFA) while the indigenous FGFA, the Advanced Medium Combat Aircraft (AMCA) is under development. The IAF currently operates two



Long legacy: Technicians preparing a MiG-21 fighter for a test flight at the Base Repair Depot at Ozhar, Maharashtra on July 24, 1982. HINDU PHOTO ARCHIVES

squadrons of the LCA-Mk1, which undertook maiden flight in January 2001 and was inducted in 2016. A more capable variant, the Mk-1A, which is to be inducted in large numbers, had been delayed initially due to development issues and later due to non-delivery of engines by General Electric (GE) Aerospace citing supply chain difficulties.

How did it get delayed?

The Defence Ministry had signed a ₹48,000 crore contract with HAL for 83 Mk1A jets, and deliveries were to start in March 2024 with at least 16 planes to be delivered to the IAF every year. However, not a single Tejas Mark-1A has been delivered so far. In August 2021, the HAL placed an order for 99 F-404 engines with GE Aerospace at a cost of ₹5,375 crore for the 83 Mk1A jets. The first engine arrived in India only in April this year after a delay of one and half years and the second engine was delivered early this month. Additionally, a deal for 97 additional jets, estimated to ₹67,000

crore, is expected to be concluded in the next few months. HAL has assured to scale up production to 24 jets a year. Amid these delays, an Empowered Committee for Capability Enhancement of the IAF headed by the Defence Secretary R. K. Singh identified key thrust areas and made recommendations for medium- and long-term measures in the report submitted to Defence Minister Rajnath Singh in March. As per the IAF, the LCA Mk2, larger and more capable than the Mk1 variants, is meant to replace the Mirage 2000, MiG-29 and Jaguars. It is expected to take first flight in 2026. In February 2025, IAF Chief Air Chief Marshal A. P. Singh said that they need to add 35-40 jets every year to make up for the shortage in numbers. Both these programmes, LCA-Mk1A and Mk2, are extremely critical to shore up fighter numbers of the IAF over the next 10-15 years. In an interview to PTI in June, HAL Chairman and Managing Director D. K. Sunil said that GE Aerospace is expected to supply 12 engines in the current fiscal and that the jets would be delivered to the IAF. Moreover, India has procured 272 Su-30MKIs from Russia of which around 260 remain in service. Last December, the Ministry of Defence signed a ₹13,500 crore deal with HAL for 12 Sukhois to replace those lost in crashes. A major upgrade programme for the Sukhoi’s has been lined up to be undertaken by HAL. The upgrade of 84 jets in the first batch has already been approved. Meanwhile, by early 2040s, some of the earlier batch of SU-30MKIs will go out.

What is the way forward?

The IAF has drawn up an ambitious plan to induct more than 600 jets over the next two decades, a large number of them being LCA variants. This includes 180 LCA-Mk1A, over 120 LCA-Mk2, 114 MRFA and at least 120 AMCA. A Twin-Engine Deck Based Fighter for the Navy’s aircraft carriers is also on the drawing board. However, all this hinges on timely

production and deliveries. Mr. Singh said in an interview recently that they are talking to partners for the likely import of a small number of fifth gen fighters as an interim measure while the AMCA development continues. The option is between the Russian SU-57 and American F-35. These are sensitive negotiations, Mr. Singh said adding, “When it reaches a tangible stage, whether it is an Acceptance of Necessity (AoN), a Request For Proposal or ultimately through a contract that is when the media will come to know.” Ultimately, it is the fifth gen AMCA that is the way forward while the LCA variants and MRFA fill numbers and add strength in the medium term. The Aeronautical Development Agency (ADA) that is developing the aircraft has floated an AoN inviting private sector participation for the production. Even HAL has to bid for it, unlike the nomination in the past. “I imagine it will take 3-6 months to reach the contract award stage”, Mr. Singh said. “Thereafter the project itself of development and an AMCA prototype to actually take to the skies, it would be a 10-year program, I would imagine.” On the engine front, the F414 engine to power the LCA-Mk2 is to be licence manufactured by HAL for which commercial negotiations with GE are underway. The AMCA development is envisaged in two phases – Mk1 development and couple of squadrons with the GE414 engine, and AMCA-Mk2 with a more powerful 110KN engine that is to be co-developed with a foreign partner for which talks are underway. All this leaves the MRFA deal, for which the Request For Information was issued to global aircraft manufacturers in April 2019, but there has been no progress since. Given the huge cost involved, the long timelines and various other programmes already in the pipeline, it has to be seen how it can be taken forward. Dinakar Peri is Fellow, Security Studies at Carnegie India.

THE GIST

Contracted from the erstwhile Soviet Union after the 1962 war with China, the MiG-21s heralded the onset of supersonic aviation in the IAF and was also its first non-western fighter.

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India’s fighter jet strength

IAF CURRENT SQUADRONS		THE PLANNED LINE-UP	
SU-30MKI	13	LCA-MK1A	180 (83+97)
Jaguar	6	LCA-MK2	120<
Mirage 2000	3	MRFA	114
MiG-29UPG	3	AMCA	120<
Rafale	2	IAF LCA Tejas during the Aero India 2023 air show at Yelahanka air base in Bengaluru.	
LCA	2		
MiG-21	2		
Total sqns		31	

FROM THE ARCHIVES



Ongoing war: Students' bags are kept in front of a school building damaged in a bombardment by Myanmar's military at the Ohe Htein Twin village, Sagaing Region, on May 12. AFP

Why a progressive Indian policy on Myanmar is more than plausible

New Delhi has long defined its 'interests' in the Southeast Asian country in narrow strategic terms. However, it is possible for India to put in place a more progressive, values-driven Myanmar policy that works in favour, and not against, its national interests

Angshuman Choudhury

Late last month, the Myanmar junta ended the country's state of emergency and called for elections in December, even as the multi-sided civil war rages on. In this article dated June 22, 2024, Angshuman Choudhury outlines how Indian foreign policy towards the Myanmar junta should change in order to establish influence with its neighbour.

Three years on, the military in Myanmar, which overthrew the elected civilian government in February 2021, continues to kill, maim and displace its own people. India has steadfastly maintained formal relations with this regime, which has so far murdered more than 5,000 people and displaced some 2.5 million people. In its second tenure, the Narendra Modi government did very little to engage with the pro-democracy resistance, which now has both political and military wings. Indian foreign policy scholars and practitioners have doggedly defended this policy by arguing that India needs to work with the junta if it has to protect its "interests" in Myanmar and not get swayed by an idealistic preoccupation with "values".

How India can step out of China's shadow

But, in foreign policy, there is no clear line between "values" and "interests" simply because neither has a standard definition. It all depends on how a country defines these terms. This is also the case with India's Myanmar policy. New Delhi has long defined its "interests" in the Southeast Asian country in narrow strategic terms. But now, it needs to leverage a unique set of "values" to better defend its interests. It is possible for India to put in place a more progressive, values-driven Myanmar policy that works in favour, and not against, its national

interests.

This new policy should have two key pivots, namely, democracy and human security. The new National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government, therefore, needs to take four interlocking steps immediately.

First, India needs to use its credentials as the largest federal democracy in the region to sharpen its influence in Myanmar. For long, Myanmar's pro-democracy political elites and civil society have looked up to India as a model of a federal democratic union with a well-oiled power-sharing arrangement between the centre and various subnational units. This is even more relevant today as the democratic resistance in Myanmar, which is led by the National Unity Government (NUG), dozens of ethnic revolutionary organisations, civil society organisations, and trade unions, strives to replace the military-drafted 2008 constitution with a federal constitution. By helping this vibrant opposition achieve its aim through capacity-building and knowledge exchange programmes, India can distinguish itself from China, its primary regional competitor in Myanmar. Both Beijing and New Delhi can sell military hardware to Myanmar, but only India can sell the spirit of federal cooperation. Here is a chance for the new Indian government to outmanoeuvre the Chinese in their own 'backyard'.

Weapons sales and humanitarian outreach

Second, India needs to immediately halt all weapon sales to the Myanmar military. According to the advocacy group, Justice For Myanmar (JFM), Indian state-owned military hardware manufacturers have sold a range of non-lethal and semi-lethal equipment to the junta since the 2021 coup. In its most recent report, published on March 27, the group claimed that on

January 2, the Indian Air Force transferred a package which had 52 items, including navigation and communication parts, to its Myanmar counterpart. Another recent investigation by Frontier Myanmar claims that India sold more than \$1.5 million worth of navy-grade diesel to junta-linked entities since the coup. New Delhi needs to immediately put a stop to these, as the Myanmar military continues to use all its three services – the army, air force, and navy – to attack non-combatant civilians using imprecise lethal tactics.

Third, India needs to immediately open cross-border humanitarian corridors to help civilians affected by the conflict along three border provinces – Sagaing Region, Chin State and northern Rakhine State. According to United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) data, Sagaing Region has seen the largest quantum of internal displacement in all of Myanmar since the coup (as of March 25, 2024). Rakhine comes next, while Chin State sits tenth in the list. Continuing air strikes by the junta and clashes between armed groups in these areas have only pushed more civilians across the borders. New Delhi needs to first revoke its plans to fence the India-Myanmar border and reinstate the Free Movement Regime, or the FMR, which the Union Home Ministry suspended in February 2024. Then, it should engage existing humanitarian aid networks along the India-Myanmar border to send emergency relief assistance including medicines, food and tarpaulin to the other side. Mizoram, where a multi-layered asylum and aid ecosystem is already operational, is a good starting point. India should also collaborate with local and international non-governmental organisations with experience in the field. Best practices from Thailand, which recently started cross-border aid deliveries into Myanmar,

should also be adopted.

New Delhi should use its clout to ensure that the aid is not distributed by the junta, which not only has a disastrous track record in this field, but is also not even in control of large areas along the India-Myanmar border. It is also possible to run cross-border aid corridors without allowing contraband to pass through, with stringent checks and pre-delivery vetting.

Detention of asylum seekers

Fourth, the Narendra Modi government should immediately halt the detention and deportation of asylum seekers from Myanmar. This is especially so in the case of Manipur, where the BJP-led government has so far deported 115 asylum seekers to Myanmar – the latest round was on June 11. These are people who entered India not because they wanted to or with mal-intent, but because they were forced to. Regardless of the fact that India has not ratified the 1951 Refugee Convention, it is incumbent upon the government to treat them as refugees in need of humanitarian assistance and protection rather than as "illegal immigrants". Both the Indian Constitution and international law allow the Indian state to do so. In fact, the customary international legal principle of non-refoulement discourages India from deporting refugees back to a home country where they face a threat of persecution or death. The Centre should also urge the BJP-led Assam government to release the 27 Chin refugees detained in the State and house them in a humane refugee shelter.

India, the "Vishwabandhu", routinely claims to stand with the people of Myanmar. It should now walk the talk.

Angshuman Choudhury is a New Delhi-based researcher and writer from Assam, and formerly an Associate Fellow at the Centre for Policy Research.

THE DAILY QUIZ

August 5 marks one year since the fall of the Sheikh Hasina government in Bangladesh. Here is a quiz on the events surrounding the regime change

Vighnesh P Venkitesh

QUESTION 1

What decision by the Bangladesh high court triggered the students' protests that led to the fall of the government?

QUESTION 2

At least 97 people were killed a day before Ms. Hasina fled the country when clashes erupted during students' protests. Under what banner were the students protesting?

QUESTION 3

What was the derogatory and

controversial word, used to denote people who helped Pakistani troops during the Liberation War in 1971, that Ms. Hasina called protesters?

QUESTION 4

Name the organisation and the economic instrument it was based on that was set up by Muhammad Yunus who took over as Chief Adviser to the interim government in the country.

QUESTION 5

Name the court in Bangladesh that on Sunday began the trial of Ms. Hasina over crimes against humanity.



Visual question: What was this building, which was razed by a mob on February 6, called? Name the person who used to reside here. REUTERS

- Questions and Answers to the previous day's daily quiz: 1. The significance of the film Muqaddar. **Ans: Kishore Kumar made his debut as an actor**
2. This song was used in a *The Simpsons'* episode. **Ans: 'Pal Bhar Ke Liye' from Johnny Mera Naam**
3. This poem that Kishore penned was made into a song. **Ans: 'Main hoon jhum jhum jhumroo' (in Jhumroo)**
4. The premise of the flick *Hum Do Daaku*. **Ans: Searching for hidden treasure in the ancient cities of Mohenjo-daro and Harappa**
5. For crooning this evergreen number Kishore won the first of the record eight Filmfare Awards. **Ans: 'Roop Tera Mastana' from Aradhana**
6. Kishore Kumar's spouses apart from Madhubala. **Ans: Ruma Guha Thakurta, Yogeta Bali and Leena Chandravarkar**
7. This song had Kishore singing alongside Mohd. Rafi, Mukesh, and Lata Mangeshkar. **Ans: 'Humko Tumse Ho Gaya Hai Pyaar' from Amar Akbar Anthony**
8. Kishore lend his voice for more than 200 songs to this actor. **Ans: Jeetendra**
- Visual: Name the authors of *Kishore Kumar: The Ultimate Biography*. **Ans: Anirudha Bhattacharjee and Parthiv Dhar**
- Early Birds: M. Suresh Kumar| Pranab Biswas



FROM THE ARCHIVES

Know Your English

K. Subrahmanian
S. Upendran

"How do you pronounce l.a.c.k.a.d.a.i.s.i.c.a.l?"

