

DMK MLA arrested over remarks on T.N. CM Vijay

The Hindu Bureau
THOOTHUKUDI/CHENNAI

Tiruchendur DMK MLA and former Fisheries Minister Anitha R. Radhakrishnan was arrested at Authoor in Thoothukudi district on Friday for allegedly making remarks against Tamil Nadu Chief Minister C. Joseph Vijay at a public meeting held on June 20.

The arrest came shortly after the Madras High Court dismissed an anticipatory bail petition filed by Mr. Radhakrishnan in a case registered by the Authoor police.

Mr. Radhakrishnan on Friday evening alleged that while he was in police custody, there were attempts to pressure him to resign from his post as an MLA and join the ruling Tamilanga Vetti Kazhagam.

After the arrest, Mr. Radhakrishnan was taken to the office of the District Superintendent of Police in Thoothukudi for further investigation. After nearly five-and-a-half hours of inquiry, he was brought out of the SP office at around 6:15 p.m. and taken to Thoothukudi Government Medical College and Hospital (TKGMCH) for a medical examination.

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Centre opens power bids to four China-linked firms

The Finance Ministry says the exemption is valid for two years and should not be treated as a precedent; decision follows a request from the Power Ministry and inter-ministerial consultations

T.C.A. Sharad Raghavan
NEW DELHI

In a sign of a continuing thaw in India's stance on Chinese investments, the government has issued an order allowing four companies with Chinese ownership or links to bid for projects tendered by the Indian government in the power sector.

The order, dated June 24, 2026, was issued by the Procurement Policy Division of the Finance Ministry's Expenditure Department and has been reviewed by *The Hindu*.

Power Ministry request
In January, the Power Ministry had written to the Finance Ministry seeking an exemption from a previous order which mandated that companies located in countries that share a land border with India must register with the Indian government before they can bid for critical public power projects.

The approval of this registration was solely at the discretion of the government. Following this, the Committee of Secretaries and the Registration Committee under the Department

Power play

The Centre has eased procurement restrictions in the power sector, granting a limited exemption to select Chinese-linked companies

■ TBEA Energy India, Nanjing Electric India, New Northeast Electric India, and Taikai Electric (India) were exempted from restrictions bidding for govt. power projects

■ Multi-Ministry decision: The Committee of Secretaries and the Registration Committee under the DPIIT deliberated on the matter before passing its order

ment for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) deliberated on the matter before passing the relaxation order.

Two-year exemption
Under the latest order, four companies – TBEA Energy India, Nanjing Electric India, New Northeast Electric India, and Taikai Electric (India) – have been granted exemption from the restrictions for a two-year period.

The Procurement Policy Division's order, however, made sure to state that "such exemption for firms may not be considered as a precedent [sic]".

TBEA Energy India is

the wholly-owned subsidiary of the Chinese company TBEA Group, while Nanjing Electric India is a wholly-owned subsidiary of the Chinese power equipment manufacturer Nanjing Electric. New Northeast Electric India has technology transfer ties with Chinese power sector companies, and Taikai Electric (India) is a subsidiary of the China-headquartered Taikai Group.

Earlier relaxations
This order also builds on other partial relaxations the government has recently offered to companies that have investments from China and other

India-Japan ties should not target third party: China

BEIJING

China on Friday said bilateral ties between countries should not undermine the interests of any nation, a day after India and Japan unveiled initiatives during Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi's visit. "Cooperation between countries should enhance understanding," a Foreign Ministry spokesperson said. » PAGE 8

countries that share a land border with India.

In May, the Finance Ministry had notified new rules to allow overseas companies with Chinese shareholding of up to 10% to invest in India under the automatic route, rather than first having to obtain government approval.

This was a relaxation made to the 'Press Note 3' that the Indian government had issued in 2020, ostensibly to prevent opportunistic takeovers and acquisitions of distressed Indian companies due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

CONGRESS SLAMS MODI
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Eight held in Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh over 'links' with JeM

Abhinav Deshpande
AHMEDABAD

Eight persons, including two teenagers, have been arrested by the Gujarat Anti-Terrorist Squad (ATS) for their alleged links with the Pakistan-based terror outfit Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM), officials said on Friday.

They were arrested from Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh in simultaneous operations on Thursday. ATS officials said they were trying to establish a Jaish network in Gujarat and other parts of the country, and planning terror attacks. The arrested accused have been identified as Mudassir Ghaziwala, 22; Ibrahim Ghagha, 30; Zakariya Durani Mohammed Ammar Ghagha, 21; Ahmed Gajiwala, 19; Mohammed Abdul Saadi, 22; Mufi Faujan Dauwa, 40; Bilal Durani Ghagha, 18; and Mohammed Amin Palanpur, 21. "They are residents of Gujarat's Patan, Navsari and Banaskantha districts, and Dewas district in Madhya Pradesh. They are members of the banned terror organisation Jaish-e-Mohammed and were working on its behalf to set up an active terror network in Gujarat," an officer told *The Hindu*.

The accused have been booked under relevant provisions of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967, and the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita. Officials said over 250 pieces of jihadi literature were recovered from them.

The officer alleged that the accused were planning terror attacks in Gujarat and other parts of the country. They were also involved in recruiting members, propagating the organisation's extremist ideology, and creating a support network to carry out both ongoing and future plans, he said.

Investigators said that to execute terrorist acts on behalf of the Jaish in Gujarat, the group received ₹3 lakh, which they used to buy an old car. They were also instructed to arrange a safe hideout by renting a small house. Another officer said they functioned as a close-knit group and carried out activities in coordination. "Their role was to provide logistical support and shelter to operational teams," he said.

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IN BRIEF



Channi presses for Punjab Cong. president post

NEW DELHI

Punjab Congress's revamp has triggered fresh turbulence, with former CM Charanjit Singh Channi convening a meeting of party leaders to press the high command to appoint him as the State unit chief. » Page 11

TMC factions fight over party headquarters

KOLKATA

The tussle between two camps of Trinamool Congress (TMC) manifested on Friday on Kolkata's streets with the faction led by Leader of the Opposition Ritabrata Banerjee occupying and locking the party headquarters. » Page 4

SC stays directive on CAG audit of Delhi discoms

NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Friday stayed an Appellate Tribunal for Electricity order that had set aside a Delhi Electricity Regulatory Commission direction for a Comptroller and Auditor General audit of the Capital's electricity distribution companies (discoms). » Page 2



MANIPUR VIOLENCE

Shah to review security situation in State today

STATES » PAGE 4



FIFA WORLD CUP

Portugal prevails over Croatia

SPORT » PAGE 17

THE NEW MANDATE

Inside CBSE's language conundrum

The promise and pitfalls of implementing the NEP's three-language formula

GROUND ZERO » PAGE 9



CHILD SAFETY

Meta faces questions over child abuse ads

NEWS » PAGE 12

Spiritual ascent



The first batch of pilgrims crosses mountain trails amid rainfall during the religious journey to the Amarnath cave on the Baltal route, northeast of Srinagar, on Friday. IMRAN NISSAR (REPORT ON: PAGE 12)

Booth-level agents barely present as Delhi's month-long SIR exercise clocks four days

Suruchi Kumari
NEW DELHI

Four days into the door-to-door special intensive revision (SIR) of the electoral rolls in Delhi, booth-level agents (BLAs), appointed by political parties to assist electors and ensure transparency, are largely missing on the ground, resulting in low awareness among residents about the ongoing exercise.

The month-long revision exercise, which began on June 30, is under way across 13,033 polling

booths in the 70 Assembly constituencies of Delhi.

So far, the BJP has appointed 12,809 BLAs across the city, Congress 10,698 and AAP 9,290.

BLAs are appointed by political parties to spread awareness, assist citizens in filling out enumeration forms and improve transparency by ensuring that genuine voters are not deleted from the rolls. The Election Commission encourages parties to appoint a BLA for every polling booth. During visits by *The Hindu* to various districts,

including Central, New Delhi, East, West, South and North West Delhi, several Booth Level Officers (BLOs) said the slow progress of the SIR exercise was partly due to the absence or limited involvement of BLAs.

'No contact yet'

A BLO in an urban village in Mehrauli said BLAs had been appointed for only one political party across the area's nine polling booths, but none had contacted the election officials. "One of them himself

Caregiver held for abuse at creche in Bengaluru

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A caregiver, identified as Vijayalakshmi, at a creche at Caggemini in Bengaluru, has been arrested over allegations of physical abuse and cruelty towards the children of IT employees. Ms. Vijayalakshmi was seen in the videos in which children were allegedly mistreated.

DETAILS ON
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SIT likely to re-audit Ram Temple Trust accounts for 5 years



Under the law: Avinash Shukla, accused in the Ram Temple theft case, being escorted by the police in Ayodhya on Friday. PTI

Mayank Kumar
LUCKNOW

The Special Investigation Team (SIT) probing the alleged embezzlement of donations at the Ram Temple in Ayodhya is likely to conduct a repeat audit of the Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust's accounts for the past five years, government sources said on Friday. This comes after the preliminary investigation hinted at large-scale anomalies and irregularities.

The re-audit is likely to cover construction-related expenditure as well as the jewellery, gold, and silver items received as donations. The SIT team will also carry out a detailed scrutiny of the Trust's financial records over the entire five-year period.

The SIT – comprising Lucknow Divisional Commissioner Vijay Vishwas Pant, Inspector General (Lucknow Range) Kiran S., and Special Secretary in the State Finance Department Neelratan Kumar – reached the Ram Temple on Friday and spoke with multiple people.

Suspect questioned

Meanwhile, the Ayodhya police interrogated key suspect Avinash Shukla, who was part of the donation-counting process at the temple, and had previously been arrested in connection with the case. A local court remanded him in police custody for 24 hours on Thursday. He is among eight accused

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Karni Sena leader’s death: bandh hits life

Press Trust of India
JAMSHEDPUR

Normal life was affected in Jharkhand’s Jamshedpur on Friday as Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and Janata Dal (United) [JD(U)] workers enforced a dawn-to-dusk bandh to protest against the killing of Karni Sena leader Himanshu Singh and the alleged deterioration in the law and order situation in the city.

Business establishments, educational institutions, petrol pumps, banks and post offices remained closed, while commercial vehicles stayed off the roads. Commuters faced difficulties as most autorickshaws, buses and other vehicles did not operate.

No untoward incident was reported from any part of the city, an official said.

☀️🌧️	Timings
DELHI	
SATURDAY, JUL. 04	
☀️ RISE	05:28
🌙 SET	19:23
🌅 RISE	22:19
🌃 SET	09:08
SUNDAY, JUL. 05	
☀️ RISE	05:29
🌙 SET	19:23
🌅 RISE	22:48
🌃 SET	10:04
MONDAY, JUL. 06	
☀️ RISE	05:29
🌙 SET	19:23
🌅 RISE	23:18
🌃 SET	11:01

Delhi Weather	max	min
Delhi City	36	27
Safdarjang	36	27
Palam	36	26

Delhi Palam Today
37°C Day will be very warm & uneasy. Chances of dust storm and thundershower. Morning will be comfortable. Night also will be uneasy.

Delhi Palam Tomorrow
36°C The weather will be very warm and uneasy. Night also will be comfortable. Spell of rain and thundershower with gusty winds to occur.

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Uddhav plans to launch stir over temple donation ‘theft’

Shiv Sena (UBT) chief to start protest at Hanuman temple in Dadar, alleges there is indifference towards public issues; BJP accuses him of trying to derive political mileage from controversy

Press Trust of India
MUMBAI

Shiv Sena (UBT) chief Uddhav Thackeray on Friday announced a Statewide ‘Ram Raksha’ agitation from July 5 over alleged donation embezzlement at the Ayodhya temple, drawing a backlash from the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), with Maharashtra Minister Nitesh Rane accusing him of “speaking like a Pakistani agent”.

‘Pak. agent’
Mr. Thackeray said his party will launch the protest on Sunday at the Hanuman temple in Dadar, where protesters will recite the ‘Hanuman Stotra’ and ‘Hanuman Chalisa’ to pressure the BJP into taking responsibility for the alleged donation theft.

Taking a dig at Mr.



Shiv Sena (UBT) president Uddhav Thackeray, party MPs Sanjay Raut and Anil Desai at a press conference in Mumbai on Friday. ANI

Thackeray, Mr. Rane said, “Uddhav Thackeray is speaking like a Pakistani agent. Places where Uddhav Thackeray performs *maha aarti* should be purified with *go mutra* (cow urine).”

Claiming that people across the country were facing multiple hardships, Mr. Thackeray said there was “chaos” and “indifference” towards public is-

sues despite the BJP being in power at the Centre and in several States. He said many Hindus, including members of the undivided Shiv Sena, had participated in the Ram temple movement and endured hardships, including atrocities on “kar sevaks”.

But the BJP politically capitalised on these events and was now enjoying “unchecked power”, said Mr.

U.P. TET candidates miss exam due to roadshow

Press Trust of India
BUDAUN

Several candidates appearing for the Uttar Pradesh Teacher Eligibility Test (TET) could not reach their examination centres on time on Friday due to traffic congestion allegedly caused by State Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) vice-president Durvijay Singh Shakyas’ roadshow.

As students expressed

their anger and the Opposition Samajwadi Party (SP) accused the government of “jeopardising their future”, the district administration said it would write to the government seeking permission for a re-exam.

Rejecting the allegations, Mr. Shakyas said he left his residence at 10.40 a.m., after the first shift had begun, and halted his convoy at two places to allow candidates to pass.

Fire at landfill: activist flags ‘failed word’ to NGT

The Hindu Bureau
GURUGRAM

A major fire at the Bandhware landfill last month has triggered a fresh complaint to the Haryana State Pollution Control Board. Environmental activist Vaishali Rana, in a complaint lodged on July 1, alleged that the Municipal Corporation of Gurugram (MCG) failed to honour fire-prevention commitments it

gave to the National Green Tribunal last year.

The complaint seeks legal action, including environmental compensation and prosecution, if violations or false declarations are found. It also calls for joint inspection by pollution control authorities.

Repeated calls and messages to Joint Commissioner, Swachh Bharat Mission, MCG, Preetpal Singh, went unanswered.

New row hits M.P. Congress over ‘land scam’ by CM, kin

Mehul Malpani
BHOPAL

Even as the issue of rejection of Meenakshi Natarajan’s nomination for Rajya Sabha is yet to die down, the Madhya Pradesh unit of the Congress is facing another embarrassment as the party tries to corner Chief Minister Mohan Yadav and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) over the alleged land scam by Mr. Yadav’s family members in his home town, Ujjain.

The current issue is related to senior leader and former CM Digvijaya Singh fact-checking an allegation State Congress president Jitu Patwari had made against Mr. Yadav. This fuelled a series of meetings and press conferences apart from some leaders publicly targeting Mr. Singh while the BJP jumped to take advantage of the situation.

Following an investigation by a publication on the alleged land scam, Mr. Patwari claimed in New



Congress leader Digvijaya Singh addressing a gathering in Bhopal on Friday. PTI

Delhi on June 24 that government land worth ₹500 crore in Ujjain had been given to a trust called Veer Bharat Nyas for a token amount of ₹1 and that Mr. Yadav’s cultural adviser Shriram Tiwari was a trustee.