"That's a big word. Let me see now. The first syllable lack rhymes with the words back, pack and sack. The 'a' in the second syllable is pronounced like the 'a' in China. Dai in the third syllable is pronounced the same way as day. The 's' in the fourth syllable is like the 'z' in words like zip, zoo and zebra."

"And I suppose the final 'a' is like the 'a' in China again?"

"That's right. And the main stress is on the third syllable dai."

"So the word is pronounced lackaDAIsical? Is that right?"

"That's right. Do you know what lackadaisical means?"

"Doesn't it mean lazy or something like that?"

"Well, sort of. If you say someone is lackadaisical, it means that he/she does not show any enthusiasm or interest in something. For example, I can say, Some of our students are very lackadaisical about doing their homework."

"You can't blame them, can you? Can I say, The Indian team has been playing lackadaisically?"

"You certainly can. Here's another example. My boss is very lackadaisical about keeping appointments."

"My sister is annoyingly lackadaisical about sports."

"Ditto!"

"Ditto? What does that mean?"

"When somebody says something and you respond by saying ditto, it means that you feel or think the same way as the other person. For example, if I say, I loved to watch Gaby play and you respond by saying ditto..."

"...it would mean that I loved to watch Gaby play too! Right?"

"That's right. By the way, the stress is on the first syllable of ditto."

"I see. Do you have any plans for the next weekend?"

"I have to get my scooter fixed. But other than that, I have no plans."

"That's great. Then you can come with me to my friend's house. He's got a beautiful house in the beach."

"He's got a beautiful house on the beach, not in the beach."

"Would you like to see this house on the beach?"

"No!"

"You're such a bore! What if this house were on the desert? Would you come then?"

"If the house were in the desert, I might have come..."

"...in the desert? Not on the desert?"

"That's right."

"It's on the beach, but in the desert! I think English is a really crazy language."

"Ditto!"

Published in *The Hindu* on July 8, 1997.

Word of the day

Clamour:

loud and persistent outcry from many people; utter or proclaim insistently and noisily; make loud demands

Synonym: hue and cry

Usage: He ignored the clamour of the crowd.

Pronunciation: newsth.live/clamourpro

International Phonetic Alphabet: /ˈklæm.ə/

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

From Page One

Centre hits back after Trump’s tariff threat

The U.S. President had on July 31 signed an executive order that authorised a 25% tariff on imports from India. A day earlier, he had posted on Truth Social that he would be imposing this tariff plus a penalty “because their [India’s] tariffs are far too high, among the highest in the world, and they have the most strenuous and obnoxious non-monetary trade barriers of any country”.

Apart from this, he also cited India’s energy and military equipment purchases from Russia as an irritant.

Following this announcement, Union Minister of Commerce and Industry Piyush Goyal had informed both Houses of Parliament that the government was “studying the implications” of Mr. Trump’s announcement, consulting all the relevant domestic stakeholders, and would “take all steps necessary to secure our national interest”.

Western trade with Russia

“This is significantly more than India’s total trade with Russia that year or subsequently,” the MEA said. “European imports of LNG [liquefied natural gas] in 2024, in fact, reached a record 16.5 mn tonnes, surpassing the last record of 15.21 mn tonnes in 2022.”

Europe’s trade with Russia includes not just energy, but also fertilizers, mining products, chemicals, iron and steel and machinery and transport equipment, the statement said.

“Where the United States is concerned, it continues to import from Russia uranium hexafluoride for its nuclear industry, palladium for its EV [electric vehicle] industry, fertilizers as well as chemicals,” the MEA noted.

“In this background, the targeting of India is unjustified and unreasonable,” it added. “Like any major economy, India will take all necessary measures to safeguard its national interests and economic security.”

The 25% tariff places India at a relative disadvantage compared to some of its competitors such as Vietnam, Indonesia, Mexico, and the Philippines. Mr. Trump’s new tariffs are expected to take effect from August 7

LS disrupted as Oppn. seeks debate on SIR

When the House reassembled at 2 p.m., Opposition MPs, including those from the Congress were again on their feet, raising slogans and holding placards demanding a discussion on the SIR.

BJP’s appeals

Bharatiya Janata Party MP Jagdambika Pal, who was in the chair, said two key sports Bills were listed for discussion and justice would not be done to sportspersons if the Bills were not debated and passed. Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju and Sports Minister Mansukh Mandaviya also made similar appeals. Mr. Pal then adjourned the House for the day.

In the Rajya Sabha, proceedings were adjourned as a mark of respect following the death of sitting member Shibu Soren. Deputy Chairman Harivansh read out an obituary.

Former Jharkhand CM Shibu Soren dies aged 81



PM Narendra Modi offers condolences to Shibu Soren’s son, Jharkhand CM Hemant Soren, in New Delhi. ANI

Ms. Murmu said his demise was a big loss in the space of social justice. “He championed the cause of tribal identity and formation of the State of Jharkhand,” she said in a post on X.

Condoling the death, Mr. Modi said in a post: “Shri Shibu Soren Ji was a grassroots leader who rose through the ranks of public life with unwavering dedication to the people. He was particularly passionate about empowering tribal communities, the poor and downtrodden.”

Union Home Minister Amit Shah, Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin, Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan, Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, and Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad K. Sangma condoled the death.

Paying tribute to Mr. Soren, Jharkhand’s first Chief Minister and the current Leader of the Opposition in the State Assembly, Babulal Marandi said his journey was filled with struggle.

The Jharkhand government has declared a three-day State mourning from August 4 to 6.

His last rites would be performed in his native village, Nemra, on Tuesday. Mr. Soren is survived by his wife Rupi Soren, sons Hemant Soren and Basant Soren, and daughter Anjali Soren.

Women’s inclusion in armed forces a priority, says Rajnath

Officials highlight expanding opportunities for women across all three armed services; as per data, women make up 13.4% of IAF, 6.85% of Army, 6% of Navy, with numbers rising steadily since 2005

Saurabh Trivedi
NEW DELHI

The parliamentary consultative committee on Defence, headed by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, was briefed on the representation of women in the armed forces.

Mr. Singh spoke on the government’s commitment to provide maximum representation to women in the forces.

As per the data from the Ministry of Defence (MoD), women form 13.4% of the Indian Air force workforce – the highest among all three services – while they make up 6.85% of the Army’s workforce and 6% of the Navy’s.

In 2024, there were a total of 1,735 women in the Army, 1,614 in the Air Force, and 674 in the Navy.



According to data, 13.4% women constitute the Indian Air force workforce, the highest among all three services. EMMANUAL YOGINI

In 2005, the figures were 767, 574, and 154, respectively.

Twelve branches in the Army are open to women officers, including combat. In the Navy, all branches are open for women officers except submarines. All

they were opening more and more branches for women for all categories. Women are eligible for various roles, including technical and non-technical positions, and can join through different entry schemes. Most of the defence training institutes and academies have been opened for women.

Colonel Sofiya Qureshi of the Indian Army, who led the Operation Sindoor briefing along with Wing Commander Vyomika Singh of the Air Force, have become an inspiration for women aiming to join the armed forces.

Another senior defence officer said that women in the armed forces are doing remarkably well and their number is only going to increase in the future as the forces adopt a more gender neutral approach.

Operation Sindoor unprecedented in scale: Army chief

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI



General Upenra Dwivedi

Army chief General Upenra Dwivedi has lauded Operation Sindoor as a pivotal, intelligence-driven mission that redefined India’s counter-terrorism approach, showcasing the armed forces’ capability to address evolving warfare challenges and readiness for fifth-generation conflicts.

He was inaugurating a research facility, Agnishodh, a joint project of the Indian Army Research Cell (IARC) and the IIT, Madras on the campus of the latter on Monday for self-reliance in defence technology.

Addressing a gathering at the IIT on the theme “Operation Sindoor - A new chapter in India’s fight against terrorism”, General Dwivedi described the operation as a landmark, intelligence-driven response that redefined India’s counter-terrorism doctrine.

He noted that the 88-hour operation was unprecedented in scale, range, depth, and strategic impact, and was executed across the DIME spectrum. Highlighting the evolving nature of warfare, he underscored that the Indian armed forces are prepared for fifth-generation conflicts driven by non-contact warfare, strategic tempo, and psychological dominance.

Review pact with U.K. and reject threats by Trump: trade unions

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

A joint statement by 10 Central trade unions (CTUs) and the Samyukt Kisan Morcha (SKM) on Monday has demanded a parliamentary review of the Comprehensive Economic Trade Agreement (CETA) signed recently with the U.K. The organisations asked the Union government to reject U.S. President Donald Trump’s “tariff threats” and assert India’s sovereign right to trade with all nations, including Russia.

“All negotiations for a U.S.-India trade deal must be halted to prevent further corporate exploitation. No more secret trade agreements – all future deals must undergo full

parliamentary scrutiny and public consultation,” the joint statement added.

“Instead of firmly rejecting this intimidation, the Central government has responded with silence, signalling its willingness to compromise India’s strategic autonomy in favour of the U.S.A. This capitulation paves the way for an even more exploitative India-U.S. trade deal, which would grant American agribusiness corporations like Cargill unrestricted access to India’s dairy sector, agriculture, resulting in collapsing prices and destroying the farming community, along with endangering the food security of the nation. It would also trigger de-industrialisation in India and skyrocketing unemployment,” it said.

Crime Branch nabs 2 ABVP members in Odisha college student death case

Satvasundar Barik
BHUBANESWAR

The Crime Branch of the Odisha Police has arrested two persons linked to the Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP) in connection with the self-immolation of a student on the campus of F.M. Autonomous College in Bala-sore, which led to her death last month.

The arrests were made late on Sunday night. Those taken into custody include Subhra Sambit Nayak, ABVP’s State joint secretary, and Jyotiprakash Biswal, who had reportedly sustained injuries while trying to rescue the girl.

The 20-year-old girl had accused her teacher, Samira Sahoo, of harassing her. However, her repeated grievances were not redressed. On July 12, she reportedly set herself on fire shortly after leaving the principal’s office.

She died of her injuries two days later at the AIIMS, Bhubaneswar, with 95% burns.

Video footage from earlier showed Subhra Sambit Nayak arguing with the principal on behalf of the



Frayed tempers: Student union members shouting slogans during a protest against the death of a 20-year-old girl. FILE PHOTO

portedly set herself on fire shortly after leaving the principal’s office.

She died of her injuries two days later at the AIIMS, Bhubaneswar, with 95% burns.

Video footage from earlier showed Subhra Sambit Nayak arguing with the principal on behalf of the

girl and demanding action against the teacher. Both accused were produced in court and have been remanded in judicial custody for 14 days.

During the investigation, Crime Branch officials have questioned students, teachers, parents, and journalists, and examined

video evidence over the past several weeks. More arrests are likely in the coming days.

The case has raised serious questions about existence of functional Internal Complaint Committees mandated under the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 (POSH Act) and the University Grants Commission (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal of Sexual Harassment of Women Employees and Students in Higher Educational Institutions) Regulations, 2015.

Those in distress or having suicidal tendencies can seek help and counselling by calling: Sanjivini, Society for Mental Health, telephone: 011-40769002 (Monday-Friday, 10 a.m.-7.30 p.m.)

Cong. speaks in different voices on Trump tariffs

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Congress leaders on Monday spoke in different voices on the issue of U.S. President Donald Trump’s latest comment on imposing higher tariffs for buying Russian oil.

“So much for Howdy Modi. So much for Namaste Trump. So much for Ab ki Baar Trump Sarkar. So much for BJP MPs hailing Narendra Modi as India’s trump card,” party’s communications chief Jai-ram Ramesh posted on X.

“This is what happens when foreign policy becomes about image building, not national interest,” he added.

His party colleague, Manish Tewari asked the American President not to lose his sleep over it. “We have enough resilience as a nation to withstand your tariff threat,” he added.

Former Union Minister Anand Sharma noted that Mr. Trump’s comments on “India and its economy was unacceptable”. “As the fourth largest economy, India has resilience & inherent strength to engage with the world on principles of equality & mutual respect,” he posted on X.

Pollution Control Boards have power to impose restitutionary damages: SC

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday gave Pollution Control Boards more teeth by declaring their power to impose and collect restitutionary damages to completely restore polluted air and waterbodies back to their original, pristine selves in an ecosystem.

“We direct that Pollution Control Boards can impose and collect as restitutionary and compensatory damages fixed sums of monies or require furnishing bank guarantees as an ex-ante measure towards potential environmental damage in exercise of powers under Sections 33A and 31A of the Water and Air Acts,” Justice P.S. Narasimha, who authored the judgment, held.

The judgment came on an appeal filed by the Delhi Pollution Control Committee against a Delhi High Court decision that it was not empowered to levy compensatory damages in exercise of powers under Section 33A of the Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974 and Section 31A of the Air (Pre-



The Bench directed that the power should be enforced only after issuing the necessary subordinate legislation. N. RAJESH

vention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981.

The Bench, including Justice Manoj Misra, further directed that the power should be enforced only after issuing the necessary subordinate legislation in the form of rules and regulations under both statutes. The rules must incorporate the basic principles of natural justice.

“According to the polluter pays principle, the responsibility for repairing the damage is that of the offending industry... The focus has to be on restoration of the ecosystem as close and similar as possible to the specific one that was damaged,” Justice Narasimha observed.

Justice Narasimha held that the Pollution Control Boards had expansive powers and “enormous responsibilities” under the Water Act and the Air Act. They had a broad statutory mandate to prevent, control and abate water and air pollution.

The provisions under these statutes bestowed the Boards with the power to direct closure, prohibition or regulation of any industry, operation or process. Further, this power extended to directing the stoppage or regulation of supply of electricity, water or any other service. The laws allow the Boards significant flexibility in deciding the nature of directions.

Court questions U.P.’s haste in taking over Bankey Bihari temple

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday questioned the Uttar Pradesh government’s haste in promulgating an ordinance to take over the management of the ancient Bankey Bihari temple at Vrindavan in Mathura.

A Bench headed by Justice Surya Kant also expressed disapproval of the “clandestine” manner employed by the State to secure the court’s permission, getting a judgment on May 15 by filing a civil dispute to use temple funds to develop the Shri Banke Bihari Temple Corridor project.

The Bench orally considered recalling its directions in the May verdict allowing the use of the temple funds for the corridor development project, which may spell a blow to the State government’s plans.

The court also suggested passing an order to have a committee manage the temple until the High Court decides the validity of the ordinance.

The Bench adjourned the case to August 5, asking Additional Solicitor General K.M. Nataraj, who ap-



The SC assured all stakeholders that a responsible person will take care of temple affairs.

peared for Uttar Pradesh, to take instructions from the State government on the suggestions.

Find a way out

“This is the land of Lord Krishna. He was the first mediator known to the world. Let’s find a way out to resolve this dispute that has been pending for years and develop the area in the interests of lakhs of devotees who visit these iconic religious places. Basic amenities need to be created, as nowadays religious tourism is one of the big-gest sources of revenue,” Justice Kant remarked.

The Bench assured all stakeholders that a responsible person would take care of temple affairs.

Kiren Rijiju dismisses demand for debate on SIR

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The government will be compelled to press for the passage of various Bills amid din in Parliament, Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju said on Monday, as the Opposition remained adamant on its demand for a debate on the ongoing special intensive revision (SIR) of electoral rolls, which the government has refused to concede.

Mr. Rijiju insisted that the government wants a thorough discussion in Parliament over its Bills but will be compelled to push for their passage from Tuesday in “national interest” as the proposed legislations are important for governance.

Hitting out at the Opposition parties, he said that they had agreed to a two-day discussion on the National Sports Governance Bill and National Anti-Doping (Amendment) Bill, both of which were scheduled to be taken up in the Lok Sabha on Monday.

Mr. Rijiju once again dismissed the possibility of holding a debate on the SIR.

SC stays defamation case proceedings against Rahul


Criticising Congress leader, it asks why he was compelled to air his views on social media; the leader says remarks on India-China border tensions were not intended to damage reputations

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday stayed proceedings in a criminal defamation case against the Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha, Rahul Gandhi, in a Lucknow court for remarks made to presspersons during his Bharat Jodo Yatra about the skirmishes reported between Indian and Chinese soldiers along the border.

“How did you get to know that 2,000 sq. km of Indian territory was occupied? Were you there? Do you have any credible proof? If you are a true Indian, you would not say all these things,” Justice Dipankar Datta criticised Mr. Gandhi.

Senior advocate A.M. Singhvi and advocate Prasanna S. responded that a “true Indian would also say our Indian soldiers were beaten up...” Mr. Singhvi said his client’s remarks were meant for disclosure of information in public interest.



If you are a true Indian, you would not say all these things... Whatever you have to say, you say it in Parliament. These are issues in Parliament. Why do you say it in social media posts?

JUSTICE DIPANKAR DATTA
Supreme Court judge

Justice Datta, heading a Bench including Justice A.G. Masih, asked why Mr. Gandhi was compelled to air his views on social media, and that he should ask his questions in Parliament.

The judge said freedom of speech did not mean that a “responsible Leader of Opposition would do all this”.

“Whatever you have to say, you say it in the Parliament. These are issues in the Parliament. Why do you say it in social media posts?” Justice Datta asked.

“Freeze dissent” Mr. Singhvi said his case was centred on the argument that one need not agree with what was said,

Roads Organisation officer, Uday Shankar Shrivastava, before a Lucknow Magistrate court in August 2023. The Lucknow court had issued summons to the Congress leader in February.

‘Political remarks’ Mr. Gandhi said his statements, made during the Bharat Jodo Yatra on December 16, 2022 in response to a media query concerning Indo-China border tensions, were “political”. Mr. Shrivastava, however, claimed that the Opposition leader had defamed the Indian Army and lowered his own personal reputation in society.

The Bench issued notice to the State of Uttar Pradesh and Mr. Shrivastava, represented by senior advocate Gaurav Bhatia, who was present on a caveat, returnable in three weeks.

Asking questions is being branded as ‘anti-national’: Cong.

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Hours after the Supreme Court censured the Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, Rahul Gandhi, for claiming that 2,000 square kilometres of Indian territory was under Chinese occupation, the Congress on Monday asserted that every patriotic Indian had sought answers after the Galwan clash of 2020.

Taking to social media platform X, Congress general secretary (organisation) K.C. Venugopal asserted that the Opposition had raised questions on alleged Chinese incursions repeatedly, both inside and outside Parliament.

“But this Government, in its delirium to peddle propaganda and project hollow bravado 24x7, is too afraid to face real questions in Parliament,” Mr. Venugopal said.

‘Silence is patriotism’ “But in Modi’s India, asking questions is branded ‘anti-national.’ Silence is ‘patriotism,’ and the ‘True Indian’ badge is reserved for the timid, the blindfold-



ed, and the spineless. Oh my Lord!”, the Congress leader added.

In a separate X post, Congress communications chief Jairam Ramesh accused the Narendra Modi government of “hiding the truth with its policy of DDLJ – deny, distract, lie, and justify.”

“The fact of the matter is that the Modi government is responsible for the biggest territorial setback India has faced since 1962, and it is pursuing ‘normalisation’ with a hostile China because of its cowardice and misplaced economic priorities,” Ramesh said.

Party’s media and publicity head Pawan Khera added, “The Constitution gives this right to ask questions to every patriotic Indian.”

Rahul’s credibility is at stake, says BJP leader

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Bharatiya Janata Party on Monday stated that Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi’s credibility is at stake, citing the Supreme Court’s remarks during the hearing of a criminal defamation case related to his December 2022 comments on Indo-China border tensions.

At a press conference, BJP spokesperson Gaurav Bhatia said: “Such immature, anti-Army, and demoralising statements made without any evidence or facts, especially when our Army was engaged in the Galwan incident, raise serious questions. Why does Rahul Gandhi make such statements?”

“The question arises: Does India deserve a more responsible and better Leader of Opposition? As a Leader of the Opposition, who has taken an oath under the Constitution to safeguard the sovereignty of our country, is he destroying that very sovereignty?..is he helping the nations which are inimical to our country? Is he demoralising the brave Indian armed forces?” he asked.

Bihar leaders find SIR draft roll ‘difficult’ to compare

Sobhana K. Nair
Sreeparna Chakrabarty
NEW DELHI

Even as the Election Commission said that no party has filed any claim or objection regarding the draft electoral rolls for Bihar published on August 1 as part of the special intensive revision (SIR) exercise, Opposition parties in the State on Monday accused the poll body of “deliberately” making it “difficult” for them to compare the draft rolls with the list issued ahead of the Lok Sabha election in January 2024.

The draft rolls have more than 65 lakh fewer names than the previous list. The EC has attributed this to deaths, migration and duplication.

It said that in the past three days, 1,927 individual complaints have been raised.

All 12 political parties in Bihar have more than 1.6 lakh booth-level agents registered with the EC for the SIR.

Opposition leaders *The*

Hindu spoke to pointed out several technical problems – the first being that the January 2024 electoral rolls are not available in machine-readable format – are making it difficult to run an analysis comparing it with the draft rolls.

The booth-level data of the deletions along with the reasons have not been provided in each district, the parties said. They pointed out that in case a person finds his name deleted from the rolls, he has to file a fresh application in Form 6, and such cases are not being categorised as complaints.

‘Exclusion-friendly’ Rashtriya Janta Dal (RJD) leader Manoj K. Jha said that the SIR is not “voter-friendly”, but “exclusion-friendly”. “The draft electoral roll published after such a massive exercise should have been self-explanatory. You have handed out a consolidated draft roll to the political parties, without indicating who you have deleted and why,



Many issues: Opposition parties in Bihar accused the EC of “deliberately” making it “difficult” for them to compare the electoral rolls from January 2024 with the draft rolls published on August 1. ANI

leaving it entirely on us to do the exercise in the limited time available,” he said.

The RJD’s Araria district president, Manish Yadav, said that he spent the last three days trying to procure detailed data. “While I have managed to get the data for Araria, I have been told by my colleagues from other districts that this data is not available to them,” he said. The RJD is planning to hold camps to allow the voters to come forward with complaints.

CPI(ML) general secretary Dipankar Bhattacharya rejected the EC’s claims on no complaints from political parties. “We have filed several complaints with the Bihar CEO, how can they say there are no complaints. When an individual’s name is deleted, she/he has to file a fresh application, which the EC is not counting as a complaint,” he said.

Accusing the EC of being less than transparent, he said, “For example, we got

the Darbhanga district electoral roll, where there are 30 lakh voters. Out of them two lakh are said to be permanently shifted, but we do not have booth-level data to do the verification.”

Technical teams The party has set up technical teams to carry out the verification online and is also sending people for physical verification, though Mr. Bhattacharya said, it is a daunting task given

the numbers involved and time given.

Congress leader Praveen Chakravarty said that without machine-readable electoral rolls of both January 2024 and the SIR draft roll, running analytical tools is difficult. “How can the onus of holding a free and fair election be on political parties? What if it is a newly constituted political party, don’t they have a right to have level-playing field, just because they don’t have the manpower to carry out verification,” he asked.

Voters have many options to check whether their names are there in the draft rolls, including on the EC website by searching with name, age, and district, or existing EPIC number.

Sunita Devi, an Anganwadi worker, who is the BLO in Phulwari Assembly constituency, said most people had made it to the draft list in her booth and since all of them had phones, they were checking their names online.

INBRIEF



Modi to inaugurate new Kartavya Bhavan tomorrow

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will on August 6 inaugurate the new Kartavya Bhavan in the national capital. The inauguration will be followed by an address at a public programme on Kartavya Path. Kartavya Bhavan-03 is part of the broader transformation of the Central Vista. It is the first of several upcoming Common Central Secretariat buildings, which aim to streamline administrative processes and enable agile governance. The project embodies the government’s broader administrative reform agenda. Kartavya Bhavan-03 has been designed to foster efficiency, innovation, and collaboration by bringing together various Ministries and Departments that are currently scattered across the national capital.

Rahul Gandhi to set out on Bihar yatra from August 17

Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi will set out on a *Matdata Adhikar Yatra* (voters’ rights march) in Bihar in three phases covering 30 districts from August 17. The *yatra*, originally scheduled from August 10, has been “postponed by a week” following the death of Jharkhand Mukti Morcha leader Shibui Soren, Congress spokesperson Asit Nath Tiwari told *The Hindu*. “Now it will commence from August 17 in the State,” Mr. Tiwari said. Mr. Gandhi is likely to commence his journey from Sasaram, the district headquarters of Rohtas. Senior Congress leaders and *Mahagathbandhan* (grand alliance) leaders are likely to join Mr. Gandhi over the course of the *yatra*. The Assembly election is due in the State in October-November.

Punjab Minister summoned for ‘hurting Sikh sentiments’

The Akal Takht on Monday asked Punjab Cabinet Minister Harjot Singh Bains to appear before the five Singh Sahiban (high priests) on Wednesday for allegedly “hurting Sikh sentiments”. Mr. Bains has been summoned for organising “entertainment performances” at a programme held in Jammu and Kashmir’s Srinagar to mark the 350th martyrdom anniversary of Sri Guru Teg Bahadur. A meeting will be convened at the Akal Takht Sahib Secretariat in Amritsar under the leadership of the officiating Jathedar Giani Kuldeep Singh Gargaj to deliberate on various religious matters, said a statement. Bagicha Singh, in-charge of the Akal Takht Secretariat, stated that summons has been sent to Mr. Bains to appear before the five Singh Sahiban. -PTI

SC to hear Baghel’s plea against specific provisions of PMLA

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday agreed to examine a plea by Congress leader Bhupesh Baghel claiming specific provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) led to the violation of an accused person’s fundamental rights against self-incrimination and to maintain silence under questioning by an investigating agency.

“Section 50 and 63 of the PMLA are unconstitutional, being violative of fundamental rights guaranteed under the Constitution. The framework under Sections 50(2) and 50(3) of the Act infringes the fundamental rights against self incrimination guaranteed under Article 20(3) of the Constitution. The provisions permit the

ED to summon any person, compel answers and production of documents under a threat of penalty,” the petition said.

A Bench headed by Justice Surya Kant agreed to list Mr. Baghel’s plea challenging Sections 50 and 63 along with a batch of petitions challenging various provisions of the 2002 Act. They are scheduled to be heard on August 6.

Refuses separate pleas The court refused to entertain separate petitions filed by Mr. Baghel and his son, Chaitanya Baghel, who was arrested by the ED under the PMLA in the Chhattisgarh liquor scam case on July 18, challenging the “piecemeal investigations” being carried out. They contended that the probe has become a source of harassment.

Abhishek to lead Trinamool in LS; chief whip Kalyan Banerjee resigns

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Trinamool Congress named its national general secretary, Abhishek Banerjee, as the party’s new leader in the Lok Sabha, replacing Sudip Bandopadhyay who has been unwell for months.

Kalyan Banerjee resigned as chief whip of the party.

These changes were announced after a virtual meeting chaired by Trinamool Congress president and West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee with the party MPs. Without naming any individual, she expressed disappointment over poor coordination among Trinamool’s Lok Sabha members.