However, days later, Mr. Singh addressed reporters in Ujjain and refuted Mr. Patwari’s claim. “... The land has not been given to a private trust. It’s a government trust. I have gotten [documents] on that. The ex officio chairman of the trust is the Chief Minis-

ter. So, this charge is not right,” he said.

The statement reportedly alarmed senior Congress leaders and MLAs. While several party leaders criticised Mr. Singh on social media, the Congress called a meeting of its political affairs committee (PAC). Some leaders, however, claim that a sitting of the PAC was already scheduled.

Former Union Minister Arun Yadav took to X and sought Congress leader Rahul Gandhi’s intervention.

United house
Meanwhile, after the PAC meeting, Mr. Singh and Mr. Patwari also addressed a press conference together in an attempt to present a united house. “A misconception is being spread that there is an issue between me and Jitu Patwari. I cannot use the word ‘*dalaal*’ for any Congress worker let alone the State Congress president,” Mr. Singh said, with Mr. Patwari sitting next to him.

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VICTORIS

A ND-NDE

The Himachal Pradesh police arrested a man in Hamirpur on Friday for allegedly posting a video on social media containing derogatory remarks and death threats against Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu. The accused, identified as Rajnish, a resident of Bhagot village, was produced in court on Friday and remanded to police custody for four days. On Wednesday, Vishwa Shama, a resident of Shivrinar, had lodged a complaint with the police, saying that a video uploaded from an individual's social media account used offensive language against the Chief Minister with a threat to kill him. PTI

Social activist Anna Hazare on Friday welcomed the Maharashtra government's decision to stay implementation of the State's amended Right to Information (RTI) rules, but insisted the proposed guidelines should be withdrawn permanently to safeguard citizens' rights. He also announced postponement of his indefinite fast from July 5 over the new rules. The Maharashtra Right to Information Rules, 2026, proposed several changes, including a higher RTI application fee, mandatory identity proof and a restriction that each application should deal with only one subject. ^{PTI}

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The petitioners argued that earlier probes on similar allegations had found no adverse material and that the fresh exercise was intended to harass them. The State maintained that the inquiry covered over 4,000 madrasas and involved no coercive action. "The court is not inclined to entertain this petition at this stage," the Bench held.

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

The application, filed by DMK organising secretary R.S. Bharathi, who has sought impleadment in the case pending before the court in connection with the stampede, stems from public statements allegedly made by Mr. Arjuna, the Minister for Public Works and Sports Development, against former Chief Minister M.K. Stalin in connec-



The stampede at a TVK rally in Karur on September 27 last year claimed 41 lives and left 142 injured. FILE PHOTO

Mr. Bharathi said Mr. Arjuna's statements on July 2 were intended to shift the blame for the stampede onto Mr. Stalin, who was the Chief Minister at the time, in a bid to prejudice the ongoing Supreme Court-ordered CBI investigation into the incident. The statements, in substance, claimed that the previous DMK government had

The DMK leader said Mr. Arjuna was both a Cabinet Minister and an accused in the case. His conduct, as an “accused holding public office” was impermissible and prejudicial to the fairness of the CBI investigation, he said. The application sought a direction to the CBI to register a complaint and proceed against Mr. Arjuna for “influencing,

Mr. Bharathi further submitted that Mr. Vijay was likely to travel to Karur on or around July 10 to meet the families of those who died or were injured in the stampede, and hand over government benefits, including orders of compassionate appointment. The State government had already announced an *ex-gratia* of ₹10 lakh each to the affected families, said the application filed by advocate Anuradha Arputham.

The DMK leader clarified that he had no objection to the State government extending *ex-gratia*, compassionate appointments, or other benefits to the grieving families, but was apprehensive of the fact that the members of these families and those injured were material witnesses in an active investigation.

Rahul Karmakar
GUWAHATI

Mr. Mallabuaruah said the Wildlife Institute of India (WII) validated the State Forest Department's 2025-end estimation of 12



One of four tiger reserves in Assam, Nameri shares a boundary with Pakke Tiger Reserve in Arunachal Pradesh. FILE PHOTO

He attributed the “extraordinary results” to the forest conservation efforts under the guidance of Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma.

The tiger went locally

The 2022 AITE reported that Kaziranga had 104 tigers, one more than the number recorded in the 2014 AITE. However, 148 tigers were recorded in the 'Status of Tigers in Kaziranga Tiger Reserve', a report released by State Forest Department in 2024 stated.

Vijaita Singh
NEW DELHI

Mr. Shah will hold the meeting with Manipur government's Security Adviser Kuldip Singh and State Director General of Police Mukesh Singh, Director General of Military Operations and D-Gs of Assam Rifles, Central Reserve Police Force and Border Security Force, amid continued vio-



Taking stock: Manipur Governor Ajay Kumar Bhalla with Union Home Minister Amit Shah in New Delhi on June 17. ANI

lence in the State that has claimed at least 40 lives since President's Rule was revoked on February 4. He had last reviewed the security situation on March 20, when he asked the Chief Minister to prioritise the resettlement of people displaced after ethnic violence erupted between the Kuki-Zo and Meitei people

Press Trust of India
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM



Congress MP Shashi Tharoor

“Before the tender for the project was approved, three-four times the bids had failed due to the possibility of involvement of Chinese companies in the process. As a result, both the Congress and Bharatiya Janata Party governments at the Centre had not given approval. So, no

Mr. Tharoor said that while no one was against the development of the port, it has to be taken forward in accordance with the concession agreement with the State government.

Meanwhile, BJP State president Rajeev Chandrasekhar said private investment in Vizhinjam port was essential for Kerala, and that the Adani group should have sought the State government's approval before deciding to transfer its shares. He said, "The investment will not only strengthen the State's economy, but also create job opportunities for youth. Therefore, we should welcome private investments. That is our view."

The Hindu Bureau
RAIPUR

"The Agriculture Department has advised farmers to select crop varieties that mature in short to me-



Union Ministers Amit Shah and Shivraj Singh Chouhan during a meeting on possible impact of El Nino, in New Delhi on Friday. PTI

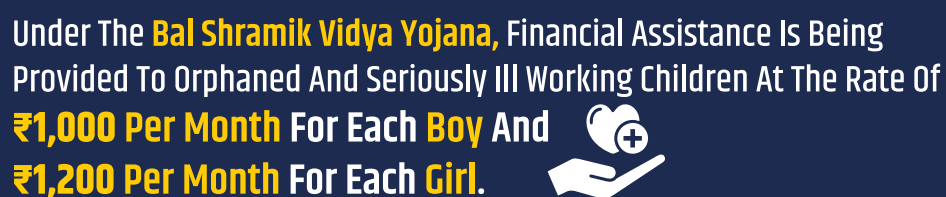
dium durations to mitigate the impact of rainfall uncertainty. Special emphasis has been placed on prioritising DSR over the traditional transplanting method," said a government official. The DSR technique, he said, offers significant benefits: it saves 20% water, reduces cultivation costs by approximately ₹5,000 per acre, and allows the crop to mature 12-15 days earlier,

The State government has also advised farmers to ensure rainwater conservation by clearing fields and bunds, ploughing on time, and constructing field bunds before the onset of rains, thereby maximising the utilisation of available water resources.

Mr. Singh is not part of Saturday's meeting. He is likely to travel to Chura-chandpur, a Kuki-Zo district on Saturday where he is expected to meet the family of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) MLA Vungzagin Valte, who died on February 21, another government official said.

The last rites of Valte, from Zomi tribe, is set to be performed on Saturday as the family had refused to bury the body till the attackers were arrested. Valte was assaulted by a mob in Imphal on May 4, 2023 and passed away at a hospital in Haryana's Gurugram on February 21 this year.

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Shwetha Menon

Internal rift in Malayalam film actors’ body deepens

The Hindu Bureau
KOCHI

The internal friction in the Association of Malayalam Movie Artistes (AMMA) deepened on Friday as Joy Mathew, Jayan Cherthala, and Kailash submitted their official resignations from the executive committee against the stand taken by its president, Shwetha Menon, that the committee would continue until the next election.

Ms. Menon, who had announced her resignation from the post of president following a stormy general body meeting held on June 21, had said in a social media post on Thursday that she would not step down until she proved her innocence.

The 17-member panel led by her decided to step down after a section of the association moved a no-confidence motion against the leadership at the general body meeting. The executive committee was accused of failing to run the day-to-day affairs of the organisation and resolve the disputes within the outfit.

Woman caregiver arrested in Bengaluru creche abuse case

Special team scrutinises all footage from childcare facility at IT firm; more arrests likely; City Police Commissioner announces review of all daycare centres to check for compliance with regulations

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Bengaluru Police have arrested a caregiver, identified as Vijayalakshmi, at a creche at Capgemini in Bengaluru, in connection with allegations of physical abuse and cruelty towards the children of IT employees.

A senior police officer told *The Hindu* that Ms. Vijayalakshmi was seen in the videos in which children were allegedly being ‘scolded in an intimidating manner’, and mistreated.

“We analysed the videos, and it was clear that Ms. Vijayalakshmi was at fault. We have sought her custody for questioning,” the officer said.

The police are prepar-



The alleged abuse took place in a creche for children of employees working at IT firm Capgemini in Bengaluru.

ing for further arrests.

“There are legal challenges to making further arrests, which are being addressed,” he added.

Physical, mental abuse

The case came to light after purported videos showing the alleged mistreatment of children at the creche, Little Buds Day Care, sur-

faced on social media.

A complaint was registered by Tilekesh Kumar at the HAL Police Station, resulting in the filing of an FIR under Section 351(2) (criminal intimidation) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, and Section 75 of the Juvenile Justice Act.

The complainant alleged that the creche staff

subjected children to physical and mental abuse.

The complaint stated that children who cried or created a disturbance were beaten, dragged, forcibly handled, confined inside a washroom, had water poured on them, and were otherwise subjected to physical assault.

A special team headed by a Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP) is probing the case. The team is reviewing all the available footage from the daycare centre to establish the facts.

Police Commissioner Seemant Kumar Singh has announced a review of all daycare centres, including those run by companies in Bengaluru, to check compliance with prescribed norms.

HC quashes plea for CBI probe in ED attack case

The Hindu Bureau
KOCHI

The Kerala High Court has dismissed a public interest litigation (PIL) petition seeking a probe by the CBI into the attack on Enforcement Directorate officials following a raid at Leader of the Opposition Pinarayi Vijayan’s house in May.

The court noted the “substantial progress” made by the Kerala Police in the investigation into the attack. It held that there was no need to direct a CBI probe at this stage.

The Commissioner of Police, Thiruvananthapuram City, updated the court regarding the investigation. The court was informed that an FIR was registered with the Museum police station under the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) and the Prevention of Damage to Public Property Act, 1984, and was submitted before the Judicial First Class Magistrate, Thiruvananthapuram.

Twenty-five accused have been identified, arrested, and sent to judicial custody. The wound certificates of those among the accused, and the officials who were injured in the attack, have also been collected. Relevant footage of the incident was obtained from the media that had reported it, and 44 witnesses were examined, the report stated.

The Commissioner assured the court that the final report on the case will be filed without any delay and sought for the PIL to be set aside.

FIR against Abhishek over ‘illegal’ use of diagnostic equipment

Shiv Sahay Singh
KOLKATA

A fresh case was registered against Trinamool Congress general secretary Abhishek Banerjee on Friday over the “illegal” use of diagnostic equipment at Sebaashray health camps.

Sebaashray was a community health initiative launched by Mr. Banerjee for his Lok Sabha constituency of Diamond Harbour. It drew large crowds during the Trinamool Congress regime.

The FIR has been registered at the Diamond Harbour police station based on a complaint by Sukdeb Das, a resident of Raynagar. Mr. Banerjee has been booked under various provisions of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), including those pertaining to criminal conspiracy and common intention, for allegedly operating unauthorised medical and diagnostic establishments at different places and times.

He has also been accused of violating various sections of the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, Atomic Energy Act, Pre-Conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (PC & PNDT) Act, National Medical Commission Act and West Bengal Clinical Establishments Act.

Since his party’s defeat in the Assembly, nearly half a dozen FIRs have been registered against Mr. Banerjee. He has also been questioned by the State police as well as the Enforcement Directorate.

He has been summoned



TMC leader Abhishek Banerjee

in connection with allegations of forging the signatures of Trinamool Congress MLAs and for making “provocative remarks” during the campaign for the election held in April.

Relief from HC

During the day, the Calcutta High Court granted relief to Mr. Banerjee, directing the police not to take any coercive action against the Trinamool MP in the alleged signature-forgery case till July 17.

Mr. Banerjee has alleged that over the past few days, the Special Task Force, the CID and the West Bengal police have summoned or picked up nearly 25 people linked to his office or associated with him, without proper notice and in violation of basic legal safeguards.

“They are being intimidated, threatened and pressured to give false statements against me. Phones are being tapped, and even family members, including women, are being harassed and threatened,” said Mr. Banerjee, terming the actions “political intimidation at its worst”.

Alert locopilots stop train going in the wrong direction in Chennai Division

S. Vijay Kumar
CHENNAI

Alert locopilots prevented a potential tragedy by stopping an express train going in the wrong route to a different destination in Chennai Division on the night of June 28, 2026.

According to official sources, the incident occurred last Sunday after Train No. 17654, Puducher-

ry-Kacheguda Express, departed the Arakkonam railway station. While the signal was cleared for the train to proceed towards Renigunta, the point was set for the Katpadi line.

Realising the train with about 900 passengers on board was running in the wrong direction, the locopilots slammed the brakes and brought it to a halt. Wireless communication

confirmed that the train had entered the wrong track. The locopilots, after alerting the Station Manager, rolled the train back to Arakkonam, sources said.

The incident took place on a day when Southern Railway had completed the multi-crore remodelling of the Arakkonam yard.

Sources said the signal and points were being manually operated due to on-

going works in the section. Though the signal was cleared for the train to proceed towards Arakkonam, the point was set to the track heading to Katpadi.

Had the locopilots not sensed trouble and stopped the train, the possibility of an accident could not have been ruled out. However, there was no formal statement by the Railways on the incident.

INBRIEF



Mohanlal seeks to declare ivory in his possession

Actor Mohanlal, who had been booked for the alleged illegal possession of ivory, has approached the Kerala Forest department to declare its possession and seek immunity from legal action. He made use of the recent one-time amnesty scheme offered by the Forest department to declare the wildlife article in his possession following an observation of the Kerala High Court. A senior functionary of the Forest department carried out an inquiry regarding the article in his possession at his Kochi residence.

Up close



Beach attraction: Tourists brave the inclement weather at the INS Kurusura Submarine Museum in Visakhapatnam on Friday, as the city experiences overcast skies and intermittent rain under the influence of a low-pressure system over the Bay of Bengal. K.R. DEEPAK

Panel to study issues faced by Totapuri mango farmers in A.P.

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Union Agriculture Ministry has decided to constitute a high-level expert committee on Friday under the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) to examine the challenges being faced by Totapuri mango growers in Andhra Pradesh. The panel will recommend appropriate measures for the long-term development of the sector.