Mr. Kalyan’s resignation comes after a public spat with his colleague Mahua Moitra in April, during a vi-



New roles: West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee with party general secretary Abhishek Banerjee during a rally in Kolkata. ANI

sit to the Election Commission in Delhi. Mr. Kalyan said that he was being blamed unfairly for lack of coordination among MPs even as some barely attend Parliament.

“I have quit as the party’s chief whip in Lok Sabha as ‘Didi’ (Mamata Banerjee) said during the virtual meeting that there is a lack of coordination

among party MPs. So the blame is on me. Hence, I have decided to step down,” Mr. Kalyan told a news channel.

The MP, who is a senior advocate, said he felt humiliated that the party was not holding those responsible for indiscipline and poor attendance to account, but instead making him the fall guy.

The critically endangered Asian giant tortoise, the largest in mainland Asia, has been reintroduced into the Zeliang Community Reserve in Nagaland's Peren. Officials said 10 individuals of the species from Nagaland Zoological Park in Chümoukedima were released through a community event on Saturday. The event was organised by the Nagaland Forest Department and the India Turtle Conservation Programme. The tortoises were released in a pre-constructed soft-release enclosure to help them develop site fidelity before dispersal. Once found in large numbers, the species was almost wiped out from Nagaland over a decade ago.

Union Ministers Dharmendra Pradhan, Ashwini Vaishnaw, and Jitendra Prasad on Monday received the Guinness World Record for the latest edition of “*Pariksha Pe Charcha*”, an annual event led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The initiative, being organised by the Ministry of Education in collaboration with MyGov since 2018, has been conferred the record for the “Most people registered on a citizen engagement platform in one month”. “A matter of great delight and personal satisfaction to accept the Guinness World Record... #PPC2025 has set a world record with 3.53 crore+ registrations and over 21 crore viewership on television,” said Mr. Pradhan.

Amit Bhelari
PATNA

Before Shibu Soren started his political journey, he was a social reformer. Later, as a political leader, he fought for a separate Jharkhand State, earning the respect of all parties.

The former Jharkhand Chief Minister was born on January 11, 1944, at Nemra village in undivided Bihar, currently in Ramgarh district of Jharkhand. As a tribal leader, he challenged the social structure at that time. From 1962, he had fought against the money-lending system which, at its peak, deprived borrowers of all but one-third of their produce in the tribal areas.

Describing his fight against the money lenders, Tanuj Khatri, spokesperson and central committee member of the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM), told



Grassroots leader: Former Jharkhand Chief Minister Shibu Soren with his son Hemant Soren at an event. ANI

The Hindu that Soren had started a campaign to cut paddy on lands occupied by the moneylenders in lieu of loans.

Tribal women would harvest paddy, and men with bows and arrows would keep a watch.

Hailing from the Santhal tribal group, Soren got the sobriquet Guruji because he used to organise night schools for children who

could not afford to go to school.

‘Revolutionary spirit’
Dr. Khatri said *Dishom Guru* was not just a political leader but a revolutionary spirit who united fragmented struggles. He brought together diverse communities, bonded by a shared pain and common cause, to fight exploitation, social injustice, and land

alienation. He had his influence in neighbouring Odisha and West Bengal as well. "He was a pioneer of grassroots mobilisation, inspiring an entire generation to rise against feudal structures, and exploitative systems. From the forests to the Legislative Assembly, he gave voice to the voiceless," he said.

Soren played a crucial role in the creation of separate State of Jharkhand, turning a long-standing dream into reality.

The book *Jharkhand Andolan Ka Dastavej: Soshan, Sangharsh Aur Sahadat*, written by Anuj Kumar Sinha, says A.K. Rai, Vinod Bihari Mahato, and Soren were running movements under different banners. On February 4, 1972, the three sat together and decided to merge the different banners to form the JMM. Vinod Bihari Mahato became its first president,

and Shibu Soren the general secretary. After the death of Nirmal Mahato, the party's president in 1987, the command of the JMM came into the hands of Shibu Soren.

He became the Chief Minister of Jharkhand thrice. However, he could not complete his term neither as a Union Minister nor as a Chief Minister. Every time he had to resign in the middle of his term. He served at the party's top post till April 2025. With health failing, his son Hemant Soren was elected JMM chief.

He was associated with many controversies and serious allegations; despite that, he remained the tallest tribal leader in Jharkhand. Soren and other JMM MPs were charged with accepting bribes to save the P.V. Narasimha Rao government in the infamous JMM bribery case of 1993.

Saurabh Trivedi
NEW DELHI

Independence Day invites from the Defence Ministry for this year's Independence Day celebrations will have Operation Sindoor as the central theme, an official said on Monday.

In another change, the Central Vista image embossed on the cards will be replaced by a sketch of the world's highest railway bridge that spans the Chenab river which was recently inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Posters and banners around the venue will also mention Operation Sindoor. Operation Sindoor was launched by India on May 7 in response to the Pahalgam terror attack in which 25 Indians and one

This year, more guests will be invited to attend the celebration. To accommodate them, more tiered seating structures have been prepared.

Anti-drone measures

"Installation of anti-drone measures, a radar near the Red Fort, and the threat posed by unmanned devices were discussed in detail with the Army. The Defence Ministry will be deploying an anti-drone system to prevent any aerial breach, and the Indian Air Force will be on high alert. Drones are among our key security concerns. We have also instructed vendors responsible for installing CCTVs around the venue not to use any Chinese equipment for surveillance purposes," an official said.

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Abstract

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References

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Praise of Mahalakshmi

In his Guna Ratna Kosa, Parasara Bhattar prays for Goddess Mahalakshmi's merciful glances to fall on him, for he has no one else who can offer him protection (*asaranam maam paalaya*).

Parasara shows his affection for Goddess Ranganayaki of Srirangam through Guna Ratna Kosa, said T.A.K. Srinivasacharya in a discourse. In one verse, he says he is afraid to even praise Her, for even his words of praise might hurt Her tender body! He says that when Her attendants look at Her, Her body suffers like a flower exposed to the heat of the sun. The vanamala garland that the Lord wears is Her swing, says Parasara. He is concerned that even these flowers will have an abrasive effect on Her delicate skin. She is Herself a garland on the Lord's chest. Goddess Ranganayaki is beautiful even when She is not wearing ornaments. And when the priests of the temple adorn Her with pearl earrings and pearl necklaces, anklets, a jewel on Her forehead and a girdle, She looks even more charming. The ornaments are like lovely buds and flowers on a creeper.

Parasara Bhattar elaborates on Goddess Mahalakshmi's qualities. Like Lord Narayana, Goddess Mahalakshmi is eternally youthful. She shares many other qualities with Him. She stands by Him in everything. Here one should recall the Ramayana sloka, where Janaka gives Sita in marriage to Rama. Janaka says with reference to Sita – *sahādharmācharee* tva. Here he is assuring Rama that Sita will share in his duties. While Lakshmi and He share the same auspicious qualities, there are some that are special to Her. While She is worshipped by Her devotees, She, in turn, worships the Lord.

INBRIEF



Titagarh bags ₹1,600-crore Mumbai Metro contract

Titagarh Rail Systems Ltd. (TRSL) has received a ₹1,598.55-crore contract for manufacturing 108 coaches for Mumbai Metro, a company official said. TRSL received a Letter of Acceptance (LoA) for the design, manufacture, supply, installation, integration, testing and commissioning of the coaches for Mumbai Metro's Line 6, he said. The contract has been awarded by NCC Ltd., which is executing the project for the Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority. PTI

IOC buys U.S., West Asia crude as Trump slams Russian buys

Indian Oil Corp has bought 7 million barrels of crude from the United States, Canada and the Middle East, four trade sources said on Monday, as U.S. President Donald Trump ramped up his criticism of the country over its purchases of Russian oil. Indian government officials denied any policy change. India imported about 1.75 million barrels per day of Russian oil from January to June this year, up 1% from a year ago, according to data from trade sources. REUTERS

P.B. Balaji named JLR CEO, to succeed Adrian Mardell

The Board of Directors of Jaguar Land Rover (JLR), in its meeting on Monday, approved the appointment of P.B. Balaji to succeed Adrian Mardell, as the CEO of JLR, when he retires upon completion of his contract. Mr. Balaji will be joining in this role from November 2025. Mr. Mardell will continue to help with the transition and support until the end of his contract, Tata Motors, the owner of JLR, said in a filing with the stock exchanges.

Bharti Airtel unveils subsidiary Xtelify, to sell software tools to foreign telcos

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI



Gopal Vittal

Bharti Airtel Ltd. on Monday announced a new subsidiary called Xtelify, which the company said, would sell the telco's internal business intelligence and customer relations tools with operators around the world.

In addition to this, Airtel will sell 'sovereign' cloud storage with local data

centres to firms who need it due to data localisation regulations.

The integration of Air-

tel's own systems into the cloud was something that led to Xtelify's formation, Airtel India CEO Gopal Vittal told reporters. The suite would offer telcos the ability to make personalised offers to customers, something Airtel has already been doing, Mr. Vittal said. Xtelify has already tied up with the Singaporean telco Singtel, and Globe, a Filipino operator.

The product would help

telcos materially boost their earnings from users, Mr. Vittal said. The "software platform ... will help telcos all around the world rid themselves of underlying complexity, improve customer experience, lower churn and raise Average Revenue Per User," Airtel said in an announcement.

The Airtel Cloud product had a "control plane" that was also in India, Mr. Vittal said.

COTTON BOARD
Government of Kerala

E-TENDER NOTICE

Cotton Board invites e-tender from suppliers for supply of Cotton Bales to various spinning mills all over Kerala. Also invites EOI from cotton suppliers for one time registration

For details visit:
www.etenders.kerala.gov.in, www.bptkerala.in

Last date : 25.08.2025

05.08.2025

Sd/-
Fund Manager, Cotton Board

GOVERNMENT OF RAJASTHAN
OFFICE OF THE ADDITIONAL CHIEF ENGINEER WATER RESOURCES
ZONE BHARATPUR

No. 732 Date: 25.07.2025

E-NIT no- 03/2025-26

On behalf of the Governor of Rajasthan, bids are invited from eligible bidders for the work "Rehabilitation of GMC Chain 1210 to 1750, Construction of Drain from Tail Distributary to Homes canal & lift scheme for depression area in villages Nonera, Pathwari, Sheda, Nagla Dadu, Nagla Chahra etc. District Deeg." Rs 3534.34 Lakh up to 06:00 PM on dated 18.08.2025 and Technical bid will be opened on dated 19.08.2025 at 3:00 PM.

Other particulars of the bid may be visited on the procurement portal (<http://eproc.rajjasthan.gov.in>, <http://sppp.raj.nic.in>) of the state.

UBN no: WRD2526WLOB00813

Additional Chief Engineer
Water Resources Zone
Bharatpur

DIPRC/10645/2025

KARNATAKA STATE MEDICAL SUPPLIES CORPORATION LIMITED
No.1, Dr. Siddaiah Puranik Road, KHB Colony, Magadi Road, Bangalore-560079.
Phone: +91-80-29619801, Email: md.ksmscl@gmail.com

No:KMSMCL/DRUGS/TND/25-26 A/PACKAGE-1/22 DRUGS/22/2025-26 Dt: 04.08.2025

TENDER NOTIFICATION

Ref: Tender Notification No: KMSMCL/DRUGS/TND/25-26 A/PACKAGE-1/22 DRUGS/22/2025-26, Dated: 04.08.2025 (IND-0265).

Nationwide Tender is invited through e-Tendering system under KTPP Act 1999 and Rules 2000 for the following tender:

Tender for the supply of 22 Analgesics, Antipyretics, Nonsteroidal Anti-inflammatory Medicines for various Health Institutions across Karnataka under Annual Indent 2025-26 (IND-0265)

Details regarding EMD, Terms and Conditions and other information are available in Tender Document, which can be downloaded from the website:<https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in> from 04.08.2025. The eligible tenderers shall submit their e-tenders under e-procurement platform for above mentioned tenders. Further information if any may be obtained from this office.

Sd/-
**Managing Director
KMSMCL, Bengaluru**

DIPRC/CP/2192/CCL/2025-26

Kolkata Municipal Corporation
Sustainability, Hygiene and Resilience Project
(KMC-SHARP)

E-Tender Notice
INVITATION FOR BIDS Date. 05.08.2025

Kolkata Municipal Corporation represented by **Project Director, KMC-SHARP, 206, A.J.C Bose Road, 2nd Floor, Kolkata - 700 017**, West Bengal, India invites eligible bidders to submit bids online in the e-Tendering platform of the Government of West Bengal (URL: <https://wbttenders.gov.in>) for the Works of :

Development of S&D Network in Adjoining Area of Jadav Ghosh Road in Suti sub basin in Borough XIV & XVI (Part of Ward 126 & 127) including Construction of Keyatala Pumping Station; Contract Package No: KMC-SHARP/OCB/SD09R/2025-26.

Bidders may download the tender document from <https://wbttenders.gov.in>

Bid submission start date (online) : From **09:30 hours on 04.09.2025.**

Bid submission closing date (online) : Up to **14:30 hours on 16.09.2025.**

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STEP
For General Communication

STEP

IPO-bound JSW Cement to stay off battle arena

Ashokamithran T.
MUMBAI



Parth Jindal

JSW Cement, whose ₹3,600-crore IPO is opening on August 7, is not looking to acquire new businesses, but is set to focus on organic growth, said MD Parth Jindal.

"We don't have the aukat [stature] right now to fight the big boys and I don't want to go to my father for help in this business," said Mr. Parth Jindal, the son of leading industrialist and Chairman of JSW Group Sajjan Jindal.

Explaining further, he said that the firm was not interested in competing with either Ultratech or Adani, currently the top two players in terms of market share in the cement industry.

Acquisition mode

India's cement players have been competing to expand through acquisitions in the industry in the past two years. Adani Group has been eyeing the top spot which is now occupied by Birla-owned Ultratech Cement.

The latter holds 22% of the 637 million tonnes per annum (MTPA) capacity, according to the prospectus of JSW in Fiscal 2024. Adani, with its Ambuja and ACC acquisitions, controls 16% of the capacity.

It has also acquired smaller players like Penna Cement and Orient Cement. Ultratech, too, acquired India Cements and a minority stake in Star

Cement.

In this context, Mr. Jindal said that the company would not consider acquisitions until they touch a capacity of 42 million tonnes. Currently, the company has a capacity of 20.6 million tonnes, which is 3% of the total capacity in fiscal 2024. "We are working on getting to 10% (market share). Visibility is about 6% to 8%," he said in a media briefing after the announcement to list.

The company is also not looking to enter the South Indian market as Mr. Jindal said he believed that it is "overcrowded and lacks pricing power." JSW plans to stick to expansion in North and Central India.

The company's shares are priced at ₹139 to ₹147 per equity share in lots of 102 shares and multiples thereafter.

The IPO is for ₹1,600 crore of fresh issue and the rest on offer for sale. The company plans to use the proceeds to finance its cement unit in Rajasthan, debt payment and general costs. The bidding closes on August 11.

MARKETS

MARKET WATCH

	MONDAY	% CHANGE
Sensex	81,019	0.52
US Dollar	87.66	-0.55
Gold	98,020	0.40
Brent oil	69.05	-

NIFTY 50

	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Enter	2363.60	12.70
Adani Ports	1388.90	41.80
Apollo Hosp.	7308.00	-43.50
Asian Paints	2449.80	18.80
Axis Bank	1068.60	6.20
Bajaj Auto	8187.50	143.00
Bajaj Finserv	1933.60	17.30
Bajaj Finance	885.30	9.70
Bharat Elec.	389.55	12.35
Bharti Airtel	1914.60	30.20
Cipla	1515.10	12.30
Coal India	374.70	2.20
Dr Reddys Lab.	1225.00	-4.40
Eicher Motors	5621.00	93.00
Eternal Ltd.	305.25	-0.50
Grasim Ind.	2787.80	65.60
HCL Tech	1474.40	22.30
HDFC Bank	1992.00	-20.20
HDFC Life	739.80	-1.90
Hero MotoCorp	4535.90	224.30
Hindalco	687.70	15.25
Hind Unilever	2543.70	-10.00
ICI Bank	1463.20	-8.40
Indusind Bank	894.05	20.35
Infosys	1489.50	10.90
ITC	416.85	0.40
Jio Financial Services Ltd.	333.90	4.40
JSW Steel	1055.90	28.10
Kotak Bank	1997.00	-4.60
L&T	3631.10	43.80
M&M	3200.20	40.90
Maruti Suzuki	12365.00	63.00
Nestle India	2277.40	0.90
NTPC	332.00	1.10
ONGC	234.83	-1.96
PowerGrid Corp	287.95	-3.30
Reliance Ind.	1411.50	17.80
SBI Life	1831.50	35.30
State Bank	795.70	1.70
Shriram Finance Ltd.	624.90	10.70
Sun Pharma	1641.60	11.90
Tata Consumer Products	1072.60	2.20
Tata Motors	653.60	4.75
Tata Steel	159.56	6.55
TCS	3074.40	71.40
Tech Mahindra	1475.00	36.20
Titan	3356.30	40.30
Trent Ltd.	5249.00	69.00
UltraTech Cement	12257.00	144.00
Wipro	246.05	3.30

EXCHANGE RATES

Indicative direct rates in rupees a unit except yen at 4 p.m. on August 04

CURRENCY	TT BUY	TT SELL
US Dollar	87.46	87.78
Euro	101.28	101.66
British Pound	116.35	116.77
Japanese Yen (100)	59.44	59.66
Chinese Yuan	12.19	12.23
Swiss Franc	108.44	108.85
Singapore Dollar	67.96	68.22
Canadian Dollar	63.51	63.74
Malaysian Ringgit	20.63	20.73
Australian Dollar	56.73	56.94

Source:Indian Bank

KHARTOUM
Sudan paramilitaries kill 14 civilians fleeing besieged city



Sudanese paramilitary fighters killed 14 civilians trying to flee a besieged city in Darfur, a rights group said on Monday. The attack in a village on the outskirts of El-Fasher came two days after the administration — installed by the paramilitary RSF — asked civilians to evacuate the besieged city and promised they would be safe. AFP

SEOUL
S. Korea removes loudspeakers on its border with the North



South Korea said on Monday it was removing loudspeakers used to blare K-pop and news reports to the North, as Seoul tries to ease tensions with its neighbour. The nations, still technically at war, had halted propaganda broadcasts along the border, Seoul's military said in June after the election of President Lee Jae Myung. AFP

KABUL
Afghanistan has its 'sharpest surge' ever of child malnutrition, says UN



Afghanistan is seeing its sharpest-ever surge of child malnutrition, the World Food Program said on Monday, adding it needed \$539 million to help the country's most vulnerable families. Almost 10 million people, a quarter of Afghanistan's population, face acute food insecurity. One in three children is stunted. AP

TEHRAN
Iran sets up new Supreme National Defence Council after Israeli strike



Iran founded a new defence council after attacks in June by Israel and the U.S., Iranian state media reported on Monday. Iran's Supreme National Security Council, the country's highest security body, made the decision to establish the Supreme National Defence Council, which will be headed by President Masoud Pezeshkian. AP

BNP to oppose July Proclamation if it is against Bangladesh constitution

The party says that though the government consulted various stakeholders before going ahead with the announcement of Charter, it should not go against the 1972 constitution of the country which is based on the sacrifices of 1971 Liberation War

Kallol Bhattacharjee
NEW DELHI

The July Proclamation that is being planned on the anniversary of the anti-government uprising on Tuesday in Dhaka will be opposed if it goes against the constitution of Bangladesh, said a senior leader of Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) on Monday.

Speaking to *The Hindu*, General Secretary of BNP, Mirza Fakhru Islam Alamgir, said the interim government has consulted various stakeholders before going ahead with the planned announcement of



Mixed opinions: Student-activists had said in December 2024 that they would use the Charter to 'bury' the constitution. REUTERS

the July Charter on Tuesday. However, he cautioned that the charter should not go against the 1972 constitution of Ban-

gladesh which is based on the sacrifices of 1971 Liberation War.

“The interim government sent us a draft of the

July Proclamation some weeks ago. We did not find anything objectionable in that draft but we do not know what will be the exact draft of the proclamation that will be launched on 5 August. If we find that the proclamation goes against our existing constitution, then we will oppose it,” Mr. Alamgir said ahead of Tuesday's launch.

Mr. Alamgir's remarks came hours after the interim government said that Chief Adviser Prof. Mohammed Yunus will announce the July Proclamation at 5 p.m. on Tuesday at the southern plaza of the Jatiyo Sansad — parliament

of Bangladesh.

The July Proclamation came into focus in December 2024 when the student-activists, part of the core support groups of the interim government, announced that they wanted to use the July Proclamation to 'bury' the 1972 constitution. The attempt of the student activists was however not successful and the interim government stepped in and decided to carry forward the idea of the proclamation. In his Id speech on June 6, Mr. Yunus revived the plan saying the text of the proclamation had been agreed upon by “all parties”.

Senior Israeli officials urge Trump to help end Gaza war

Agence France-Presse
JERUSALEM

Hundreds of retired Israeli security officials, including former heads of intelligence agencies, have urged U.S. President Donald Trump to pressure their own government to end the war in Gaza. “It is our professional judgement that Hamas no longer poses a strategic threat to Israel,” the former officials wrote. “When we achieved all military objectives, this war ceased to be a just war,” said Ami Ayalon, former director of the Shin Bet security service.

Be very cautious with nuclear rhetoric, says Russia in reply to Trump's remarks

Agence France-Presse
MOSCOW

Russia called for caution on Monday after U.S. President Donald Trump said he would deploy two nuclear submarines following an online row with former Russian President Dmitry Medvedev.

Mr. Trump said he had ordered the deployment in response to what he alleged were highly provocative comments by Mr. Medvedev, saying the submarines would be positioned in “appropriate regions”.

“Russia is very attentive to the topic of nuclear non-proliferation. And we be-



Escalation game: The U.S. President ordered the deployment of two nuclear submarines following a row with Dmitry Medvedev. AFP

lieve that everyone should be very, very cautious with nuclear rhetoric,” Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters on Monday.

The row between Mr.

Medvedev and Mr. Trump erupted against the backdrop of the U.S. leader's ultimatum for Russia to end its military offensive in Ukraine or face fresh econom-

ic sanctions.

Mr. Medvedev — one of Russia's most prominent anti-Western hawks — accused Mr. Trump of “playing the ultimatum game” and said that Mr. Trump “should remember” that Russia was a formidable force. “Each new ultimatum is a threat and a step towards war. Not between Russia and Ukraine, but with his own country,” he said.

The chief of staff to Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy on Monday backed Mr. Trump's actions. “The concept of peace through strength works,” Andriy Yermak wrote on social media.

Strategic autonomy is alive; neoliberalism is dead: India's takeaways from Trump era

NEWS ANALYSIS

Varghese K. George

Donald J. Trump can be brutally forthright and publicly so. It is partly innate and partly a strategy to throw his interlocutors off balance. In a 1989 interview on CNN's *Larry King Live*, Mr. Trump was asked by the host about his strategies for gaining an edge in negotiations. Mr. Trump responded not with a direct answer, but with a startling personal comment: “Can I move my chair? Because your breath is very bad. It really is... Has this ever been told to you before?” Years later, Mr. Trump explained that it was a demonstration of his negotiation tactics.

Mr. Trump's outspokenness can be unsettling, but it can also be helpful. There are a few valuable lessons that Indian strategy could learn, thanks to the manner in which Mr. Trump conducts U.S. diplomacy.

Key elements of his worldview have largely remained consistent for decades. Even before he made an entry into politics, Mr. Trump was anti-trade, anti-war, cognisant of the economic and social challenges within the American society. He is trying to turn all those beliefs into policies. All countries are scurrying to reposition themselves.

The idea that India's hesitation to go into a complete strategic lock-in with the U.S. and to completely open its market is hindering progress in bilateral ties is commonplace be-



Donald Trump

cause its proponents are influential. India, whether under Jawaharlal Nehru or Narendra Modi, has been reluctant to do either of these, and strategic autonomy has held the country in good stead. For one, alliances are not insulated from shifts in U.S. priorities over time, Trump or not. To cite one example, when Joe Biden was President, Australia scrapped a \$90 billion deal with France to build conventional diesel-electric submarines. Instead, it entered the AUKUS pact with the U.S. and the U.K. to acquire nuclear-powered submarines using the U.S. technology.

All within the family, but hanging France out to dry. Mr. Trump, who is often portrayed as hostile to U.S. allies, is saying it all too loud.

India's choice

Amid Mr. Trump's rhetoric, India could be further incentivised to reinforce the idea of strategic autonomy, which remains the most viable framework for sustaining a robust relationship with the U.S. The Modi government has, in practice, followed the path of strategic autonomy. Both strategic autonomy and strategic subservience

carry costs. India appears increasingly prepared to bear the cost of autonomy — rather than of subservience. Turning into a frontline of any U.S. strategy for containment of another country or expansion of its own interest can be fatal — ask Ukraine. If there was any doubt about strategic autonomy, the Trump moment has clarified it.

Mr. Trump wants to restore manufacturing and jobs in the U.S. and has, in the process, unsettled global trade. Access to its market has been a lever of American power for long, and Mr. Trump is just blunt about it. A trade deal may resolve some immediate issues, but India cannot ignore the reality that in a world where every country has turned protectionist, export-driven growth is a narrow and difficult path.

Ties with the U.S.

The Trump moment tells India two things — strategic autonomy is alive; and neoliberalism is dead. India has to navigate the path ahead, and the U.S. remains a key partner in that. It is reasonable to assume that the U.S. will remain the most powerful state for several decades to come. Ties with the U.S. will continue to be a major determinant of India's capacity to realise its ambitions. Neither obsequiousness nor confrontation can advance India's relations with the U.S. India should also learn that soft power is supposed to be soft, not loud and screeching. As the yoga teacher would say, pranayama practice should not make any sound.

Grand double for Ishaan, Shonal, Rivaan and Shiv



Champions all! The winners in various categories, standing from left, Shonal, Rivaan, and Shiv Tummala. Sitting: Ishaan.

SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

MOTORSPORTS

Sports Bureau

Ishaan Madesh, a seven-time National champion across various categories, held off his sibling Rohaan in both the Pre-Finals and Finals in the Senior Max class for a grand double in the second round of the MECO-FMSCI National Karting Championship Rotax Max Classes at the CoASTT circuit in Coimbatore on Sunday.

Shonal Kunimal from Kozhikode (Birel Art India) and Pune's Arafat Sheikh (Crest Motorsports) won the Finals and the Pre-Finals respectively in the Junior Max category.

Expectedly, Chennai's Rivaan Dev Preetham (MSPORT) dominated the newly introduced Mini

Max category, winning both the Finals and the Pre-Finals to complete a double, as did Shiv Tummala from Bengaluru (Peregrine Racing), who was an equally facile winner in the Micro Max class, where he comfortably held off his rivals.