The Ministry said in a release that Union Minister for Agriculture Shivraj Singh Chouhan had recent-

ly visited Andhra Pradesh, during which he interacted with Totapuri mango growers.

“During these interactions, farmers informed the Minister that prices of the Totapuri mango variety, which is cultivated extensively for the processing industry, have declined significantly in recent months. They highlighted that the sustained fall in prices has adversely affected their incomes and created considerable financial stress among mango-producing farmers in the State,” the government said.

Radio telemetry almost saved this vulture from death

Prince Frederick
CHENNAI

Vultures are drawn to ‘the dead’. This one was drawn to the living. Captive-bred and released in the wild, this white-rumped vulture consistently displayed a tendency to be within earshot of smartphone-carrying primates. It had taken into its bald head that humans are providers of food. The idea was likely seeded in there when the bird had a brief stay at the Kalaburagi Zoological Park in Karnataka, and had been nurtured in the Mudumalai Tiger Reserve where it had the fortune, nay, misfortune of finding human feeders from time to time.

This female vulture was being spied upon. Radio-tagged, the bird had its movements tracked in real time. Records of its peregrinations at the Muduma-



A file photo of ‘Z25’, a white-rumped vulture that was fitted with a radio transmitter. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

lai Tiger Reserve were showing up on screens at the Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS)’s establishment at Tadoba-Andhari in Maharashtra.

From radio telemetry data gathered by BNHS, it was evident the vulture was not fit for the wild, and the BNHS team was considering relocating it to a breeding centre where it could be used for breeding.

Before the conservationists could act on that decision, the vulture met with a tragic end, being electrocuted at a power transmission line in the Nilgiris in Mudumalai. If that plan had fructified, the bird would have come full circle, as it had been captive-bred at the Jatayu Conservation Breeding Centre in Pinjore, Haryana, run by the Haryana Forest Department along

with BNHS.

Jonathan D’Costa, conservation biologist at BNHS, points out this bird (Z25, its radio-tagged identity) was one of five white-rumped vultures to be radio-tagged at Tadoba on December 22, 2025. The carrion-devouring quintet were released at the Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve on December 30.

Mr. D’Costa gives a blow-by-blow account of how this vulture ended up among the dead prematurely: “After their release, the five white-rumped vultures were monitored. And Z25 in particular was observed to have not stuck around much in Tadoba-Andheri Tiger Reserve. In a week or two, it flew out of the reserve and kept going south, eventually reaching Kalaburagi city in Karnataka.”

Karnataka Forest Department personnel cap-

tured the bird and kept it at the Kalaburagi Zoological Park and following consultations with their counterparts in Tamil Nadu, it was decided the vulture would go to Mudumalai Tiger Reserve where a white-rumped vulture population existed. Amidst familiar plumage, Z25 had a reasonably good chance of getting acclimatised to the wild. But radio telemetry data showed the bird was slipping out of the wild; and this maverick behaviour was regularly observed on the field.

This fatal flaw in the vulture was noticed thanks to radio telemetry, and the data did help protect the bird till it ran into that power transmission line.

Radio telemetry is a potent tool to study the movements of critically endangered bird species and “herd” straying individual birds into safe zones.

BENGALURU NORTH CITY CORPORATION, ZONE-2
Office of the Executive Engineer, Dasarahalli Division, MEI Layout, Hesaraghatta Main Road, Bagalagunte, T. Dasarahalli, Bengaluru - 560073
No: BNCC/EE/DD/TEND/09/2026-27, Date: 03.07.2026

INVITATION FOR TENDERS (IFT)
(Short Term Tender) TWO COVER SYSTEM
(Through GOK KPP Portal only)
Website: <https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in>

The Executive Engineer, Dasarahalli Division, BNCC invites item rate tender from the eligible contractors registered in BBMP / KPWD / CPWD / Railways / MES or Any State Government Organizations for the below work.

Sl. No.	Name of the Work / Category
1)	Developments and Improvements to selected Roads and Drains in Jalahalli Ward No.60, HMT Ward No.61, Brundhavan Nagar Ward No.62, JP Park Ward No.63 and Yeshwanthpura Ward No.64 in Rajarajeshwarinagar Constituency in BNCC limits. (OTHERS). Approximate value of work (Rs. in Lakh): 1300.00 . EMD (in Rupees) Rs.15,00,000/- . (1.00 Lakhs through e-Payment (NEFT) balance Rs.14,00,000/- thorough BG/FDR, should be submit before opening of Technical Bid.

Calender of Events: 1) Pre-Bid Meeting will be held on **10-07-2026 at 3:00 p.m.** in the office of the **Chief Engineer, BNCC, Zone-2, Yelahanka Mini Vidhana Soudha, Bangalore-560064.** 2) Last Date for uploading the Filled proposals is on **17-07-2026 upto 4:00 p.m.** 3) Date of Opening of Technical Bid is **18-07-2026 after 4:00 p.m.** 4) Date of Opening of Financial Bid after Approval of Technical Bid.

Sd/- Executive Engineer, Dasarahalli Division, BNCC.

EAST CENTRAL RAILWAY
E-TENDER NOTICE
e-tender Notice No. 24 of 2026-27 (Open)-Engg/DDU. On line (through e-tendering) for the following work is invited by DRW/Engg/DDU for and on behalf of the President of India from experienced and financially as well as technically sound contractors including those enlisted with the Railway, CPWD, BSNL, MES, PWD and other public sector undertakings.
Tender No. 11-DDU-SR DEN -III-26-27, (i) Name of work with its location : Construction of 10 units type-II quarters for running staff at Ankurha(ANH) station in BD Section under ADEN/JPL. (ii) Advertised Value : ₹2,03,63,799.60 (iii) Earnest Money : ₹4,07,700/- (vii) Closing Date & time for submission of e-tender : 24.07.2026. Up-to 12:00 hrs. (viii) Website particulars of e-tendering: www.reps.gov.in
Divisional Railway Manager/ ECR/PI. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya PR/0488/DDU/Engg/T/26-27/28

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KARNATAKA INDUSTRIAL AREAS DEVELOPMENT BOARD
(A Government of Karnataka Undertaking)
#2, 2/1 and 2/3, Kalidasa Marg, 1st Main Road Gandhinagar, Bengaluru - 560009. Phone No. 22265383
website : www.kiadb.in

No. IADB/ENGG/ETND-EP-05/435/2026-27

Date : 03.07.2026

SHORT TERM NOTICE INVITING TENDER
(Through GOK KPPP Portal Only)

Item rate Tenders are invited as per the Karnataka Transparency in Public Procurement Act 1999 and Rules 2000 through electronic procurement from eligible Contractors registered in KPWD who have got adequate financial resources & sufficient past experience for the following works as per the schedule given below:

Name of the work : (1) Construction of Compound Wall Adjacent to Nagasamudhra Village and sinking of Borewell and repairs to pipeline in Narasapura Industrial Area, Gadag District. (2) Reconstruction of Road, RCC Drain and RCC Box Culvert at Basavakalyan Industrial Area, Bidar District. (3) Formation of 24M Wide Road of Flexible Pavement, Construction of RCC Side Drains with Pedestrian Footpath, Connecting the Airport directly from to NH-50 in Vijayapura Taluk & District.

Applicants may download bidding documents from the e-procurement portal <https://tkppp.karnataka.gov.in>

Scheduled of date are as follows:

Last date for submission of Tender: **21-07-2026 up to 4.00 pm.**

Sd/-
Chief Engineer-2
K.I.A.D.B, Bengaluru

DIPR/CP/1477/AKAR/2026-27



BENGALURU EAST CITY CORPORATION
Office of the Senior Assistant of Horticulture
(Mahadevapura / K.R. Pura Zone), BECC,
Vengaihan Lake, ECO Park, K.R. Pura, Bangalore-560036.

No. SADH(S)/TENDER/02/2026-27

Date: 03-07-2026

INVITATION FOR TENDERS (SHORT TERM)

Two Cover System (Only through GoK KPP Portal)

The Senior Assistant Director of Horticulture (Mahadevapura / K.R.Pura), BECC, Bengaluru on behalf the Commissioner, BECC invites Tenders from eligible experienced person / agencies / firms registered in GBA or Labour department for maintenance of parks as detailed below.

Sl. No.	Name of the Work
1	Beautification, landscape development, water facility and other civil works and Borewell drilling of Jagadishnagar in Ward No. 25. Amount put to tender : Rs. 80,00,000/- . EMD amount: Rs. 16,000/- .
2	Beautification, landscape development, water facility and other civil works and Borewell drilling of Bennaganahalli Lake Park in Ward No. 24. Amount put to tender : Rs. 1,50,00,000/- . EMD amount: Rs. 2,25,000/- .
3	Landscape development, water facility with Drip irrigation system and Borewell drilling and other civil works of LG Lake Due Park in Ward No. 06. Amount put to tender : Rs. 2,00,00,000/- . EMD amount: Rs. 3,00,000/- .

Duration / Period of Maintenance : **12 months.**

Calendar of Events: (1) Tender documents may be downloaded from KPP Portal <https://tkppp.karnataka.gov.in> from **07.07.2026.** (2) Last date for receipt of queries: **10.07.2026.** (3) Date of pre-bid meeting : **15.07.2026.** (4) Last date for receipt of tenders: **18.07.2026.** (5) Date of opening of Technical bid : **20.07.2026.** (6) Date of opening of Financial bid: **After approval of technical bid.** Further details may be obtained from the above office during office hours or from KPP Portal <https://tkppp.karnataka.gov.in>

Sd/- Senior Assistant Director of Horticulture
Mahadevapura / K.R. Pura Zone, BECC



Chief Engineer, Uttarakhand Rural Roads Development Agency
First Floor, Directorate of Panchayatraj, Opp-IT Park,
Sahasradhara Road, Dehradun,

Ref. No. 347/11-02(xix)-2/ITCO/URRDA/26

Dated : 03.07.2026

PRADHAN MANTRI GRAM SADAK YOJANA (PMGSY)
e-Procurement Notice-03(P-IV)/2026-27

The Chief Engineer, URRDA on behalf of Governor of Uttarakhand invites the item rate bids in electronic tendering system for construction of works under Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana in the District of **Almora, Bageshwar, Chamoli, Pauri & Uttarakashi** for **08** number of packages with estimated cost totalling to **Rs. 44.68 Core** including their maintenance for five years from the eligible contractors (Class-A and above) registered with PWD/CPWD or equivalent".

Date of release of Invitation for Bids through e-procurement : 04-07-2026.

Availability of Bid Documents and mode of submission : The bid documents are available online and should be submitted online in www.pmgsytendersuk.gov.in. The bidder would be required to register in the web-site which is free of cost. For submission of the bids, the bidder is required to have Digital Signature Certificate (DSC) from one of the authorized Certifying Authorities.

The bidders are required to submit original affidavit regarding correctness of information furnished with bid document as per provisions of Clause 4.4 B (ii) of ITB with **CONCERNED CIRCLE OFFICES, mentioned in SBD on a date not later than three working days after the opening of technical qualification part of the bid**, either by registered post or by hand, failing which the bids shall be declared non-responsive. No Physical documents will be accepted after the closing date and time of submission of bids.

Last Date/time for receipt of bids through e-procurement : 18-07-2026 01:00 PM.
For further details please log on to www.pmgsytendersuk.gov.in

Chief Engineer
URRDA, Dehradun

*Non Registered bidders may submit bids, however, the successful bidders must get registered in appropriate class with appropriate authorities before signing the contract.
Note : For e-Procurement for any sort of queries 0135-3517698 number may be contacted 10:00 AM to 05:00 PM.



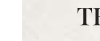
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NATIONAL COMPETITIVE E-BIDDING INVITATION

RE-TENDER NO. 24/E-TENDER/ BSTDC/SD/2026-27

File No. 108/Engg/2026/937/engg/26

(Through e-procurement mode only – www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in)

- Bihar State Tourism Development Corporation Limited (BSTDC), a nodal agency for executing tourism infrastructure projects in the state of Bihar, India, intends to execute tourism infrastructure projects at its tourism potential locations.
- Any Contractor registered in Central Government/any State Government or any PSU or an agency of International or National repute may participate in the tender through registration in requisite category with any works department, government of Bihar will be essential before executing the agreement, if not registered in Bihar.
- Details of works

Gr. No.	Name of work	Estimated Cost (in Lac)	Bid Processing fees (Beltron) (In Rs.)	Bid Document Cost (In Rs.)	Bid Security (EMD) (in Lac)	Contract Duration (Months)
1	TOURIST DEVELOPMENT OF VISHWAMITRA PLACE, VISAUL, LOCATED IN HARLAKHI BLOCK UNDER MADHUBANI DISTRICT.	Rs- 1327.63	Rs- 5,900.00	Rs- 10,000.00	Rs-23.28	12 Months

4. Date of Inviting tender : Date- 02.07.2026

5. Date of downloading of bid document : From 17.07.2026 to 23.07.2026 up to 3:00PM. Through website www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in only

6. Place & Date of Pre-bid meeting : Date 20.07.2026 Time 03:00PM. (Office of Chief Engineer B.S.T.D.C. Patna)

7. Last date and time for receipt on eproc2 : Date 23.07.2026 up to 3:00PM

8. Last date and time for Submission of Original instrument of EMD & Affidavit : Date 24.07.2026 Time 3:30PM

9. Time and date of opening technical bids : Through website www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in

10. Time and date of opening of financial bids : To be communicated later on

11. Place of opening of bid : Through website www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in

12. Period of bids validity : 120 days

13. Officer inviting bids : Executive Engineer (North), BSTDC Ltd.

For further details please visit website state.bihar.gov.in/prdbihar

PR- 007002 (B & C) 2026-27 **Executive Engineer (North)**
BSTDC Ltd, Patna

नशे की मार, बर्बाद करे सुखी परिवार।



DISTRICT POLICE HEADQUARTERS KATHUA
E-mail: sspkathua@jkpolice.gov.in Fax/Phone No.: 01922-234010

LOOK OUT NOTICE

On 24-06-2026, one person namely Tilak Raj S/O Bindru Ram R/O Sandhi Tehsil Bani District Kathua lodged a written report at P/S Bani stating therein that on 22-06-2026 his son namely Kishore Kumar, age 21 years went missing from home. The complainant made every best effort to search for his son but all in vain. On this, missing report vide DD No. 09 dated 24-06-2025 has been entered at Police Station Bani. During the course of investigation, best efforts were made to locate missing individual, whereas he is still un-traced. As such Description Roll/Photograph of said missing individuals being shared with the appeal that anybody having clue/information about his whereabouts may inform us accordingly. The informer will be rewarded suitably:-

DESCRIPTION ROLL

- Name Kishore Kumar
- Father Tilak Raj
- Permanent Address Village Sandhi
- Present Address Village Sandhi
- Tehsil Bani
- Police Station Bani
- Age 21 years
- Height 5 feet 05 inch
- Complexion Wheatish
- Built Normal
- Face Oval
- Eyes Black
- Languages known Hindi/Dogri



PHOTOGRAPH

Any information related to the whereabouts of the subject may be communicated on following contacts:-

- DPO Kathua- 01922-234010 (Phone/Fax)
- dpokathua@jkpolice.gov.in (Mail ID)
- PCR Kathua- 01922-234311 (Phone/Fax)
- Police Station Bani 9103007515

Sd/-
Mr. Superintendent of Police, Kathua

DIP/J- 4877/26



HIMACHAL PRADESH PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT
INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB)

The Executive Engineer, Bhoraaj Division HPPWD, Bhoraaj on behalf of Governor of H.P. invites the Item rate/ Percentage rate bids, in electronic tendering system from the eligible class for the works as detailed below on the table:-

Sl. No.	Name of Work	Estimated Cost (Rs.)	Earnest Money (in Rs.)	Starting date for down-loading Bid	Deadline for submission of Bid
1.	Construction of 50 Bedded Critical care unit for Civil hospital at Bhoraaj Distt. Hamirpur (H.P), (Sh. C/o Building portion, WS&SI, SepticTank, Rain Water Harvesting Tank, Site Development, Providing E.I, Fire Alarm system, Fire Fighting System, CCTV Surveillance System therein).	184574178/-	2646000/-	06-07-2026	10-07-2026

The bidders are advised to note other details of tenders from the department Executive Engineer, website. Bhoraaj Division, HPPWD Bhoraaj, Pin Code 176045

HIM SUCHANA Tel. No. 01972-266099, e-mail : eeppwd-bhoroaj-hp@gov.in on behalf of Governor of HP.

HP / 1593/26-27 AVAM JAN SAMPARK



Govt. of Bihar

Bihar State University Service Commission
8th Floor, Bihar State Examination Board, Academic Building, Budha Marg, Patna-01

(Advt. No.-BSUSC/CAP-01 to 06/2026)

Important Notice Regarding Appointment to the post of Assistant Professor on contract

With reference to the relevant Statute and in view of the urgent requirement of recruitment, and on the basis of requisition received from the Higher Education Department, Government of Bihar, vide Letter No.-19/पी 2-01/2026-1994 Dated-03.07.2026, online applications are invited from eligible Indian citizens through the HED's Samarth Portal (URL- (<https://hedbiharrec.samarth.edu.in>) for contractual appointment to 3687 vacant posts of Assistant Professor in 06 subjects (English, Hindi, Economics, History, Sociology and Political Science) in different Universities of Bihar, including 211 newly constituted Rajkiya Degree Colleges in the State. The online application portal will remain open until 13th July 2026. Subject wise, university wise and category wise vacancies, along with the terms and conditions and guidelines for filling out online application form are available on the HED's Samarth Portal (URL- (<https://hedbiharrec.samarth.edu.in>)). Vacancies for the post of Assistant Professor are available in the following subjects.

Sr. No.	Advt. No.	Name of the subject	Number of Posts
1	CAP-HIND-01/26	Hindi	625
2	CAP-ECON-02/26	Economics	597
3	CAP-HIST-03/26	History	662
4	CAP-POLI-04/26	Political Science	596
5	CAP-ENGL-05/26	English	674
6	CAP-SOCI-06/26	Sociology	533

2. Other instructions and dates related to the filling of online application form are as follows :-

(i)	Date of Starting Registration	03.07.2026
(ii)	Last date for filling application form	15.07.2026

For further details please visit website state.bihar.gov.in/prdbihar

PR- 007085 (B & C) 2026-27

नशे की मार, बर्बाद करे सुखी परिवार।

Secretary



बिहार सरकार

नगर विकास एवं आवास विभाग

आवश्यक सूचना

नगर विकास एवं आवास विभाग के अधीन एकीकृत शहरी अभियंत्रण संगठन, बुडको, पटना महानगर क्षेत्र प्राधिकार एवं बिहार राज्य आवास बोर्ड के अन्तर्गत अभियंताओं के रिक्त पदों के विरुद्ध सामान्य प्रशासन विभाग के संकेत ज्ञापक-10000 दिनांक-10.07.2015 के आलोक में संविदा के आधार पर नियोजन हेतु विभागीय Email-recruitment.udhdbihar@gmail.com पर विज्ञापन प्रकाशित की गई थी, जिसकी विवरणी निम्नवत् है :-

क्र० सं०	अभियंता	रिक्ति	विज्ञापन सं०	विज्ञप्ति की तिथि
1	मुख्य अभियंता (असैनिक)	04	PR-000236 (Urban) 2026-27	07.04.2026
2	अधीक्षक अभियंता (असैनिक)	10	PR-000235 (Urban) 2026-27	07.04.2026
3	कार्यपालक अभियंता (असैनिक)	58	PR-024163 (Urban) 2025-26	15.02.2026

2. उक्त प्रकाशित विज्ञापन अपरिहार्य कारणवश तत्काल प्रभाव से रद्द की जाती है।

(मनन राम)
विशेष सचिव,
नगर विकास एवं आवास विभाग।

PR- 007128 (Urban) 2026-27

नशे की मार, बर्बाद करे सुखी परिवार।



Government of India, Department of Space
ISRO Propulsion Complex (IPRC)
Mahendragiri P.O., Tirunelveli District, Tamil Nadu- 627 133, India

E-TENDER NOTICE

On Behalf of the President of India, item-rate tenders are invited through e-tendering for the following work:

Dated : 03-07-2026

Estimated Cost (₹ in Lakhs)

Period of completion

EMD (₹)

Sl. No.	NAME OF THE WORK	Estimated Cost (₹ in Lakhs)	Period of completion	EMD (₹)
1	NIT no:IPRC/CMG/TD/e-22/MW/CMP-05/2026-27 External services including Roads and Electrical works for Antenna structure at Spacecraft Control Centre (SCC), Palayamkottai, Tirunelveli (Phase-II)-SBC-3. (Electrical & Civil works)	503.46	04 (Four months)	10,07,000

Dates for Online Request : From 04-07-2026 [10.00 hours] To: 17-07-2026 [23.30 hours]

Due Time & Date of Submission : 28-07-2026 [14.00 hours] For further details visit : www.isro.gov.in/tenders (or) www.tenderwizard.com/ISRO.

Note : All future correspondence (Corrigenda) for the above work(s) shall be published only on the websites mentioned above.

GROUP HEAD, CMG, IPRC.



OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE



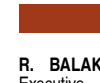
DEATH



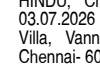
OBITUARY



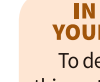
Smt. RAJALAKSHMI RAGAVACHARI (91)
wife of late Sri P S Ragavachari, attained Acharyan Tiruvadi on Friday, July 3rd 2026
Deeply mourned by
Indu & K Venugopal, Sashi & Shyam Raman and Grandchildren - Divya & Rohan, Lavanya, Krithvi & Keerthi, Krishna and great grandchildren
4/35, Sriparam First Street, Royapettah, Chennai 600014.



DEATH



R. BALAKRISHNAN (63), Retired Executive - Advt Commercial, THE HINDU, Chennai passed away on 03.07.2026. Address: 95/33, T N R Villa, Vanniar Street, Choolaimedu, Chennai- 600094. Ct. 9841073943



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Manufacturing justice

Use of AI-fabricated judicial ‘precedents’ amounts to criminal misconduct

But for its serious implications, a judge relying on Artificial Intelligence (AI) hallucinations to arrive at a judicial determination would have been comical. Given the serious miscarriage of justice that such hallucinations can lead to, if used in the judicial processes, the Supreme Court of India has likened it to methyl isocyanate, the poisonous gas that led to the Bhopal gas tragedy in 1984 – “invisible, insidious, and catastrophic by the time anyone notices”. The Court made these observations while setting aside the orders of the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) and the National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT) in an insolvency case after finding that the NCLT had relied on fictitious AI-generated legal citations, a lapse overlooked by the appellate tribunal. This is the latest in a series of interventions by the Court this year, cautioning against the use of AI-generated fictitious judicial precedents in court proceedings. Through its rulings and oral observations, the Court has consistently adopted a strict and cautionary approach to the deployment of AI in the justice delivery system. On February 27, the same Bench of Justices P.S. Narasimha and Alok Aradhe took cognisance of a trial court relying on AI-generated fictitious case laws and underlined that it was not merely “an error in decision-making” but amounted to judicial “misconduct”.

The Court has made clear that AI may serve as an assistive tool to improve efficiency, but it can never replace independent human reasoning, judicial discretion or professional accountability. In AI, humanity is encountering what many experts fear might well be an existential question. AI disruption is a known unknown – everyone knows that it is happening but nobody quite knows its extent or implications. There is, however, enough evidence of a combination of human stupidity and deliberate design leading to dangerous social outcomes being derived from AI. Human oversight is the essential counter to these dangers. The Court has said that presenting fabricated, machine-generated judgments to a court constitutes professional misconduct for advocates and a serious lapse of duty for judges; and any judgment influenced by an iota of fake or hallucinated AI material is “no decision in the eyes of law”. The draft ‘Regulations for Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Courts, 2026’ prohibits AI in the making of judicial outcomes such as the function of adjudication, sentencing, or deciding bail eligibility and evaluating the credibility of parties or witnesses. Even as the draft is open for public consultation, the Court has directed the Bar Council of India (BCI) to set up a dedicated committee to formulate strict norms and define disciplinary actions for lawyers who cite unverified AI material. Justice must be done and seen; not hallucinated.

Counting cancer

Making cancer a notifiable disease at the national level is the way forward

What’s good for the goose is surely good for the geese. What the States will benefit from, the country could too. In India, cancer is not a notifiable disease at the national level, keeping with the Health Ministry’s position that such notification is only for communicable diseases. Population-based cancer registries and hospital-based cancer registries are currently the only national tool at the disposal of the Centre to count cancer cases. Unfortunately, these registries cover about 10%-16 % of the population, and have an urban, government health care set-up skew. However, several States have taken the lead on this front, making cancer a notifiable disease within their boundaries. Telangana is the latest to join the list of States that have made cancer a notifiable disease, bringing the total number of States doing so to 17.

With the Global Cancer Observatory (affiliated to the World Health Organization) projecting an estimated increase of 1.05 million cases between 2022 (1.41 million) and 2045 (2.46 million), the rise is expected to be a staggering over 74%. Given these projections, thanks to an increasing life span and ageing demographics, changes in lifestyle and diet, it becomes all the more important to be armed with data and get ready for vanguard action from a public health point of view. While State action can, to an extent, solve the data question, any benefit thus derived from notifying health authorities of every single case of cancer, it cannot become a rubric by which the nation can contour its cancer control programme. Apart from existing registries covering mostly urban and semi-urban posts, care in India is also delivered in good measure through the private sector and that data set is not uniformly captured. The Indian government must pay heed to its own counsel, the Indian Council of Medical Research, National Centre for Disease Informatics and Research (now ICMR-NINE) had recommended that cancer be made a notifiable disease years ago. It is a fact that establishing cancer as a notifiable disease will mean a sudden increase in the number of cases being recorded, but it must not be considered a liability. Instead, it is merely part of the process of crafting a studied, and evidence-based response – health care and information, education, and communication (IEC) – to cancer at the country level. While bold advances in research and treatment methodologies have retrieved cancer from the fear and the utter helplessness surrounding it, the heart of the issue remains the lack of data. Taking lessons from the States, the Centre must recalibrate and make cancer a notifiable disease in India.

Ever since 1945, the dominance of the United States and western Europe in world affairs has been taken for granted, largely because of their military power, technological innovations, and financial strength. This situation continued until fairly recently. However, the rise of China, along with the growing prominence of certain “middle powers” in recent years, has begun to dent – though not eclipse – the image of the U.S. as a superpower.

As China’s influence over world affairs has grown, driven by its technological and innovative capabilities and its stranglehold over scarce strategic resources, the supremacy of the U.S. and the West has, however, appeared to wane. Many experts, nevertheless, continued to believe that there was still time before the West faced an effective challenge to its leadership. Concerns had, no doubt, grown about the U.S.’s structural vulnerabilities, though few expected that a country such as Iran would effectively deal a mortal blow to the image of the U.S. as the world’s leading power.

The (now deceased) Iranian Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, had once observed that, while Americans constantly threatened war, they lacked “staying power”. This has now become apparent in ample measure. By contrast, in the course of the Iran-Iraq war (1980-1988), Iran’s Islamic regime demonstrated remarkable endurance, resilience, and determination to preserve the regime by all means necessary. U.S. President Donald Trump’s failure to recognise this aspect has since cost him dearly. One leader who is seen to have emerged from the ashes of the U.S.-Iran conflict is Ali Khamenei’s presumed successor, his son Mojtaba Khamenei, who is presently viewed by many as a “living martyr”.

The new Iran-U.S. framework

Even prior to embarking upon substantive negotiations in Switzerland on all contentious issues, the U.S. and Iran entered into an “initial deal” (mid-June 2026) to end the war and reopen the Strait of Hormuz. The announcement of the talks was cautiously welcomed by world leaders, though all agreed that difficult negotiations lay ahead. Prior to the formal talks, a 14-point Memorandum of Understanding was, interestingly enough, signed by Mr. Trump at the Palace of Versailles, France, on June 17, 2026, evoking comparisons with the 1919 Treaty of Versailles, which is widely regarded as having imposed humiliating terms on Germany following the First World War.

The June 17 agreement was widely criticised as little more than a latter-day endorsement of the status quo that had existed prior to the U.S.-Israel strikes on Iran, on February 28, 2026. The terms of the agreement included the reopening of the Strait of Hormuz, the lifting of the U.S. blockade, and a vague commitment by the U.S. and its regional partners to initiate plan, for at least \$300 billion, for the reconstruction and economic



M.K. Narayanan

Former Director, Intelligence Bureau, a former National Security Adviser, and a former Governor of West Bengal

Power realignments may follow the United States-Iran deal

development of Iran – the U.S. has since declared that no U.S. funds would flow directly to Iran. If so, this commitment could possibly refer to the release of Iranian assets that have been frozen by the U.S. over the years. The agreement also reportedly contains an important pledge by Iran not to develop a nuclear weapon.

The talks in Switzerland soon thereafter seemed little more than a formality, with the U.S. claiming, following their successful conclusion, that it had achieved a major milestone by persuading Tehran to allow inspectors from the International Atomic Energy Agency back into the country, thereby opening a pathway to international monitoring of its nuclear programme. But Iran is said to have told its state media that Tehran had made “no new commitments” on nuclear inspections. The conclusion of the talks appeared to many observers to represent a “desperately needed truce” for the U.S., as it was followed shortly thereafter by the lifting of U.S. oil sanctions on Iran and the issuance of a 60-day waiver authorising the sale and transport of Iranian crude oil and petroleum products.

Newspaper headlines across the world had little to say about the deal and instead harped on the enormity of the setback to the image of the U.S. resulting from its coming to terms with Iran. Perhaps the most telling headline appeared on the front page of The Times of India (June 19, 2026): “Versailles II: Trump rushes where historians would dread to tread”. Apart from the fact that the U.S. and its President have been excoriated for what critics have termed the “surrender blunder”, the reality is that the deal has brought the U.S. few tangible benefits.