The results (provisional):

Senior Max: Finals (20 laps): 1. Ishaan Madesh (Peregrine Racing) 15mins, 06.320s, 2. Arjun Vijay Chheda (Crest Motorsports) 15:14.080, 3. Rohaan Madesh (Peregrine Racing) 15:15.424.
Pre-Finals (15 laps): 1. Ishaan 11:24.689, 2. Rohaan 11:34.956, 3. Laksh Manish Bafna (Kart Crew Motorsports) 11:35.157.
Junior Max: Finals (18 laps): 1. Shonal Kunimal (Birel Art India) 13:51.050, 2. Eshanth Vengatesan (MSPORT) 13:53.974, 3. B. Kumar Gowda (Rayo Racing) 14:04.270.
Pre-Finals (16 laps): 1. Arafath Sheikh (Crest Motorsports)

12:04.909, 2. Hridaan Sanadhya (Crest Motorsports) 12:21.680, 3. Shonal 12:24.750.

Mini Max: Finals (16 laps): 1. Rivaan Dev Preetham (MSPORT) 12:31.339, 2. Hamza Balasinorwala (Crest Motorsports) 12:35.028, 3. Yatharth Gaur (Leapfrog Racing) 12:35.630.

Pre-Finals (14 laps): 1. Rivaan 10:59.312, 2. Yatharth 11:04.510, 3. Danish Dalmiya (Rayo Racing) 11:14.365.
Micro Max: Finals (13 laps): 1. Shiv Tummala (Peregrine Racing) 10:34.726, 2. Zidaan Arshaan Anees (Peregrine Racing) 10:39.957, 3. Aarav Surekha (Rayo Racing) 10:40.030.

Pre-Finals (12 laps): 1. Shiv Tummala 09:43.943, 2. Zidaan 09:47.055, 3. Aarav 09:54.239.

LIVE TELECAST

Football: Durand Cup, Sony Sports Ten 2 (SD & HD) & LIV, 4 & 7 p.m.

Imperia obliges in Royal Revive Plate

RACING

HYDERABAD: Trainer Ananta Vatsalya's filly Imperia, ridden by P. Ajeeth Kumar, won the Royal Revive Plate, the chief event of Monday's (Aug. 4) races.

The winner is owned by M/s. Kapil Agrawal & Shailendra Singh. The last race of the day was cancelled due to rain.

1. SULTAN PHEROZE PLATE (DIV. I) (1,200M): STAR OF OPERA (Mukesh Kumar) 1, Exponent (Nakha) 2, Decan Ranger (Shivansh) 3 and Politics (G. Nareesh) 4. Not run: Balahaka. 2-3/4, 2-3/4 and 2. Im, 30.86s. ₹30 (w), 11, 17 and 28 (p). SHP: 39, THP: 78, SHW: 23 and 29, FP: 216, Q: 94, Tanala: 1,025. Favourite: Imperia. Owners: Mr. Rajendran rep. Rapar's Galloping Stars LLP, Mr. Suchit Jayraj Shah & Mr. Prabhakar Chowdary Tripuraneni. Trainer: D. Netto.

2. PALAMPET PLATE (DIV. I) (1,100M): DUBAI TOUCH (Neeraj Rawal) 1, Blazing Saddle (Ajay K) 2, Dontblockmyway (Vivek G) 3 and Sunny Day (P. Ajeeth K) 4. 5-3/4, 1-1/4 and 2-1/2. Im, 7.72s. ₹13 (w), 12, 86 and 17 (p). SHP: 220, THP: 36, SHW: 13 and 62, FP: 276, Q: 236, Tanala: 1,286. Favourite: Dubai Touch. Owners: Mr. N. Shyam Sunder, Mr. Anil Viswanatha Podaval & Mr. Vara Prasad Reddy. Trainer: N. Rawal.

3. SULTAN PHEROZE PLATE (DIV. II) (1,200M): TURIYA (Akshay Kumar) 1, Bestie (Md. Ekram) 2, Moonlite Rose (Vivek G) 3 and Infinitia (Ashad Asbar) 4. Not run: Beast Master. 8-1/4, 3-1/4 and 2. Im, 13.21s. ₹14 (w), 12, 15 and 12 (p). SHP: 41, THP: 41, SHW: 10 and 31, FP: 60, Q: 58, Tanala: 122. Favourite: Turiya.

4. THREE WISHES PLATE (DIV. I) (1,400M): GOLDEN INZIO (Ajay Kumar) 1, Exponent (Nakha) 2, Decan Ranger (Shivansh) 3 and Politics (G. Nareesh) 4. Not run: Balahaka. 2-3/4, 2-3/4 and 2. Im, 30.86s. ₹30 (w), 11, 17 and 28 (p). SHP: 39, THP: 78, SHW: 23 and 29, FP: 216, Q: 94, Tanala: 1,025. Favourite: Imperia. Owners: Mr. Manish Jaiswal, Mrs. Candida Tania Jaiswal, Mr. Tulasiram Kaskana & Mr. C.S. Suresh. Trainer: S. Sreekanth.

5. P.G. REDDY MEMORIAL CUP (1,600M): GLORIA (A. Ashad Asbar) 1, Corte Madera (Neeraj) 2, Dapper Look (R.S. Jodha) 3 and China Town (P. Ajeeth K) 4. Neck, 3/4 and 1-1/2. Im, 40.41s. ₹41 (w), 12, 10 and 10 (p). SHP: 31, THP: 37, SHW: 25 and 10, FP: 97, Q: 28, Tanala: 180. Favourite: Corte Madera. Owners: Mr. Aditya P. Thackersey & Col. S.B. Nair. Trainer: L.V.R. Deshmukh.

6. PALAMPET PLATE (DIV. II) (1,100M): PACIFIC HEIGHTS (Vivek G) 1, Zuzza (Ashad Asbar) 2, Sadiya (Kuldeep Jr.) 3 and Bold Beauty (Santosh Raj) 4. 8-1/2, Short Head and 1-1/4. Im, 7.58s. ₹14 (w), 11, 16 and 38 (p). SHP: 20, THP: 85, SHW: 15 and 14, FP: 24, Q: 20, Tanala: 452. Favourite: Pacific Heights. Owner: Mr. M. Ramakrishna Reddy. Trainer: L. D'Silva.

7. BASARA CUP (1,400M): WALKING THUNDER (A. Ashad Asbar) 1, N.R.I Triple Power (Varun) 2, Hawk King (G. Nareesh) 3 and Calabasas (Md. Ekram) 4. Not run: Secret Option. 4, 5-1/2 and 3-1/2. Im, 27.62s. ₹14 (w), 12, 13 and 47 (p). SHP: 24, THP: 99, SHW: 10 and 21, FP: 37, Q: 20, Tanala: 337. Favourite: Walking Thunder. Owner: Mr. Aditya P. Thackersey. Trainer: L.V.R. Deshmukh.

8. ROYAL REVIVE PLATE (1,400M): IMPERIA (P. Ajeeth Kumar) 1, Darling's Boy (Sonu K) 2, Annihilator (Kuldeep Sr.) 3 and Decoy (Mukesh K) 4. Not run: D Minchu. 3/4, 2 and Neck. Im, 29.04s. ₹20 (w), 11, 39 and 16 (p). SHP: 128, THP: 58, SHW: 14 and 72, FP: 471, Q: 278, Tanala: 1,494. Favourite: Imperia. Owners: M/s. Kapil Agrawal & Shailendra Singh. Trainer: Ananta Vatsalya.

Jackpot: (i) 70% ₹ 1,421 (80 tkts.) & 30%: 91 (532 tkts.); (ii) 70%: 429 (1,965 tkts.).

Mini Jackpot: (i) 1,334 (164 tkts.), (ii) 41 (2,573 tkts.).

Treble: (i) 140 (234 tkts.), (ii) 288 (76 tkts.), (iii) 25 (1,895 tkts.).

CLOSELY CONTESTED

It's been toe-to-toe for 25 days... the 2-2 result is probably fair: Stokes



PTI
The series as a whole was just all games going to five days. It's been toe-to-toe for 25 days and two very good teams who have thrown everything at each other and leaving nothing out there. I guess from a cricket fan's point of view 2-2 is probably fair — England Test captain Ben Stokes after India's six-run win at The Oval.

SWEET SUCCESS

Team India registers its narrowest victory in Test history



GETTY IMAGES
India scripted its narrowest victory in Test history in terms of runs after beating England in the fifth and final Test at The Oval on Monday. The six-run triumph was also the first time the team registered a Test win by a single digit margin. The 13-run victory over Australia in Mumbai in 2004 was its previous narrowest win.

DREAM DUO

Bowlers like Siraj and Prasidh make captaincy look easy: Gill



GETTY IMAGES
Mohammed Siraj is a captain's dream. Gave it his all every ball and every spell he bowled. Two-all is a fair reflection. It shows how passionate both teams were. When you have bowlers like Siraj and Prasidh (Krishna), captaincy looks easy. I think the way we responded today [Monday] was magnificent — Shubman Gill.

CONFIDENT

Didn't stop believing even when Root and Brook were batting: Gill



GETTY IMAGES
The way Harry Brook and Joe Root were going, not many teams in the world would have given themselves a chance. But this Indian team believes that whenever we have some kind of an opening, we can get through that opening — India captain Shubman Gill about the team's indomitable spirit.

Siraj scripts redemption tale as India levels series

The pacer makes amends for dropping centurion Brook by producing a magical spell as Gill's men hold their nerve on the final day; Prasidh chips in with a four-for to complete an epic victory

INDIA IN ENGLAND

Shayan Acharya
LONDON

Mohammed Siraj couldn't hold back his tears as Dhruv Jurel ran in and hugged him. Shubman Gill stood quietly for a moment, looking up at the sky, before the teammates rushed towards him to celebrate. Prasidh Krishna waved towards the packed stands as the tricolour fluttered high.

Monday morning at The Oval felt surreal.

India came from behind to pull off a dramatic six-run win against England in the fifth Test and level the series 2-2.

In the Bazball era, not many pinned hopes on a young Indian team when the series got underway, but Shubman Gill's men showed plenty of steel. And, the final day of the series was no different as the Indian bowlers, spearheaded by Siraj, delivered a performance for the ages.

Siraj, ignoring workload management calls and not making a fuss about the quick turnaround time bet-

Escape to victory

Every delivery was an event at The Oval on Monday. A ball-by-ball account:

England began the final day at 339 for six in 76.2 overs, needing 35 runs with four wickets in hand	BOWLER	OVER NO.	THE OVER	SCORE
	Prasidh	77	4 4 0 0	347/6
	Siraj	78	0 0 W 0 0 2	349/7
	Prasidh	79	0 0 0 1 0 3	353/7
	Siraj	80	0 0 0 1lb W 0	354/8
	Prasidh	81	0 1 0 0 0 0	355/8
	Siraj	82	1 0 0 0 0 0	356/8
	Prasidh	83	0 0 0 1 0 W	357/9
	Siraj	84	0 6 0 0 0 1b	364/9
	Prasidh	85	2 0 0 0 0 1	367/9
	Siraj	86	W	367

ween the fixtures, got the ball to swing amidst a drizzle. He picked up three wickets in a challenging spell with the old ball and, riding on his five-wicket haul, India pulled off a famous win.

In pursuit of a massive 374, England needed 35 on the final day with four wickets in hand. There was also a chance for the hosts to win a Test series against India for the first time since its 4-1 triumph at home in 2018.

But with Siraj and Prasidh operating in tandem, England's lower-order

looked jittery and as the Indian fans cheered for their team, the visitors did everything possible to snatch victory from the jaws of defeat.

Quick strikes

In fine rhythm, Siraj nicked off Jamie Smith before trapping Jamie Overton, who started off the day with a couple of boundaries, leg-before. The pressure grew further as Prasidh castled Josh Tongue shortly.

England had to struggle for every run, but with Gus Atkinson hanging in there

SCOREBOARD

INDIA — 1ST INNINGS
224 in 69.4 overs
ENGLAND — 1ST INNINGS
247 in 51.2 overs
INDIA — 2ND INNINGS
396 in 88 overs
ENGLAND — 2ND INNINGS
Target 374
Zak Crawley b Siraj 14 (36b, 2x4), Ben Duckett c Rahul b Prasidh 54 (83b, 6x4), Ollie Pope lbw b Siraj 27 (34b, 5x4), Joe Root c Jurel b Prasidh 105 (152b, 12x4), Harry Brook c Siraj b Akash 111 (98b, 14x4, 2x6), Jacob Bethell b Prasidh 5 (31b, 1x4), Jamie Smith c Jurel b Siraj 2 (20b), Jamie Overton lbw b Siraj 9 (17b, 2x4), Gus Atkinson b Siraj 17 (29b, 1x6), Josh Tongue b Prasidh 0 (12b),

and Chris Woakes, walking out to bat with his left arm in a sling and bringing back memories of 41 years ago when the late Malcolm Marshall batted with one hand, there was still a slim chance.

Perfect yorker

But, in the end, Siraj's tenacity prevailed over England's valiant fight as his perfect yorker rattled Atkinson's off-stump. It was also redemption for Siraj as he had dropped centurion Harry Brook on 19 on day four of the Test.