Intrinsic to, or as part of the deal are several other aspects of considerable interest, apart from sanctions relief for Iran’s oil exports, viz., the possibility of Iran assuming a formal role in managing traffic through the Strait of Hormuz and, (potentially), charging transit fees for passage through the Strait. Questions remain, however, regarding the safety of shipping routes, vessel security procedures, naval protection, and emergency response mechanisms. Many of these issues remain to be clarified.

The deal is important, even though its wording remains inchoate. It is widely portrayed as a deal between unequals, with Goliath having been worsted – or at least caught unawares by David. It also does not read like a standard diplomatic document. The implications of a superpower – the world’s leading nuclear power – conceding ground to a battered Iran are huge and are unlikely to be lost on nations and major powers across the globe.

Israel-U.S. relations fracture

It also entails an important rupture in relations between the U.S. and Israel. Israel Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s devious plans to inveigle the U.S. in a conflict in West Asia, which was aimed at decimating Iran and establishing Israel’s

undisputed supremacy over the region has now become part of the detritus of history. The Israel-U.S. rupture, unless Tel Aviv bends substantially hereafter, could alter power equations in West Asia, leading to either an unsettled peace or further wranglings among Arabs, Iranians and Israelis.

What is also quite plausible is that Iran’s claims to have bested the Great Satan, could lead the new Iranian regime, now increasingly under the tutelage of Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) hotheads rather than the Ayatollahs, to revive conflicts with other Arab nations, apart from Israel itself. Such ‘adventurism’ could lead to more disparate conflicts in a vital region, which incorporates a critical artery of global energy supplies.

Many imponderables are still present. For one, the U.S.-Iran Agreement is almost certain to give a boost to hardliners in Iran who may believe that they have managed to ‘defeat’ the mighty U.S., signalling scope for a still more hardline policy, *vis-à-vis* not only Israel, the U.S., and other Arab States in the region but also their own people as well. For another, the IRGC, already on the ascendant, could feel more emboldened to act with impunity, having a new Ayatollah identified with it. The impact of all this would be felt not only in Iran but also in countries with large Shia populations, including India. A worsening of Shia-Sunni tensions in different pockets across the globe cannot, therefore, be ignored.

For a third, Israel and its leaders could be expected to behave like ‘wounded tigers’. Their ploy of inveigling the U.S. into supporting their bid for supremacy in West Asia having failed –and with the U.S. President distancing himself from Mr. Netanyahu – they could be expected to embark on a fresh bout of ‘adventurism’, especially with their Arab neighbours and across West Asia. This could aggravate tensions and undermine the fragile peace that has existed since the Abraham Accords. Furthermore, with the U.S. seen as a major loser and its influence across the region set to wane, Gulf nations may be prompted to take a hard look at relying on the U.S. for protection against external threats, including a resurgent Iran. Interestingly, there could also be growing demands to reduce the presence of U.S. troops in West Asia.

Radical groups could regain ground

Neither Russia nor China have gained much from the conflict, even as both claim to have supported Iran and some of the other Arab countries. What the world needs to examine closely is whether this level of uncertainty could lead to the re-emergence of well-organised terrorist organisations and entities such as al Qaeda, capable of even greater destruction than their forebears. They could well become the forerunners of many more disparate Arab groups and forces centred in West Asia, capable of extending their activities from Africa and parts of Asia to Europe, if not the U.S. itself.

Building water security in a rapidly drying India



Nitin Bassi

Fellow at the Council on Energy, Environment and Water (CEEW)

The monsoon cannot fix India’s water problem; policy could

through granular climate risk assessments of water infrastructure and services. The CEEW’s analysis of India’s urban flood risk management shows that such assessments help prioritise investments in high to very high-risk locations, including coastal and low-lying areas such as Thane (Maharashtra) and Navsari (Gujarat), or areas with critical infrastructure such as schools, hospitals, and electricity grids, as seen in Ahmedabad. These assessments are especially important for cash-strapped urban local bodies and panchayats. Cities should leverage existing mechanisms like the Urban Challenge Fund (UCF) to finance them—for instance, Visakhapatnam (Andhra Pradesh) recently secured ₹1,501 crore under the UCF for water supply and drainage, part of which could support water risk assessments.

Second, enable water reuse for non-potable purposes in urban areas. Shifting from a linear to a circular approach to water use is essential to reduce pressure on freshwater resources. Used water can be treated and reused for activities such as car washing, landscaping, and cooling data centres. City-level reuse planning is key to achieving this. The Thane Municipal Corporation is adopting a scientific approach to scale up treated wastewater reuse, including for construction, to reduce its annual freshwater deficit of 53 million litres per day and generate revenue. According to CEEW analysis, the economic opportunity from the sale of treated wastewater could reach ₹3 lakh crore and generate 1,00,000 additional jobs by 2047.

Third, scale up micro-irrigation systems, including drip and sprinkler technologies that deliver water to crops more efficiently than flood irrigation. Expanding these systems beyond the current 20% coverage of India’s potential 72 million hectares of irrigated area requires large-scale interventions. First, the CEEW’s Gujarat research shows that micro-irrigation

subsidies should be redesigned for small and marginal farmers by using 0.4 hectares instead of one hectare as the base unit. Second, farmers need support to shift to low-water, higher-value crops such as horticulture and oilseeds to recover costs, as seen in Andhra Pradesh’s Rayalaseema region. Third, low-cost insurance with faster claims, including through a strengthened Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana, can help smallholders manage climate and crop risks.

Close water data gaps

Finally, generate data at the river basin level to improve decision-making. India has good data on water availability, but limited data on withdrawals, losses, and consumption at the basin scale. This makes it difficult to assess actual water use, gauge efficiency gains, or allocate water judiciously – often leading one sector to gain at the expense of others, while the lack of data encourages “free riding”, with users extracting as much as the source allows. Artificial Intelligence-based monitoring of water conveyance infrastructure can help detect and measure losses and also generate data. Cities such as Delhi and Bhubaneswar (Odisha) are installing smart bulk water meters to identify and reduce physical losses during distribution. Equally important is analysing end-user consumption by scaling up smart metering and using advanced water accounting tools. India’s rollout of over 4.93 crore smart electricity meters can serve as a model for the water sector.

Water is an economic resource – it powers lives, livelihoods, and ecosystems. Reversing water bankruptcy will be the foundation of social welfare. Political will, transparent governance, and societal trust are the levers. Pull them, and India can still turn the tide toward a water-secure future.

The views expressed are personal

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Judicial reliance on AI

It is astounding that the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT), Mumbai, used an AI-generated case law without verifying its authenticity and delivered an order under Section 7 of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC) in a ₹200 crore credit facility

case against a bank (Front page, July 3). The incident shows that the NCLTs are not fully aware of the pitfalls of using AI indiscriminately. The temptation for judicial authorities to rely on AI may be considerable, but the Supreme Court of India’s advice to adopt “zero

tolerance” towards reliance on AI should be scrupulously followed by all courts in the interest of the judicial system. Kosaraju Chandramouli, Hyderabad

Meaningful advertising

It was interesting to read the column “From the

Archives: Fifty Years Ago” on the necessity of conviction in advertisements. Fifty years on, despite the

availability of advanced techniques and technologies, the quality of advertisements has only

Corrections & Clarifications

In a report, “GST revenues up 14% in June amid dependence on imports” (Page 1, July 2), a sentence should have read: “Revenue from imports... grew nearly 35% in June 2026 to ₹0.6 lakh crore”, and not ₹6 lakh crore.

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deteriorated, with many becoming loud, gaudy, and meaningless. There is a glaring excess instead of dignified moderation.

Balasubramaniam Pavani, Secunderabad

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



CBSE directed all affiliated schools to implement the three-language formula under NEP 2020, from Class 6. The policy requires that two of the three languages be native Indian languages. Students attend school for the new academic year. G.N. RAO

Inside India’s language conundrum

The CBSE’s move to implement the National Education Policy 2020’s three-language formula from Class 6 has caused confusion across the country. The transition has led to teacher losses, curriculum disruptions, and concerns from parents, students, and foreign embassies. **Maitri Porecha** reports on the many challenges in implementing the three-language formula in a country as diverse as India

When the summer break came to an end, 10-year-old Adya Pandey, a Class 6 student of Seth Anandram Jaipuria School in Greater Noida West, packed her bag for school. She stuffed a bunch of books inside, including her French textbook, but then, on a sudden realisation, pulled it out and tossed it on the table.

“It hasn’t sunk in yet that I won’t be studying French at school any more,” she said.

Adya, who studies in an English-medium school, had been learning French and Hindi. She had chosen French as her third language a year ago, when she was in Class 5. In April, when the academic session of 2026-27 began, she attended French classes at school and diligently finished studying three chapters from her textbook.

However, in the same month, the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) directed all affiliated schools, with altogether about 40 lakh children, to implement the three-language formula under the National Education Policy (NEP), 2020, from Class 6. The policy requires that two of the three languages be native Indian languages (*Bhartiya Bhasha*).

Following this, many English-medium schools, including Adya’s, issued circulars in May saying they would discontinue foreign languages such as French as the third language. The CBSE also considers English a foreign language, despite it being one of the 22 official languages in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution.

In place of foreign languages, many schools decided to offer Sanskrit as the third language. A circular from Delhi Public School in Greater Noida West explained, “Because of the linguistic diversity of our learners, implementation of any other native Indian language is not logistically viable. Therefore, as a school, we have decided to offer Sanskrit as the third language.”

Adya said she was shocked to receive a circular from her school asking students to stop learning German and French at school. “Around 25 of us had chosen French, 20 had opted for German, and only 15 had chosen Sanskrit. Now, all 60 of us will have to learn Sanskrit,” she said.

Her mother, Monika, said that Sanskrit has become largely obsolete today. “Adya can fluently recite shlokas from Hindu scriptures such as the *Ramcharitmanas* and the *Hanuman Chalisa*. These are the values we inculcate at home, but I believe learning a foreign language will help her from a career perspective,” said Monika.

The three-language formula proposed by the NEP, 2020, which mandates that students learn at least two native Indian languages, has departed from the previous policy of 1968, which had emphasised the study of Hindi, English, and a modern Indian language (preferably one of the southern languages) in Hindi-speaking States, and Hindi, English, and a regional language in the non-Hindi speaking States.

The hasty roll-out of the policy, and the subsequent change in rules by the government, have caused chaos in CBSE schools across the country, with parents and students struggling with curriculum shifts and shortage of teachers.

Backlash and brief respite

Bani, 12, is a Class 8 student at Delhi Public School, Vasant Kunj. She was admitted under the Economically Weaker Section quota and has been studying French for the last four years. Her father, Navraj, works as a driver, while her moth-



Adya can fluently recite shlokas from Hindu scriptures. These are the values we inculcate at home, but I believe learning a foreign language will help her from a career perspective.

MONIKA
Mother of Adya Pandey, a Class 6 CBSE student

er, Saraswati, takes up cooking and housekeeping jobs to help support the family.

In May, Navraj was among the many parents who moved the Supreme Court challenging another CBSE circular, issued on May 15. It stated that all Class 9 students – including those who had previously been studying foreign languages – would instead study three languages, two of which must be native to India. Until this circular was issued, Class 9 students were required to study only two languages.

Although the directive applied only to Class 9, many schools forced students in Classes 7 and 8 to drop foreign languages as well, say parents. After the Court refused to stay the CBSE circular, the hopes of students of continuing to study the foreign language of their choice were dashed.

On June 25, however, following a backlash, Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan clarified that the CBSE would relax its requirement for the present students of Classes 7, 8, and 9 to switch abruptly, mid-session, from studying a foreign language to studying a native Indian one. However, Classes 7, 8, and 9 students will still have to study a third language native to India.

For instance, if a student studying in an English-medium school chose French as her second language, she would, as per the May circular, have had to drop French and learn two languages native to India. But following the clarification, she can continue learning French but will still have to study a native tongue, which can be Hindi or any other regional language.

Bani falls under this category. “I am glad I can continue learning the language I have been learning since Class 4,” she said.

This indecisiveness on the part of the Ministry of Education regarding the language policy has caused confusion across schools. After the CBSE stated that Class 9 students would have to switch mid-session from foreign to native languages, many schools, such as Heritage Xperiential Learning School in Gurugram, either let go of their foreign language teachers or reassigned them to teach other subjects.

A principal from a private CBSE English-medium school in Mangaluru, Karnataka, said, “Earlier, we offered French, but after the CBSE circular in May, we let go of the French teacher. We also had an option for students to learn Konkani, but since we could not find a qualified Konkani teacher, we dropped it from the list. Now, we offer only English, Hindi, Kannada, and Sanskrit.”



Around 40 lakh students study across various CBSE schools in India. SRIBHARATH G.

CBSE-affiliated schools in Puducherry had dropped French from the 2026-27 curriculum. This raised concerns over the livelihoods of French teachers in the Union Territory where French enjoys constitutional recognition.

Foreign languages impacted

According to data accessed by *The Hindu*, about 4.5 lakh students in India study French in school, while nearly 1.5 lakh learn German. In many schools, students begin learning these foreign languages as early as Classes 4, 5, or 6.

CBSE has stated that it has relaxed norms only for students in Classes 7, 8, and 9 who have already chosen a foreign language, but students in Class 6 will have to opt to learn three languages, of which two will have to be native to India. This essentially means that foreign language teaching will eventually be phased out of CBSE schools.

This decision has ruffled feathers in diplomatic circles. Sources said that the German and French embassies, which invest “significant funds” running into millions of euros in developing teaching infrastructure, preparing course materials, training teachers, and conducting language exams jointly “pushed back” against the Indian government’s decision. A spokesperson of the German embassy said to *The Hindu*, “The embassy has confirmed that it is in contact with the Indian government on the issue.”

The Centre’s decision to reduce the role of foreign languages such as French and German in schools appears to be at odds with its broader efforts to strengthen educational and diplomatic ties with European countries.

Earlier this year, during Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s visit to Germany, he and German Chancellor Friedrich Merz noted the growing number of Indian students pursuing higher education in Germany and welcomed the creation of an Indo-German Comprehensive Roadmap on Higher Education, according to a statement issued by the Ministry of External Affairs.

“Germany is an attractive market for skilled Indian labour and there is an ambitious plan in place there for the migration of skilled labour,” said a source. “Learning German is important for this community. How can you fulfil their ambitions if you don’t support foreign language learning?”

Anuradha Karkun, a French language trainer and teacher based in the National Capital Region, said, “Students perceive learning foreign languages like French and German useful as it also helps them gain admission in renowned universities abroad. A working knowledge of the country’s language in which a student wishes to pursue higher education is favourable even if the course is being taught in English.”

Karkun is also a qualified examiner for the Diplôme d’Études en Langue Française (DELFI). The DELF and the DALF (Diplôme Approfondi de Langue Française) are official international French language diplomas issued by the French Ministry of Education and are recognised for study, work, and immigration in French-speaking countries.

She explained that DELF certificates are in high demand among school students. According to data cited by *The Hindu*, around 11,000 candidates take the DELF examinations each year, including about 4,000 students who appear for DELF Junior, designed for school learners.

“Candidates as young as 11 years old (Class 6) prepare for DELF A1 levels,” said Karkun. “By the time they are in Class 12, many progress to fairly advanced levels of B2. Early learning is made possible because they are already studying French at school. Learning a foreign language, in this case French, enables students to gain a broader intercultural world view empowering them as future ambassadors of India and global citizens.”

The cost of compulsion

The NEP 2020 states that it offers greater flexibility in the three-language formula and that no language will be imposed on any State. It says that the three languages learned by students will be determined by the choices of States, regions, and the students themselves, provided that at least two of the three languages are native to India. However, data indicate that the implementa-



We respect Sanskrit as a language of immense historical and classical value. But for children of Nagaland, studying Sanskrit as their third language will not help them connect with their Angami grandmother, their Konyak grandfather, or the oral stories of their own community.

PRINCIPAL
CBSE school, Nagaland

tion of the three-language policy varies widely across States. According to an analysis of the share of schools based on languages taught at the primary stage (Classes 1-5), conducted by the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) in 2009, Hindi-speaking States largely opt for Sanskrit as the third language in school. This is the last such data available on language preferences in schools across India, as no follow-up survey was conducted by the NCERT. It is not available in the public domain and was accessed by *The Hindu* through sources.

This is largely why implementation of the three-language formula under the NEP, 2020, has seen intense political opposition from some States. Tamil Nadu’s resistance to learning three languages dates back to the pre-Independence era. The 1968 draft of the NEP proposed that regions in southern India learn a north Indian language, and vice versa, in order to foster “national integration”; however, Tamil Nadu rejected this position and excluded the proposed introduction of Hindi from its curriculum. Six decades later, little has changed. Chief Minister C. Joseph Vijay has said that students in the State will learn only two languages, with Tamil and English being the primary choices.

Anita Rampal, who was Professor and Dean at the Faculty of Education, Delhi University, said Tamil Nadu’s two-language formula is not, as is often assumed, Tamil and English, but rather the mother tongue and English. “It is important to note that even after the implementation of the Tamil Nadu Tamil Learning Act, 2006, and the Tamil Nadu Tamil Learning Rules, 2012, minority-language schools, such as Urdu schools, are exempted from learning Tamil,” she explained.

Even States such as Kerala, which have generally supported the three-language formula, are now facing uncertainty over the latest CBSE decision. Many elite and private CBSE schools in Kerala previously allowed students to opt for popular foreign languages such as French, German, or Arabic – sometimes in place of Hindi or Malayalam – given the State’s strong links with the Gulf region. This will no longer be possible in the coming years as the CBSE is set to implement the revised three-language framework prospectively from Class 6 in the 2026-27 academic year, eventually extending it to Class 10 by 2030-31.

For State Board schools, Telangana has typically followed the three-language policy, with an emphasis on the mandatory learning of Telugu. Alongside Telugu, students can choose any two languages from English, Hindi, and Urdu.

However, policies that mandate language instruction often face resistance, and the Telangana (Compulsory Teaching and Learning of Telugu in Schools) Act, 2018, is no exception.

“We were unable to fully implement the policy, especially due to resistance from students and schools affiliated to central and international boards, since its enactment in 2018,” said a senior official in the Telangana School Education Department. The latest CBSE directive on the mandatory three-language policy for Class 6 has now paved the way for the State government to fully implement the aforementioned Act.

The infrastructure hurdle

Mostly, challenges in implementing the three-language formula arise from a lack of adequately trained teachers and the unavailability of learning material across regional languages.

According to the Unified District Information System for Education 2023-24, the government’s primary management information system for school education, 61.6% schools across India teach three languages. The rest (38.4%) teach either one or two languages.

The State Board in Uttar Pradesh, for instance, had expressed interest in introducing the three-language formula for students from Class 9 onwards last year. However, officials told *The Hindu* that the policy has not been implemented in the academic years 2025-26 and 2026-27. In the case of south Indian languages, State Education Department officials said there are very few available teachers. “We had 17 students of Kannada, 10 students of Tamil, and 133 students of Telugu registered with us in the academic year 2025-26. These students appeared as private candidates and prepared on their own for language exams,” said Bhagwati Singh, Secretary, Madhyamik Shiksha Parishad, the State Board of U.P. entrusted to conduct exams for Classes 10 and 12.

Nagaland in the north-east, which has a distinct socio-linguistic context, has also expressed resistance to the three-language formula. This is partly because the State and Centre have yet to provide adequate learning infrastructure for classrooms comprising children from over 30 different linguistic backgrounds.

“Naga students find it difficult to follow Hindi,” said a principal of a CBSE school in Nagaland. “Schools in Nagaland seeking a workable path within the current policy framework are facing a difficult dilemma and are converging on a troubling default – Sanskrit. We respect Sanskrit as a language of immense historical and classical value. But we must be candid: for children of Nagaland, studying Sanskrit as their third language will not help them connect with their Angami grandmother, their Konyak grandfather, or the oral stories of their own community.”

With inputs from B. Pradeep in Hyderabad, Mayank Kumar in Uttar Pradesh, and Rashmi Patil in Mangaluru

A ND-NDE

Democracy is in jeopardy, INDIA bloc writes to CJI

Opposition leaders express concern over SIR in Bengal and Bihar; allege manipulation of polls in Delhi, Haryana, Maharashtra; the EC's independence has eroded in recent years, they say in letter

Sobhana K. Nair
NEW DELHI

Alleging manipulation of elections, partisan conduct by the Election Commission (EC), and the misuse of Central investigation agencies against Opposition parties, leaders of the Indian National Developmental, Inclusive Alliance, in a joint memorandum addressed to Chief Justice of India Surya Kant, said they were taking the unusual step of reaching out to the CJI because they believed that “democracy is in jeopardy”.

‘Manipulated elections’
The June 28 letter was released to the media by the Opposition on Friday. Signed by leaders of 23 Opposition parties and Independent MP Kapil Sibal, it detailed concerns over the special intensive revision (SIR) in West Bengal and Bihar. The leaders alleged that the recent elections in Delhi, Haryana, and Maharashtra had been “manipulated”. The leaders said they were approaching the court because they believed democratic institutions were under strain and that electoral outcomes in several instances did not accurately reflect the will of the people. Delineating the EC’s conduct from 2014, the Opposition parties said there were hardly any instances, barring a few exceptions, when questions were



The Opposition parties raised concerns over the brazenly biased conduct of the Chief Election Commissioner.

raised about the integrity of persons in the commission before 2014. “But since 2014, almost every appointment made by the government has been of persons closely associated with it and seen to be doing the bidding of the government, brazenly, to manipulate the outcome of election results,” the letter said. The Opposition leaders alleged that the Election Commission’s independence had eroded in recent years. Referring to the Supreme Court’s judgment in the *Anoop Baranwal* case, they argued that judicial concerns about the process of appointing Election Commissioners remained relevant. The letter criticised changes made through subsequent legislation, which removed the Chief Justice of India from the committee responsible for appointing the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) and other Election Commissioners. Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar’s

“brazenly biased conduct”, coupled with his “open, unabashed support of the BJP during the course of and in the outcome of electoral processes”, was a matter of grave concern, the Opposition said in its letter. They accused the EC of not being “even-handed” in the application of the Model Code of Conduct (MCC) ahead of elections, “by choosing not to take action when the MCC is breached by the political party in power – all this while targeting those in the Opposition”. The parties questioned the rationale behind conducting the SIR. The political rhetoric surrounding the exercise, the Opposition claimed, centred on the alleged infiltration of Bangladeshis into the Bihar electoral rolls. “Now that the Bihar Assembly elections are over, there is absolutely no data to suggest that such an infiltration indeed took place, nor has the Election Commission made public any data

with respect to the number of Bangladeshis having illegally acquired the right to vote in India,” the letter noted. The situation became worse in West Bengal, where, the Opposition said, the government was under siege with the presence of 2.4 lakh CAPF personnel. “To put this in context, 3.5 lakh CAPF personnel were deployed for the entire Lok Sabha election in 2024,” the letter pointed out. It also complained of the arbitrary removal of voters under a “never used before category” of logical discrepancies. “We believe that recently conducted elections in Delhi, Haryana and Maharashtra were also manipulated,” the letter said. **Suspension of SIR** The Opposition has demanded the immediate suspension of the SIR, arguing that such a comprehensive overhaul of the electoral rolls should be undertaken only when the next Assembly election is at least five years away. “Judges do not live in ivory towers. You too are aware of what is happening on the ground. The legacy media is largely compromised, but there are many independent platforms that are still speaking truth to power,” the letter said. At the same time, the Opposition maintained that it was not questioning the judiciary.

BJP terms the letter a ‘dangerous conspiracy’

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) on Friday targeted the Congress and its allies, alleging a “dangerous conspiracy to malign Indian democracy” through attempts to delegitimise democratic processes and constitutional institutions, particularly the Election Commission. Reacting sharply to a letter written by 23 Opposition parties to the Chief Justice of India, alleging “biased” conduct by the Election Commission and questioning the special intensive revision (SIR) process, BJP MP and spokesperson Sudhanshu Trivedi described the move as an “attack on democracy”. “The language and tone used in the letter are reminiscent of the arrogant attitude witnessed during the Emergency,” said Mr. Trivedi. He said the SIR process had already been held to be completely reasonable and lawful by various courts. “From the constitutional point of view, they have failed to place any factual matter before the court,” he said. “Is it not true that senior Congress leader Shashi Tharoor remarked on a television programme that the Congress benefited from SIR in Kerala? In Karnataka, Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar is directing his party workers to participate actively in the SIR process, while you cast aspersions on the very same process,” claimed the BJP leader.

Ram Temple ‘theft’ has hurt sentiment of Hindus, says RSS

Ishita Mishra
NEW DELHI

In its first official reaction to the Ayodhya Ram Temple embezzlement controversy, the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) on Friday appealed to Hindus to “remain united”, and urged the authorities to ensure strict punishment for those found guilty. It cautioned against “conspiracies (by) anti-Hindu, anti-national forces” to exploit the incident and “malign Hinduism and society”. In a video statement, RSS general secretary Dattatreya Hosabale said the temple, built after the “struggles of generations” and the “sacrifices” of crores of Ram devotees, had become a centre of reverence and faith for the Hindu community. Calling the alleged theft from the temple’s donation boxes “unfortunate”, Mr. Hosabale said the incident had hurt the sentiments of devotees and the wider Hindu society. Referring to the steps taken by the Uttar Pradesh government, he said a special investigation team (SIT) had been constituted at the request of the Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust and that legal proceedings had been initiated based on its recommendations. He said those found guilty in the investigation should face strict punishment. The RSS said the incident should be treated as an “exceptional case”, and called for comprehensive



Dattatreya Hosabale

measures to address deficiencies in the temple’s administrative and operational systems. It said the confusion surrounding the matter should be brought to an end through corrective action by the temple management and the SIT. The organisation expressed confidence that transparent financial management, efficient operations and systems ensuring accountability would help reinforce public confidence in the Trust and preserve the faith of devotees.

‘Insult to injury’
Reacting to the RSS statement, Congress leader Pawan Khera said, “The loot of Ram Mandir funds has deeply hurt the faith of Hindus across the country. But what adds insult to this injury is the RSS’s sudden outrage over the alleged theft of Ram Mandir donations. The truth is that if the RSS were sincerely committed to safeguarding devotees’ donations, embezzlement on such a scale would never have taken place at a temple that is directly under its watch.”

Senior Trust officials being shielded, says Congress

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Congress on Friday questioned the investigation into the alleged theft of donations from the Ram temple in Ayodhya, accusing the BJP governments at the Centre and Uttar Pradesh of shielding senior functionaries of the Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust, including its former general secretary Champat Rai, by making junior employees the scapegoats. The party asked Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who had taken “full credit” for the construction of the temple, to break his silence on the issue and accept responsibility for what it termed as a “breach of public trust”. Addressing a press conference, Congress spokesperson Ragini Nayak demanded that the accounts of nearly ₹1,400 crore collected from devotees for the construction of the temple before the formation of the Trust be made public. Ms. Nayak demanded the immediate dissolution of the Trust and a Supreme Court-monitored probe into its functioning and financial transactions, while questioning why the report of the special investigation team (SIT), constituted by the State government, had not been made public. She questioned whether the Trust had been deliberately kept outside the ambit of the Right to Information Act to shield its financial dealings from public scrutiny.

Fresh turbulence in Punjab Congress as Channi holds show of strength, Randhawa meets Shah

Sandeep Phukan
NEW DELHI

The revamp of the Punjab Congress has triggered fresh turbulence in the State unit, with former Chief Minister Charanjit Singh Channi on Friday convening a meeting of party leaders and supporters to press the high command to appoint him president of the Punjab Congress Committee (PCC). Mr. Channi, the Lok Sabha member from Jalandhar and a Dalit, met his loyalists at his residence in Morinda, about 30 km from Chandigarh. In Delhi, senior Congress leader and Gurdaspur Lok Sabha member Sukhjinder Singh Randhawa’s meeting with Union Home Minister Amit Shah only added to the sense of turmoil within the State unit, though he maintained that the interaction



Congress leader Charanjit Singh Channi with Punjab Congress Legislature Party leader Partap Singh Bajwa. FILE PHOTO

was solely to discuss Punjab’s deteriorating law and order situation. The All India Congress Committee (AICC), while announcing several election-related committees for Punjab on Wednesday, appointed Mr. Channi as the chairperson of the Campaign Committee but retained Amrinder Singh Raja

Warring as PCC president. The decision, sources said, had upset Mr. Channi, and Friday’s meeting was intended to convey his displeasure to the party leadership. “We have no issues with the high command, but we do have some objections. We want the leadership to hear our grievances and resolve

them so that the Congress party comes to power,” Tripat Rajinder Singh Bajwa, MLA, told presspersons. Sharing a video of Mr. Bajwa’s remarks on X, Mr. Channi posted, “Congress party leadership called on me at my residence and urged me to present the sentiments and aspirations of the people of Punjab before the high command.” Among those present at the meeting were former Deputy Chief Minister O.P. Soni, former Ministers Bharat Bhushan Ashu and Gurpreet Singh Kangar, former MP Mohd. Sadiq, and former MLAs Nazar Singh Manshahia, Gurkirat Singh Kotli, Lakhvir Singh Lakha, Darshan Singh Brar and Tarsem Singh. Mr. Randhawa, who has been appointed chairperson of the Core Committee in

Punjab, said his meeting with the Home Minister was a follow-up to a letter he had written to the Prime Minister on law and order issues, including the predominance of gangsters, extortion and narco-terrorism. **Discontent brews** The senior Congress leader, however, acknowledged a sense of disquiet within the party and said only AICC observer Ajay Maken could explain the basis of the report he had submitted to the high command on the changes to be made in the State unit. “It certainly hurts when all this is happening after a list comes out... and I don’t know what it means,” Mr. Randhawa said. “The situation is not as bad as you think. But it is a matter to ponder that it should not have come to this....,” he added.