The last time all games

Chris Woakes (not out) 0 (0b); Extras (b-2, lb-9, nb-1, w-11): 23; Total (in 85.1 overs): 367.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-50 (Crawley, 13.5 overs), 2-82 (Duckett, 22.4), 3-106 (Pope, 27.3), 4-301 (Brook, 62.4), 5-332 (Bethell, 70.4), 6-337 (Root, 72.6), 7-347 (Smith, 77.3), 8-354 (Overton, 79.5), 9-357 (Tongue, 82.6).

INDIA BOWLING
Akash 20-4-85-1, Prasidh 27-3-126-4, Siraj 30.1-6-104-5, Washington 4-0-19-0, Jadeja 4-0-22-0.

India won by six runs, five-match series drawn 2-2.

Player-of-the-Match: Siraj.
Player-of-the-Series: India: Gill; **England:** Brook.

in a five-Test series went to the final day was in 2017-18 during the Ashes in Australia. And, the inaugural edition of the Anderson-Tendulkar Trophy will forever be remembered for the fierce competitiveness between the two teams despite a spate of injuries, and of course, for being an absolutely perfect advertisement for the game's longest format.

There were initial apprehension about India's chances, but with the players giving it their all, it, indeed, was a series to savour.



The final nail: Siraj castles Atkinson to seal one of India's finest Test wins. GETTY IMAGES

The most rewarding format: Gill

Shayan Acharya
LONDON

As Shubman Gill's first assignment as India's Test captain turned out to be a memorable one with his team coming from behind to level the series against England, the skipper made it clear that there should not be any changes to the longest format of the game.

"I think Test cricket should be as it is. In my opinion, it is the most rewarding and satisfying format. You work the hardest to be able to get a win and the best thing about this format is that it always gives you a second chance, which none of the other formats give," Gill said on Monday after India won the fifth and final Test of the Anderson-Tendulkar Trophy.

"So, if you keep working hard, if you keep doing the right things, there is always a second chance...", he said.

After losing the opening fixture in Leeds, India won the second Test in Birmingham, before going down at Lord's in the third.

However, a draw in Manchester meant the series wasn't over.

And with a bunch of youngsters giving it their all, India created history at The Oval, beating England by six wickets.

Before the series got underway, the right-hander said that he wouldn't let



All square at The Oval: India staged a stunning comeback to draw the series on a gripping final day which saw Woakes braving injury in an attempt to deny Gill & Co. AFP, GETTY IMAGES

captaincy affect his batting.

He kept his word with 754 runs in the series, including a double hundred and three hundreds.

As a leader, he had to take care of the mental health of the players and

that helped him.

"If you think too much about others, your own pressure goes away. You are always thinking about someone else. Even in captaincy or when I was batting, I felt that. Because, thinking about others, I

didn't feel much pressure on myself," he said.

"I was always thinking about what I can do for the team. How can I help a person who is feeling low? So all of these things helped me to be able to take pressure from myself..."



Test cricket... absolute goosebumps

We'll win some, we'll lose some... but we'll never surrender! Well done, boys!

GAUTAM GAMBHIR

Test cricket... absolute goosebumps. Series 2-2. Performance 10/10! Supermen from India! What a win!

SACHIN TENDULKAR

What a series! Stunning performance from Siraj and Prasidh who held their nerve. Congratulations to Gill and the team for a great series

ANIL KUMBLE

Exceptional series from Jadeja, Washington, Pant... so much consistency from this young team

SOURAV GANGULY

Resilience and determination from Siraj and Prasidh has given us this phenomenal victory. Special mention to Siraj who will put everything on the line for the team

VIRAT KOHLI

I bowl every ball for the country, not for myself: Siraj

Shayan Acharya
LONDON

Mohammed Siraj woke up at six in the morning on Monday, took out his phone and searched on the internet for a wallpaper with the word 'believe' written on it.

The first thing that he came across was a picture of Cristiano Ronaldo in the Manchester United colours. And for the next few minutes, he looked at the picture and muttered the word 'believe' at least a couple of times.

Once the picture made it to his wallpaper, Siraj kept looking at it until reaching The Oval. "I usually wake up at eight, but today, I got up early. So I Googled this picture and downloaded it, because I knew I could do it for my country. It's important to believe in yourself," he said, after claiming a five-for and guiding India to an incredible six-run win in the fifth Test.

With Jasprit Bumrah featuring in just three Tests to manage his workload, Siraj stepped up and backed himself to carry out the role of the senior pacer. Not making a fuss about workload or a quick turnaround time, Siraj bowled 185.3 overs in the series — 1,113 deliveries to be specific — and finished as the leading wicket-taker of the

Anderson-Tendulkar Trophy in numbers

BATTING	M	Inns	Runs	HS	Avg	100s/50s
Gill	5	10	754	269	75.40	4/0
Root	5	9	537	150	67.12	3/1
Rahul	5	10	532	137	53.20	2/2
Jadeja	5	10	516	107*	86.00	1/5
Brook	5	9	481	158	53.44	2/2
BOWLING	M	Inns	Wkts	BBI	SR	SWI
Siraj	5	9	23	6/70	48.39	2
Tongue	3	6	19	5/125	40.10	1
Stokes	4	8	17	5/72	49.41	1
Bumrah	3	5	14	5/74	51.28	2
Prasidh	3	6	14	4/62	45.00	0

HOW THE SERIES PANNED OUT



Anderson-Tendulkar Trophy with 23 scalps.

"To be honest, my body is fine right now. It has been almost 186 overs in this series. But when you play for your country you give everything and you don't think about whether

you bowled six overs or nine overs. I believe that I bowl every ball for the country and not for myself," Siraj said, adding with a smile: "You play for the country and give your everything, the rest is not in your control."

INBRIEF



Farhan-Ayub stand propels Pakistan to series win

Sahibzada Farhan and Saim Ayub combined for a 138-run opening stand as Pakistan beat West Indies by 13 runs in the third T20I at Lauderhill, Florida, on Sunday to clinch the series 2-1. WI batter Roston Chase became the first player to get retired out during a men's T20I featuring two Full Member teams.

The scores: Pakistan 189/4 in 20 overs (Farhan 74, Ayub 66) bt West Indies 176/6 in 20 overs (Athanaze 60, Rutherford 51). **Toss:** Pakistan; **PoM:** Farhan; **PoS:** Nawaz.

Sitender beats Hiura, wins 60kg freestyle gold

Sitender defeated Japan's Rihito Hiura 9-4 in the men's 60kg freestyle final at the World under-17 wrestling championships in Athens. India won a gold and a silver in freestyle competitions.

Kerala visit off for Messi-led Argentina

Argentina's football team, led by Lionel Messi, will not visit Kerala, state Sports Minister V. Abdurahiman said on Monday. The minister had earlier insisted Argentina side would visit the state, and that the sponsor had already paid the match fee for the event. He said on Monday, the team was facing difficulties in visiting the state in October, but the sponsor responded "we are interested only in a visit in the month of October".

Messi sidelined indefinitely with minor muscle injury

Inter Miami captain Lionel Messi will be sidelined indefinitely with what the MLS team described as a "minor muscle injury in his right leg" on Sunday. The 38-year-old legend suffered an upper right leg injury in the 11th minute in Miami's home win over Mexico's Necaxa on Saturday on penalties in a Leagues Cup match.

Divya gets past Ananya in the first round

Divya Bhardwaj fought her way past Ananya Jain 4-6, 6-3, 7-6(4) in the first round of the ₹100,000 AITA women's tennis tournament at the DLTA Complex on Monday. In the pre-quarterfinals, Divya will challenge the top seed Mahika Khanna.

The results (first round): Mahika Khanna bt Vaishnavi Singh 6-0, 6-2; Divya Bhardwaj bt Ananya Jain 4-6, 6-3, 7-6(4); Shatakshi Choudhary bt Manshi Singh 5-7, 6-2, 6-2; Jennifer Luikham bt Ridhima Singh 6-0, 6-2; Riya Sachdeva bt Ayushi Tanwar 6-2, 6-0; Snigdha Patibandla bt Durganshi Kumar 6-3, 4-6, 6-2; Mahi Trivedi bt Sowkhya Gaddam 6-1, 6-2; Aditi Tyagi bt Divya Sharma 6-2, 6-1; Shagun Kumari bt Vitula Velumani 6-3, 1-6, 6-3.

Yashika Shokeen bt Shatakshika Sahayak 6-2, 6-3; Bhumika Dahiya bt Arushi Raval 6-1, 7-6(5); Jeetesh Kumari bt Vennela Reddy 5-7, 6-4, 6-3; Suryanshi Shekhawat bt Suhani Gaur 6-3, 4-6, 6-3; Ruma Gaikaiwari bt Hansika Singh 6-1, 6-0; Jasmine Rawat bt Thaniya Gogulamanda 6-3, 6-1; Samriti Punyani bt Dyuti Jain 6-2, 6-2.

HI names men's team for tour of Australia

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

India named a 24-member men's hockey team to be led by ace drag-flicker Harmanpreet Singh for the four-match tour of Australia, starting on August 15 in Perth.

The team: Goalkeepers: Krishan B. Pathak, Suraj Karker. **Defenders:** Sumit, Jarmanpreet Singh, Harmanpreet Singh (Capt.), Sanjay, Amit Rohidas, Nilam Sanjeev Xess, Jugraj Singh, C. Poovanna.

Midfielders: Rajinder Singh, Raj Kumar Pal, Hardik Singh, Manpreet Singh, Vivek Sagar Prasad, Rabichandra Singh Moirangthem, Vishnu Kant Sing; **Forwards:** Mandeeep Singh, Shilanand Lakra Abhishek, Sukhjeet Singh, Dilpreet Singh, Selvam Karthi, Aditya Lalage.

Budhilal leads India's strong showing on day one

He says the waves weren't as consistent as the team had hoped; Kishore (12.17) and Srikanth (13.70) also advance to the next round; the host will aim to carry this momentum into the next rounds

SURFING

Tarun Shastry
CHENNAI

Ramesh Budihal led India's charge on the opening day of the Fourth Asian Surfing Championships 2025, held at the iconic point break in Mamallapuram here on Monday.

Budihal posted an impressive 12.33 points, winning his heat by 4.93 points, and cruised comfortably into Round Three.

He was joined by fellow Indians Kishore Kumar, who scored 12.17 (winning by 3.77 points), and D. Srikanth, who advanced with a solid 13.70 (winning margin: 1.44).

Reflecting on his performance and the day's wave conditions, Budihal said: "I was really disappointed last year – not being part of the Championships hit hard. But this year, I set clear goals and worked



Poise: Budihal posted an impressive 12.33 points. R. RAGU

hard to reach them."

"Today, the waves weren't as consistent as we'd hoped. A week ago, we had a great swell, but now it's dropped. Still, the condi-

tions were decent – just not predictable. In a heat, you have to adapt and surf with whatever comes your way. I'm happy I made it through," Budihal added.

Team India will aim to carry this momentum into the next rounds, eyeing a strong finish in what promises to be a high-stakes week of competition.

Doseja steers West Delhi Lions to facile victory

DPL

Sports Bureau
NEW DELHI

Ayush Doseja's unbeaten 84 helped West Delhi Lions make light work of a target of 209 against East Delhi Riders in the Delhi Premier League at Arun Jaitley Stadium on Monday.

The left-hand batter's sparkling knock at No. 3 steered the Nitish Rana-led Lions to victory in 17.3 overs with seven wickets in hand. Opener Krish Yadav struck 62 off just 29 balls to lay the foundation for the run chase.

At the mid-innings break, East Delhi Riders, which won its opening game of the second season versus South Delhi Superstarz, seemed to be in a commanding position with a total of 208 for four. Skipper Anuj Rawat led the way with an unbeaten 73 that took 38 deliveries.

In reply, Ankit Kumar's wicket fell in the very first over, but Yadav and Doseja took the initiative and stitched together a stand of 114 runs for the second



Holding fort: Doseja anchored the Lions' chase. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

wicket to tilt the scales in their favour.

Central Delhi posts win

Later in the day, Central Delhi Kings beat New Delhi Tigers by nine wickets to notch up its second straight win. The victory was set up by the bowlers, who restricted Tigers to 124 for nine. Gavinsh Khurana

starred with three wickets.

The scores:

East Delhi Riders 208/4 in 20 overs (Anuj Rawat 73 n.o., Arpit Rana 44, Mayank Rawat 40) lost to West Delhi Lions 214/3 in 17.3 overs (Ayush Doseja 84 n.o., Krish Yadav 62, Nitish Rana 39). New Delhi Tigers 124/9 in 20 overs (Gavinsh Khurana 3/20) lost to Central Delhi Kings 125/1 in 13 overs (Yash Dhull 55 n.o., Siddharth Joon 45).



Karthikeyan. FILE PHOTO: B. JOTHI RAMALINGAM

Karthikeyan replaces Fedoseev in Masters section

Sports Bureau
CHENNAI

Grandmaster Karthikeyan Murali joins the Masters field at the Quantbox Chennai Grand Masters 2025 to be held here from August 6 following the withdrawal of Vladimir Fedoseev.

The field: Masters: Arjun Erigaisi, Vidit Gujrathi, Anish Giri, Jorden van Foreest, Nihal Sarin, Vincent Keymer, Awonder Liang, Ray Robson, Karthikeyan Murali, Pranav Venkatesh. **Challengers:** Aryan Chopra, Abhimanyu Puranik, B. Adhiban, M. Pranesh, Dipatyam Ghosh, Pa. Iniyian, D. Harika, Leon Mendonca, R. Vaishali, G.B. Harshavardhan.

TN, Karnataka teams win freestyle relays

AQUATICS

Sports Bureau
BENGALURU

Tamil Nadu and Karnataka emerged the boys' and girls' Group-III freestyle relay (4x50m) champions respectively on the opening day of the 41st National sub-junior Aquatic Championships here on Monday.