Legislative debates must focus on solutions, says Om Birla

Senjuti Sengupta
KOLKATA

Legislative debates in the Houses must focus on solutions, not merely criticism, said Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla on Friday, launching a two-day orientation programme for the members of the West Bengal Assembly. “Constructive debate is the hallmark of a vibrant democracy. While criticism is an essential component of legislative functioning, every discussion should also offer practical solutions to public problems. Legislators should base their interventions on facts, research, and reasoned

Legislators should base their interventions on facts, research, and reasoned arguments, the Speaker says
arguments to enrich the quality of democratic discourse. Every debate, law, and policy should be guided by public welfare and aimed at finding practical solutions to citizens’ challenges,” said Mr. Birla, addressing the event. “Agreement and disagreement are natural features of democracy,” he added. However, Mr. Birla emphasised that differences must always

be expressed through reasoned, dignified, and respectful debate. The Lok Sabha Secretariat, and the Parliamentary Research and Training Institute for Democracies (PRIDE), in collaboration with the West Bengal Legislative Assembly is organising the orientation programme to familiarise newly elected members with various aspects of parliamentary and legislative functioning. Calling upon the MLAs to remain lifelong learners, Mr. Birla urged them to regularly study previous debates, landmark legislations, and best parliamentary practices.

Feminist network seeks ‘fixes’ in SIR third phase

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The All-India Feminist Alliance (ALIFA-NAPM), a pan-India network of feminist organisations and individuals, has submitted an urgent appeal to the Election Commission demanding immediate electoral reforms to prevent the large-scale disenfranchisement of women and transgender persons during the ongoing special intensive revision (SIR) of poll rolls. The alliance claimed that data from the first two SIR phases across 13 States and Union Territories showed an 8.9% drop in voters, with wo-

men, transgender individuals, and marginalised minority communities being deleted at disproportionate rates. The group called for a major “mid-course” correction during the third phase of the voter list revision process. The key demands include expanding eligibility criteria, shifting away from patriarchal lineage and household proofs to recognise alternative documentation like marriage invitation cards or school certificates, accepting transgender IDs or gazette notifications, establishing self-determination of gender, and create safe linkage methods for those estranged from families.

Uttarakhand Tourism Development Board (UTDB)
Pandit Deendayal Upadhyay Paryatan Bhawan, Near O.N.G.C. Helipad,
Nimbuwala, Garhi Cantt, Dehradun - 248003 (UK)
Ph. 0135-2559898, Fax 135-2559988

Ref. No. 1987/2-7-1035/2026-27Dated: 03 July, 2026

SELECTION OF A TRAINING AGENCY FOR OUTDOOR EDUCATION,WILDERNESS MEDICINE & GUIDE CAPACITY BUILDING

Details may be obtained on website: uktenders.gov.in from 3:00 PM on 04.07.2026. **Pre-bid meeting will be held at 12:30 PM on 13.07.2026.** Prospective Bidders may seek clarification till 3:00 PM on 08.07.2026 through E-mail: adventurewingutdb@gmail.com with CC to procurement.utdb@gmail.com. Any Addendum / Corrigendum including date extension will be uploaded on uktenders.gov.in. Proposals must be submitted online through uktenders.gov.in only. The last date for submission of proposals is **27.07.2026 till 3:00 PM.**

Chief Executive Officer

**GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
HIGHER EDUCATION DEPARTMENT**
Lokaseva Bhavan, Sachivalaya Marg, Bhubaneswar-751001
Phone: 0674-2390154 | Website: <https://dhe.odisha.gov.in> |
Mail: section1thed@gmail.com

CORRIGENDUM-III

The tender for the development of 83 digital application modules was published on the Department's official website and in two leading newspapers each in Odia and English on 04.06.2026. Subsequently, the last date for submission of bid documents was extended up to 03.07.2026 vide Department Letter No. 34572/HE, dated 25.06.2026. It is hereby notified that **the last date and time for submission of bid documents is further extended up to 07.07.2026, 5 PM.** Tenders received after the stipulated date and time shall not be entertained.

For more details like corrigendum, clarification etc. concerning to the bidding, visit our official website <https://dhe.odisha.gov.in>

NOTE - The Department reserves the right to accept or reject any or all tenders without assigning any reason thereof.

Bids must be sent via speed/Registered Post/Courier to :
Additional Secretary to Government, Higher Education Department, Lok Seva Bhawan, Bhubaneswar-751001 Or by E-mail : section1thed@gmail.com

11001/188/2627OIPR-11001/11001/1/26-27/0021

**DIRECTORATE OF TEXTILES & HANDLOOM, ODISHA
GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA**
AT/PO-SATYANAGAR, BHUBANESWAR - 751007
Phone No. 0674- 2575783 ; Email- textiles.odisha@gov.in
No. **4892** / Dated the **02/07/2026**

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (EOI)

“FOR DEVELOPMENT OF AN INTEGRATED SILK SPINNING UNIT UNDER PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP (PPP) MODE ON DESIGN, BUILD, FINANCE, OPERATE AND TRANSFER (DBFOT) BASIS”

The Directorate of Textiles & Handloom, Odisha under the Handloom, Textiles, and Handicrafts Department, Government of Odisha invites proposals from prospective applicant (s) for Expression of Interest for selection of a Bidder for Development of an Integrated Silk Spinning Unit under Public Private Partnership (PPP) mode on Design, Build, Finance, Operate and Transfer (DBFOT) basis in accordance with the conditions and manner prescribed in the EOI document.

The proposals should be submitted by the interested parties to the Director of Textiles, Directorate of Textiles & Handlooms, Odisha at Satya Nagar, Bhubaneswar-751007, Odisha on or before **05.08.2026 upto 05:00 PM.** The detailed EOI may be downloaded from the e-tender portal <https://tendersodisha.gov.in/nicgep/app>, Handlooms, Textiles & Handicrafts Department website: <https://handloom.odisha.gov.in> and Directorate website : <http://textiles.odisha.gov.in>

Further details about the project and submissions are available in the Eoi document. Interested firms are requested to download the Eoi document from the e-Procurement portal of Government of Odisha <https://tendersodisha.gov.in/nicgep/app>. The last date for submission of Eoi by interested firms is **05.08.2026 upto 05:00 PM.**

For further information, please contact <http://textiles.odisha.gov.in> or call at +91 9837267419

81001/48/2627OIPR-31001/31003/1/26-27/0006

Business

INBRIEF



HCLTech bags \$1.14 billion deal from European firm

HCLTech on Friday said it has secured a \$1.14 billion deal from a Europe-headquartered Fortune Global 50 company to transform and manage its digital workplace and enterprise networks. HCLTech will establish an AI-driven operating model for the client, according to a regulatory filing. The initial term of the agreement spans five-and-a-half years, from July 2026 to December 2031, with an option to extend the partnership for a further period of 5 years.

Nayara's gasoline sold to Russia via traders, sources say

Traders have sold gasoline produced by Indian refiner Nayara Energy to Russia, which is grappling with fuel shortages triggered by Ukrainian attacks on its energy infrastructure, two sources with direct knowledge of the matter said on Thursday. Reuters reported on Wednesday that Russia had begun seaborne imports of gasoline from India, without naming the supplier. Nayara did not respond to an email from Reuters seeking comment.

IIFL Finance raised \$300 mn via social debt issue: Bankers

IIFL Finance has accepted bids worth \$300 million for a four-year social dollar bond, in its second such fundraising in less than a month, two merchant bankers said on Friday. The non-banking finance company will offer a yield of 7.75% to investors, slightly below the initial price guidance at about 7.85%, the bankers added, requesting anonymity as they are not authorised to speak to the media. IIFL Finance did not reply to a Reuters email seeking comment.

Centre orders blocking of battery management apps

Action comes after e-rickshaws in various parts of the country were turned off via apps developed by Chinese firms to manage lithium ion battery packs; extortion incident reported in Ujjain

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Union government on Friday issued orders to block battery management apps after some users discovered they were able to remotely use them to shut down e-rickshaw batteries even as those vehicles were transporting passengers, an official said.

The apps, mostly developed by Chinese firms, appeared to be designed for legitimate battery owners.

The developers of three such apps – named by a Ministry official – Shenzhen Grenergy Technology, Shenzhen Ruichuang Lineng Technology, and Daly BMS, did not respond to queries from The Hindu.

It is unclear if banning the apps would completely eliminate the vulnerability, as these apps do not require Internet access to hijack and shut off battery units without a configured password or PIN. Testing standards to certify e-rick-



Soft targets: Testing standards to certify e-rickshaws do not include cybersecurity requirements. FILE PHOTO

shaws do not include cybersecurity requirements.

Lithium ion battery packs include battery management systems to monitor charge, voltage, temperature and cell health. Instagram reels demonstrating this vulnerability on roads went viral over the week, showing rickshaws grinding to a halt.

A senior official pointed out to The Hindu that stranding vehicles like this was a punishable offence, and that “regular IPC/BNS sections of criminal mis-

chief will apply”.

The Information Technology Act, 2000 also contains anti-hacking provisions that could apply to smart battery systems.

In Ujjain, the police even caught a person demanding money from e-rickshaw drivers after using the exploit to disable their vehicles. Neel Ganga Police Station in-charge Tarun Kuril stated that the racket came to light following a targeted extortion incident at Loti Tiraha.

“We received informa-

tion that an auto-rickshaw driver’s vehicle had stalled at Loti Tiraha, and a young man charged him ₹200 on the pretext of fixing it.

Upon inquiry, the driver revealed that e-rickshaws in the city are being shut down remotely. Specifically, their batteries are being disabled via a mobile app.

“Some miscreants use this app to immobilise the vehicles and then demand money to restart them,” Mr. Kuril said.

Three-wheeler e-rickshaws are typically categorised as L5M vehicles, and manufacturers such as Speego obtain certifications from the International Centre for Automotive Technology (ICAT). A review of the certification requirements on ICAT’s website shows that while electrical and mechanical safety and roadworthiness are covered, cybersecurity requirements enumerated in standards such as AIS-189 are not required for e-rickshaws.

(With agency inputs)

‘Indian firms will have to leave comfort zone to achieve \$1 tn exports’

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal on Friday reiterated his target of \$1 trillion of exports this year, but also said that Indian companies would have to push themselves out of their “cosy and comfortable” domestic market and actively work towards building their brands abroad.

‘Difficult, yet possible’ Speaking at the Board of Trade meeting at the Ministry of Commerce, Mr. Goyal admitted that the \$1 trillion export target would be difficult to achieve, but added that it was possible since the other countries were keen to trade with India.

“The world wants to work with us,” he said. “We have to go out and capture those world markets. Wherever I go in the world, they are very keen to work with us. It’s our industry that shows weakness. We are cosy and comfortable in our domestic market, but to get into the export market, we need



Piyush Goyal

scale, quality, and outreach. It will not happen by just sitting at home.”

He told the gathered export promotion councils that the government’s Export Promotion Mission would help them set up overseas branding, warehousing, and exhibitions if they needed.

“Please demand what you need, so your products can go to developed countries and countries with whom we have Free Trade Agreements,” Mr. Goyal said.

Several trade bodies made presentations at the meeting. According to sources present during the meeting, a common demand was for greater export-related credit.

SIFs see rapid adoption; asset base grows to ₹13,500 cr. by May-end

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

The newly introduced Specialised Investment Funds (SIFs) have witnessed rapid adoption, with the category crossing ₹13,814 crore in assets under management (AUM) since the regulatory

framework was introduced in February, a top Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) official said on Friday.

SEBI introduced SIFs to bridge the gap between regular mutual funds and high-ticket Portfolio Management Services (PMS).

SIFs target sophisticated investors through flexible hedging, derivatives, and long-short strategy.

Speaking at Assocham’s 17th Mutual Fund Summit, SEBI Whole-Time Member Amarjeet Singh said, “The regulatory framework for Specialised Investment

Fund (SIF) was introduced last year. The early response has been encouraging.”

Giving details, he said, “As on May 31 2026, SIFs have already garnered net assets under management of over ₹13,500 crore, spread across more than

56,000 investor folios”.

SIFs requires a minimum investment of ₹10 lakh and allow fund managers to use advanced strategies such as derivatives and long-short equity.

According to Mr. Singh, across 21 investment strategies launched, the maxi-

mum funds have been mobilised under the Hybrid Long Short investment strategy.

“This indicates a growing investor appetite for differentiated investment solutions within a well-regulated ecosystem,” the SEBI official added

‘Signs of stress in small ticket loans’

The Hindu Bureau
MUMBAI

Signs of delay in loan repayment has started to emerge in some segments of business loans even as the overall number suggests higher asset quality.

Unsecured business loans to MSMEs due for payment for more than 90 days (90+DPD), constituted 7.2% of the total unsecured outstanding business loans, as of March 2026, as per a CIBIL and SIDBI report. This is a rise of 274 basis points from March 2023.

Share of 90+DPD loans in total outstanding commercial balances reduced to 1.8% in March 2026 against 2.7% in the corresponding month in 2023 suggesting overall healthy performance by commercial lenders. This, howev-



MSME loans show some stress.

er, masks emerging slippages in unsecured business loan segment.

The statistic is crucial as share of individuals borrowing business loans rose to ₹18.3 lakh crore as of March 2026 of the total business loan book of ₹65.8 lakh crore. Individual business loans were just ₹10 lakh crore of total loan book which was also at much lower ₹42 lakh crore in March 2023.

India's services PMI growth at new low

Gurmehar Kaur
NEW DELHI

Activity in India’s services sector eased to its lowest level in 17 months, according to a private sector survey, driven by weak growth in new order intakes in over two-and-a-half years.

The HSBC India Services PMI Business Activity Index eased to 57.4 in June from 59.8 in May.

While the reading remained comfortably above the neutral 50-mark that separates expansion from contraction and above its long run average, it marked the slowest upturn since January 2025, the report noted.

“The loss of momentum points to more challenging market conditions and weaker demand, particularly at home,” said Pranjul Bhandari, chief India eco-

At home, firms cited intensifying competition and reduced client interest as main drag

nomist at HSBC.

New export orders rose at the fastest pace in three months with firms citing stronger demand from markets including Australia, Germany, Singapore, the UAE and the U.S., offering a rare pocket of momentum in an otherwise cooling month.

At home, firms pointed out to intensifying competition and reduced client interest as the main drag, even as some units reported gains from competitive pricing, stronger e-commerce demand, higher customer bookings and improved local tourism.

Assam estate sells country's first commercially produced matcha tea

The Hindu Bureau
GUWAHATI

An Assam tea estate on Friday sold India’s first commercially-produced matcha tea, marking a significant shift from conventional teas.

Matcha is made after shading Camellia sinensis tea leaves for three to four weeks before harvest. According to tea planters, blocking 90% of sunlight from the leaves boosts chlorophyll and amino acid levels and gives them distinct colour and flavour.

“Five kilograms of the first-ever batch of India-



Matcha tea field in Japan. (For representational purpose only)

produced matcha tea was sold at the Guwahati Tea Auction Centre during sale number 27. Auctioned by J. Thomas & C. Pvt. Ltd. and bought by Guwahati-based

Sheosons Chai Co., the premium tea fetched ₹3,000 per kg,” Dinesh Bihani, the secretary of Guwahati Tea Auction Buyers’ Association, said.

Making of matcha

“Matcha is made by finely grinding shade-grown tea leaves into vibrant green powder. Unlike usual green tea where leaves are steeped and discarded, matcha is whisked into water and taken entirely, giving higher levels of antioxidants, amino acids and natural caffeine,” he said.