The Tamil Nadu quartet of N. Rohith, Jitesh Mohana Krishnan, Mohammed Zidan Jawed and A.P. Arya Sathar clocked 1:57.07s to beat Manipur while the Karnataka girls team was powered by Nyra Bopanna, J.P. Prapthi, Shwiti Diwakar Suvarna and Stuti Singh as it came home in



The victorious Karnataka Group-III freestyle relay team.

2:01.26s.

On the day, Manipur boys bagged four individual golds – Kojiam Athoiba Singh (200m freestyle, 2:09.63s and 100m butterfly, 1:01.58s), Hemanshu Nahakpam (200m medley, 2:23.80s) and Maisnam Arindam Singh (100m breaststroke, 1:15.08s).

Men's teams for World wrestling c'ships named

Sports Bureau

Paris Olympics bronze medalist Aman Sehrawat (57kg), former Worlds silver medalist Deepak Punia (92kg) and Budapest Ranking Series gold medalist Sujeet Kalkal (65kg) were among the freestyle wrestlers who emerged as the winners in their respective weight categories at the selection trials for the World championships, held in Lucknow on Mon-

day. The World championships will take place in Zagreb from Sept. 13 to 21.

The squad: Freestyle: Aman Sehrawat (57kg), Udit (61kg), Sujeet Kalkal (65kg), Rohit (70kg), Jaideep (74kg), Amit (79kg), Mukul (86kg), Deepak Punia (92kg), Vicky (97kg) and Rajat (125kg).

Greco-Roman: Anil Mor (55kg), Suraj (60kg), Sunny Kumar (63kg), Anil (67kg), Ankit Gulia (72kg), Aman (77kg), Rahul (82kg), Karan Kamboj (87kg), Nitesh (97kg) and Sonu (130kg).

Bagan cruises past BSF; Real Kashmir posts win



Marksmen: Colaco celebrates one of his strikes. DEBASISH BHADURI

DURAND CUP

Amitabha Das Sharma
KOLKATA

Mohun Bagan Super Giant scored a convincing 4-0 win over Border Security Force FC in its second Group-B league outing of the 134th Durand Cup at the Kishore Bharati Stadium on Monday.

Liston Colaco netted a brace while Manvir Singh and substitute Sahal Abdul Samad came up with a goal each to complete Bagan's tally.

The win saw Bagan, which beat Mohammedan Sporting 3-1 in its first outing, join debutant Diamond Harbour FC (DHFC) on top of the group standings with six points each. But the latter remains the leader with a better goal difference.

DHFC just needs a draw in the final group league

match against Bagan (on August 9) to secure the top spot and ensure its passage to the quarterfinals.

Earlier, midfielder Rohen Singh produced a spectacular long-range winner as Real Kashmir FC edged local challenger TRAU FC 2-1 in a Group-F match in Imphal.

Sealing it

Two quick goals, first from Real's Marat Tareck and then the reply from TRAU's Afridi Buyamayum set up the contest as 20,000 fans turned up to support the local side. But Rohen's 64th-minute pile-driver from outside the box sealed the deal for Real.

The results: Group-B: Mohun Bagan SG 4 (Manvir Singh 24, Liston Colaco 53, 58, Sahal Samad 61) bt BSF FC 0.

Group F: Real Kashmir FC 2 (Marat Tareck 24, Rohen 64) bt TRAU FC 1 (Afridi Buyamayum 26).

Rathika battles past Sanya in first round

SQUASH

Sports Bureau

Rathika Seelan battled past Sanya Vats 7-11, 12-10, 7-11, 11-3, 16-14 in the women's first round of the HCL \$9,000 PSA Tour squash tournament at Sawai Man Singh Stadium in Jaipur on Monday.

The results (first round): Men: Ayaan Wazirali bt Mohit Bhat 11-7, 11-6, 9-11, 6-2 (retired); Aryaveer Diwan bt Youssef El

Sherif (Egy) 13-11, 8-11, 11-9, 11-9; Sandesh Ravikumar bt Tai Jun Kuan (Mas) 11-6, 11-6, 13-11; Om Semwal w.o. Marwan Tamir (Egy); Saif Refai (Egy) bt Rahul Baitha 11-7, 11-6, 8-11, 6-1 (retired).

Women: Sunita Patel bt Chhavi Saran 11-9, 11-5, 8-11, 11-4; Pooja Aarti bt Aradhana Kasturi 11-2, 11-5, 11-3; Isha Srivastava bt Yoojin Shin (Kor) 11-6, 11-4, 11-4; Rathika Seelan bt Sanya Vats 7-11, 12-10, 7-11, 11-3, 16-14; Anika Dubey bt Tanishka Jain 11-9, 7-11, 11-8, 10-12, 16-14; Unnati Tripathi bt Mona Tamer (Egy) 11-8, 11-5, 1-11, 11-5.



ANI

A gripping series and a fantastic finale

When the dust settled, there was nothing to separate India and England; the visiting team had numerous heroes during the thrill-a-minute 2-2 ride; the sensational victory at The Oval ensured that the series ended with honours even

R. Kaushik
LONDON

How do you describe this series? How do you even begin to start to describe this series? A classic seems too cliched, an epic too obvious.

For five Tests and 25 days and more than 70 sessions, two teams at different ends of the experience spectrum went toe to toe. Shots were fired, counter measures deployed, counterpunches thrown. Sparks flew, tempers frayed, sometimes, shoulders made contact.

When the dust settled, there was nothing to separate England and India. Absolutely nothing. England, the hosts, had a greater volume of Test work coming into this series but India, unyielding India with a youngish batting group and a first-time captain, more than held their own, bouncing back with unbelievable resilience every time they appeared out for the count.

With a little more awareness and a little more luck, India could easily have wrapped their hands around the inaugural Anderson-Tendulkar Trophy. They won more sessions than their seasoned opponents, but the sessions lost came back to haunt them. It appeared as if that trend would spill over to the fifth Test too, though India didn't quite lose the session so much as squander a moment. It was a moment that could have hurt them badly, but such is the unbelievable competitiveness of the man who was the principal actor of that misstep that not even the cricketing gods could stop from smiling down benevolently at him. Finally.

India had numerous heroes during this thrill-a-minute 2-2 ride. Skipper Shubman Gill, who stacked up 754 runs in his first series in that capacity, the most by an Indian captain ever and the second most by an Indian, after Sunil Gavaskar's 774 in the Caribbean in 1971. K.L. Rahul, who compiled twin hundreds in the same series for the first time in his 11-year Test career. Ravindra Jadeja, the third entrant into the 500-run club, who took consistency to a new level with five half-centuries and a ton in nine innings. Rishabh Pant, who slammed two hundreds and three fifties, the last of them on a broken foot in his final innings of the series in Manchester. Yashasvi Jaiswal, who started and ended the series with hundreds. Washington Sundar, who was the hero with the ball at Lord's and with the bat in Manchester with a match-saving unbeaten hundred as well

as at the Oval, where his second-innings fifty in the last batter's company pushed England's target from a challenging to an arduous one. Jasprit Bumrah, who picked up 14 wickets despite playing only three Tests. Prasidh Krishna, same number of Tests, same number of wickets as Bumrah, at a higher economy rate but also at a better strike-rate.

And, of course, Mohammed Siraj. Siraj wore a bemused, slightly offended smile when, during the course of a question, the questioner said he hadn't had a good Border-Gavaskar Trophy series in Australia in the winter. "Sir, I took 20 wickets in that series," he replied, without malice, without a hint of anger or annoyance. So he did, but because Bumrah finished with 32 wickets, many of them top-order scalps unlike here in England, the perception was that India's bowling attack was a one-man army.

Far from it. Siraj was the rock around which Bumrah built his success. Seldom has one man bowled so well for so long and had so little success. Siraj's luck had to turn. It just had to. That it finally did here in England, where he finished with an all-comers' high 23 wickets, has elevated his standing, enhanced his reputation. He has gone from sometime with a huge heart to someone with a huge heart and immense skills, because unfortunately, we live in a world where skill is measured by numbers. Twenty-three has a nice ring to it, apparently.

Driving force
Especially once India lost Pant, Siraj had to be the engine room. The driving force. The enforcer with the ball when Bumrah wasn't around - he wasn't for the two wins, in Birmingham and at The Oval, in what must be put down to coincidence - but also the one to gee up his colleagues, to ensure that energy levels didn't drop, that the fight wasn't given up before the fat lady had sung, that the towel wasn't thrown prematurely. Without Virat Kohli, he had to be the one to orchestrate the crowd, to get them to lift their decibel levels so that that could in turn lift the team when it was deflated, when it felt that things were slipping away from them. Siraj performed both those roles with aplomb, but never lost sight of the bigger goal, which was to deliver the goods for his team.

Again perhaps coincidentally, both his five-wicket hauls came when Bumrah wasn't in the XI. In Birmingham, his six for 70 in the first innings opened up a 180-run lead that translated into a

series-levelling 336-run victory. At The Oval, with the match having seemingly gotten away from them following the Harry Brook-Joe Root fourth-wicket carnage, in part because he himself offered Brook a 'life' with the batter on 19, Siraj found a second wind to finish with five for 104, among them three for nine in 4.1 outstanding overs under great pressure on Monday morning.

India had only 35 runs to play with on the last of 25 days of this riveting series. They had to prise out four wickets to win the Test and square the series, which didn't give Gill, or Siraj and Prasidh, much to work with. But that's all they had; in the end, that's all they needed. In 56 minutes, they encapsulated the series in a nutshell with Siraj as the primary protagonist, and the valiant, wounded Chris Woakes providing a stirring subtext.

Those 56 minutes tested Gill's composure and tactical nous. It will be fair to say that on both counts, he wasn't found wanting. In Leeds, he was understandably a half-step behind the game, chasing the ball with his fields and looking a little lost when England hunted down 371. But as the series progressed and as his bat caught fire, he became more assertive, if not authoritative. He is still a work in progress, but it is impressive to see both the work and the progress. Gill is unafraid to seek out counsel, either from his deputy Pant or the vastly experienced Rahul, who has led India in all three formats previously and is an excellent thinker who relished the responsibility of being the senior statesman of the side.

That status was thrust on Rahul by the retirements of Rohit Sharma, Virat Kohli and R. Ashwin at various stages in the last eight months. Gill's elevation as Rohit's successor didn't come without raised eyebrows; if he hasn't already silenced the Doubting Thomases, he most certainly won't in the future, but to the young man's credit, he doesn't really care about all those things. That's not to say that he is indifferent or cocooned in his own bubble, that he is disrespectful and self-obsessed. He seems to know what he wants, and how to go about achieving what he wants. His tactics (which, to be fair, aren't all entirely his own alone) might be questioned, but there is a Gill logic to his methodology and Indian cricket must trust his instincts, now more than ever, because he has emphatically earned his spurs.

Fears that India would be blown away in the absence of their two immediate past captains - not so much Ashwin,

because he hasn't been the same force away from Asia and the Caribbean - proved spectacularly unfounded. Giant question marks were hung around India's batting; after all, Jaiswal, Sai Sudharsan, Karun Nair, Washington Sundar, Abhimanyu Easwaran and Dhruv Jurel hadn't played a Test on English soil, Gill himself had played just three and didn't have the greatest record outside Asia. But England's predilection towards Bazball necessitated flat tracks which allowed India's young batters to find their feet right from the first innings of the first Test at Headingley. While it will be facile to pronounce that they didn't miss Kohli and/or Rohit, even they will acknowledge that their task was made easier by the surfaces that encouraged them to get into the series at the first time of asking.

In a series of many positives, India has some problem areas that can't be wished away. Such as Bumrah's fragile back and the obvious need to manage him. How his now-on, now-off avatar affects the team, the composition and mindset of the bowling group. And, as importantly, how to string together a bunch of fast bowlers like Kohli and Ravi Shastri did some seven years or so back, which allowed India to compete on an equal footing once they travelled outside the subcontinent.

Clearly, Akash Deep was out of his physical fitness depth despite his ten-wicket match haul in Birmingham. By the end of the Oval Test, he had nothing left to give, which was disappointing because he had missed the previous game with a groin/hip niggle and therefore didn't have a great deal of workload coming into the decider. He did weigh in with a crucial 66 in the second innings as the nightwatcher, which was commendable, but his primary task is looking for, and taking, wickets. His lack of fitness percolated to his fielding too. Whether India can afford to carry more than one bowler at less than peak physical conditioning can't be a topic up for debate. There can be no negotiations on that front; an exception can be made for Bumrah because, well, he is Bumrah, but there can only be one Bumrah, right?

Comparisons are being drawn with the Ashes of two years back here in England, which also ended 2-2. The hosts came to the final Test at The Oval needing a victory to square the series; this time, the shoe was on the other foot, and India did an England, with their narrowest margin of victory by runs in Test history. Seal this series in your mind, and play it on loop. Because you will be hard pressed for an encore.

THE GIST

- ▼ With a little more awareness and a little more luck, India could easily have wrapped their hands around the inaugural Anderson-Tendulkar Trophy. They won more sessions than their seasoned opponents, but the sessions lost came back to haunt them
- ▼ Fears that India would be blown away in the absence of their two immediate past captains - not so much Ashwin, because he hasn't been the same force away from Asia and the Caribbean - proved spectacularly unfounded
- ▼ In a series of many positives, India has some problem areas that can't be wished away such as Bumrah's fragile back and the obvious need to manage him