The matcha came from Chota Tingrai Tea Estate in

eastern Assam’s Tinsukia district. Mrityunjay Jalan, the Chota Tingrai’s director, said his estate spent a decade collaborating closely with Japanese tea makers, agronomists, equipment suppliers and tea experts for matcha.

“We sought to bridge traditional Assam tea heritage with authentic Japanese expertise by establishing a fully automated, state-of-the-art Japanese tea manufacturing facility on our estate. We are confident matcha from Chota Tingrai will appeal to Indian and international households,” he said.

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1.	Providing the Multipurpose Shed including Toilet facilities at Maintenance sub division in VOC Port	40,47,870/-	80,957/-	22.07.2026
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i) https://etenders.gov.in/eprocure/app
ii) https://www.vocport.gov.in

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WASHINGTON

Trump says ‘ridiculous’ for U.S. to maintain current NATO support



President Donald Trump said on Thursday it is “ridiculous” for the United States to continue its “one sided” relationship with NATO, less than a week before a NATO summit in Ankara. Mr. Trump wrote on his Truth Social platform: “They were not there for us!!!” and Washington’s relationship with NATO “is not reciprocal”. AFP

ABUJA

U.S. withdrew forces from Nigeria after mission against IS: AFRICOM



The United States has withdrawn most of the forces it deployed for an operation against Islamic State militants in Nigeria and is now providing intelligence support at Abuja’s request, the head of U.S. Africa Command said. “Nigeria has been active since the operation in May,” AFRICOM Commander Gen. Dagvin Anderson said. REUTERS

GENEVA

UN human rights chief sounds ‘red alert’ over violence in Sudan



The United Nations human rights chief, Volker Turk, on Friday sounded a “red alert” about possible atrocity crimes in and near el-Obeid in central Sudan, calling on world leaders to do more to help stop the bloodshed in the country’s ongoing war between the army and paramilitary forces. AP

BRASILIA

Lula blasts Flavio Bolsonaro for requesting delay in U.S. tariff hike



Brazil’s leader Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva on Thursday lashed out at his right-wing rival Flavio Bolsonaro for looking to postpone potential U.S. tariff hikes until after the South American country’s elections. “Asking that the brutal rate hike against our country be postponed until after the elections is yet another act of treason.” AFP

Khamenei lies in state in Tehran for week of mass funeral events

Parliament Speaker Ghalibaf says Iran’s ‘call for vengeance must ring in the ears of the whole world’; Pakistan says Shehbaz Sharif will attend the ceremony; China, Afghanistan, and Caucasian countries say they will also be sending representatives

Agence France-Presse
TEHRAN

Iranian leaders began paying their respects on Friday before the coffin of the country’s late Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei, killed by U.S.-Israeli strikes on February 28, as Tehran prepared for a vast funeral. Khamenei’s body arrived at Tehran’s Grand Mosalla on Friday ahead of ceremonies which are expected to draw millions. A coterie of foreign dignitaries is also due to attend Saturday’s official ceremony, with Tehran’s chief negotiator calling for a massive turnout to

avenge his death. State TV broadcast footage of Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian paying his respects on Friday afternoon alongside Parliament Speaker and chief negotiator Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf. Ahmad Vahidi, head of the Revolutionary Guards, the ideological arm of the military, also appeared, making his first appearance since the start of the war. Preparations for Khamenei’s public funeral are taking place as Iran and the U.S. observe a fragile ceasefire. Pakistan, a key mediator in the U.S.-Iran talks, said



Mourners pay their respects before the coffins of Ali Khamenei and members of his family at the Grand Mosalla in Tehran on Friday. AP

its Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif would attend the ceremony. China, Afghanistan and Iran’s neighbours in the Caucasus region said they would also be sending representatives. On behalf of Indian government, Union Minister of State Pabitra Margherita and Bihar Governor Syed Ata Hasnain attended the ceremony on Friday and

Russia, Ukraine exchange strikes after attack on Kyiv

Agence France-Presse
KYIV

At least 10 people were killed in Ukrainian attacks on Russia and Moscow-held territory, local officials said on Friday, as Ukraine reported five killed in Russian attacks. The exchange of deadly strikes comes a day after Russia unleashed an overnight pummelling – one of the worst of the conflict – on Ukraine’s capital Kyiv, leaving at least 30 dead. On Friday, a Ukrainian strike on a market in the Russian-held part of the southern Zaporizhzhia region killed five persons, the Kremlin-appointed governor said. “This is a strike against civilian life – against people who had come to buy groceries,” Yevgeny Balit-



The site of what Ukrainian media reported was a Russian strike on the Ukrainian Red Cross warehouse in Kyiv on Friday. REUTERS

sky said on Telegram. He earlier said three people had been killed in separate attacks in the region. Ukraine meanwhile reported a strike on its north-eastern region of Sumy that set a house ablaze and killed four people – including a toddler. Three more people were wounded in the attack. Kyiv’s air force said on Friday that Russia launched two missiles and 105 drones at Ukraine overnight. Russia, meanwhile, shot down 155 Ukrainian drones overnight from Thursday to Friday over its regions and annexed Crimea, according to the Russian Defence Ministry.

Venezuela’s interim leader Delcy defends earthquake response

Associated Press
CATIA LA MAR



Delcy Rodriguez

Venezuela’s U.S.-backed acting President Delcy Rodriguez on Thursday issued a fiery defence of her government’s response to last week’s devastating earthquakes, lashing out at critics who say authorities reacted too slowly, pushing back on suggestions that the true death toll is far higher than the government has acknowledged and rejecting accusations that the nation’s shoddily constructed social housing exacerbated the disaster. At a press conference, Ms. Rodriguez refused to accept the criticism.

“We did not wait one day, two days or three days. We activated immediately,” she said, lacing into media outlets that she accused of spreading misinformation. Authorities have counted at least 2,295 people killed by the quake so far.

Houthis threaten Saudi after alleged airspace intrusion

Agence France-Presse
SANA

Yemen’s Houthis threatened on Friday Saudi airports and vital assets should Riyadh violate its airspace or attempt to attack it, as the rebels accused the kingdom of trying to stop an Iranian plane from landing. The threats followed a time of relative calm between Saudi Arabia and the Iran-backed rebels, which did not target Gulf states during the West Asia war that saw Iran pummel its oil-rich neighbours. “We warn the criminal Saudi enemy against repeating any attempt to vio-

late our airspace or any aggression targeting our country,” military spokesperson Yahya Saree said. “Such actions will be met with a comprehensive response targeting its airports and vital interests on land and sea.” Mr. Saree said the rebels had thwarted an attempt by Saudi warplanes to infiltrate their airspace in a bid “to prevent an Iranian civilian aircraft from landing at Sanaa International Airport”. Houthi media earlier reported that the aircraft had headed back to Tehran carrying the Houthi delegation meant to attend the funeral of Ali Khamenei.

Sri Lanka ex-Navy chief arrested over ‘illegal’ recruitment of Rajapaksa’s son

Meera Srinivasan
COLOMBO



Wasantha Karannagoda

Sri Lanka’s anti-graft authorities on Friday arrested former Navy Commander Wasantha Karannagoda in connection with the alleged illegal recruitment and overseas training of Yoshitha Rajapaksa, son of former President Mahinda Rajapaksa. The Colombo Chief Magistrate’s Court later granted him bail. Issuing a statement following the arrest, the Commission to Investigate Allegations of Bribery or Corruption (CIABOC) said Admiral of the Fleet Karannagoda was taken into custody over the “unlawful recruitment” of Mr. Yoshitha as a cadet executive officer despite his failing to meet

the required qualifications. It also alleged that Mr. Karannagoda facilitated Mr. Yoshitha’s training at the Royal Naval Academy in the United Kingdom at the state’s expense. Mr. Karannagoda commanded the Sri Lankan Navy when the state forces defeated the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), ending the coun-

try’s nearly three-decade civil war in May 2009. In 2019, he was conferred the Admiral of the Fleet rank. Mr. Karannagoda has previously been accused of abduction and conspiracy to murder in a sensational case, commonly referred to as the “Navy II” case in Sri Lanka, linked to the disappearance of 11 youth in 2008 and 2009. The case drew international attention, including from the United Nations and global rights groups, with many seeing it as emblematic of crimes committed by the military. Investigators traced the disappearance and alleged murder of the young men to an elaborate ransom scheme carried out by Na-

vy personnel. The charges against Mr. Karannagoda were dropped in October 2021 during President Gotabaya Rajapaksa’s time in office. Within months, President Gotabaya appointed him as the Governor of the North Western Province, sparking serious concern among victims’ families and rights activists. After President Anura Kumara Dissanayake came to power in September 2024, promising to wipe out corruption and bring perpetrators of high-profile crimes to justice, the victims’ families sought to revive the case. In March 2025, the United Kingdom sanctioned Mr. Karannagoda, citing allegations of serious human rights violations.

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Spin cycle: assessing India's portfolio of Test tweakers

With a tricky tour of Sri Lanka in August and a blockbuster home series against Australia early next year, India needs its spinners to deliver if it wants to contend for a spot in the World Test Championship final. Just how healthy and varied are the team's stocks?



MANAV SUTHAR



RAVINDRA JADEJA



KULDEEP YADAV



WASHINGTON SUNDAR

Vivek Krishnan

Promising debuts of keenly tracked young cricketers at the highest level tend to linger in the memory for long. They act as a tantalising prelude to the career ahead, and invite lofty expectations from an entourage of admirers. It need not always be a three-figure score or five-wicket haul that instigates this rush of excitement; sometimes a sumptuous cover-drive racing across the turf, an in-swinging yorker detonating the stumps or a big-spinning delivery breaching bat and pad is enough.

A debut to savour

Last month, Manav Suthar's Test debut against Afghanistan in New Chandigarh contained many ingredients worthy of such enthusiasm. Statistically, the 23-year-old left-arm spinner from Rajasthan became the seventh Indian to take a five-wicket haul in his maiden innings. Of equal essence was the nuanced exhibition of his skillset. It transcended the benign nature of the black-soil pitch, and managed to hold the spectators, though scattered in the 38,000-capacity Maharaja Yadavindra Singh Stadium amid scorching heat, in rapt attention.

Manav Suthar's modus operandi is largely reminiscent of an older vintage of spinners whose style was adorned by generous flight, deadly drift and sharp turn

As soon as the youngster was given the ball at the start of the sixth over in Afghanistan's first innings, he got down to business. With two slips and a short-leg around opener Abdul Malik, Manav started with a dream delivery for his tribe of left-arm spinners: the ball pitched on a good length, drew the batter forward, spun and kicked up, like a serpent taunted, to beat the outside edge. Having played and missed twice more, Malik, with just three balls left for the tea interval, responded with a daft sweep. He skied the cross-batted stroke to Mohammed Siraj at short fine-leg, and became the first victim of Manav's Test career. The tweaker finished with figures of six for 33 and one for 29 as India clinched victory by an innings and 300 runs. Though the unvarnished truth is that Afghanistan isn't yet up to Test standard, Manav's illuminating debut was significant for two reasons. One, this was the first time since 2010 that India was playing a home Test without either the now-retired R. Ashwin or the rested Ravindra Jadeja. Two, neither Washington Sundar nor Kuldeep Yadav looked as threatening as the debutant. From the ease of his graceful action to the revolutions imparted on the ball as it fizzed out of

his left hand, Manav's modus operandi was largely reminiscent of an older vintage of spinners whose style was adorned by generous flight, deadly drift and sharp turn. Particularly at a time of perpetual lament about the erosion of the traditional tenets of finger-spin, Manav's arrival appears as refreshing as the first spell of monsoon showers. Sure, stiffer challenges will follow. But in circumstances where Jadeja was given a break just for the think-tank to take a closer look at the next cab off the rank, Manav, who was picked in the XI ahead of Harsh Dubey, couldn't have done more to impress. The southpaw's rousing entry bolsters the competition in India's spin department ahead of a two-Test tour of Sri Lanka where the slow bowlers have historically dominated. For their assignment across the Palk Strait in August, Shubman Gill & Co. are expected to travel with four spinners in Jadeja, Washington, Kuldeep and Manav. What Jadeja offers As tempting as it may now seem to make a case for Manav over Jadeja, the latter's importance to the Test team remains unaltered in the view of the men who matter. Even if he hasn't procured

a bundle of wickets of late, his batting has aged like fine wine. In 2025, the 37-year-old tallied 764 runs in 10 Tests at an average of 63.66 – higher than any previous calendar year. Conversely, he scalped just 25 wickets at 38.2 with his left-arm spin. Some of this was down to the conditions across five Tests in England. But even in more conducive surroundings at home recently, Jadeja hasn't quite looked like the bowler with 348 Test victims to his name. If his runs, rather than his returns with the ball, continue to drive Jadeja's presence in the team, the bowling unit will be saddled with consequences in the longer run in its efforts to keep picking up 20 wickets. But with India touring New Zealand for two Tests in November, it is prudent to repose trust in the veteran all-rounder for now. At scenic venues where it can be difficult to distinguish the playing surface from the lush green outfield, Jadeja's run-making ability at No. 6 or 7, alongside a few overs of left-arm spin, will offer balance and depth. That Washington's forte, too, is his all-round repertoire. Ever since his comeback in late 2024, the 26-year-old from Chennai has invariably chipped in with bat or ball. That said, the jury in his case is still out on whether he can conjure up definitive performances as an off-spinner. In fairness, Washington has had his moments. On his return to the Test fold against New Zealand in Pune, he claimed a match haul of 11 for 115. While that was admittedly on a dust-bowl, his four for 22 in the second innings against England at Lord's last year was an example of his wily use of drift on a track inimical to spin. Neither performance earned plaudits since India lost. When he complemented Manav with five wickets against Afghanistan, Sunil Gavaskar noticed encouraging signs. "Earlier on in Tests, you saw that Washington was more of a flat bowler. But against Afghanistan, he was prepared to experiment. Give the ball a little tweak. Use the crease quite smartly. So, I think he is beginning to grow as a bowler," Gavaskar said during a media interaction on Monday. Washington's chance to silence the naysayers is in Sri Lanka. If the reticent all-rounder can rise as a match-winner with the ball as India scrambles to climb the WTC table from its fifth position, there is bound to be greater appreciation of his multifaceted value.

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The Kuldeep situation

Going through a bit of a rut across formats at this point is Kuldeep. The left-arm wrist-spinner may not have always had the rub of the green, but the 31-year-old also ought to concede his shortcomings. Having been repeatedly overlooked during the five-Test tour of England last year, he hasn't since had the impact expected of a wicket-taking spinner against South Africa and Afghanistan in the longer version. Beyond these faces, there are efforts underway to groom a wider pool. In the tune-up to the Test against Afghanistan, leggie Zeeshan Ansari, left-arm wrist-spinner Shivang Kumar and off-spinner Saransh Jain were called up to the India nets. Pertinent as that is, promising debuts can wait. In the race to reach next year's WTC final, India needs its incumbent spinners to take prominence.

STACKING UP

ATP Men's Top 15				
#	Player	Age	Points	Events
1	Jannik Sinner	24	13,450	18
2	Carlos Alcaraz	23	9,460	17
3	Alexander Zverev	29	7,190	20
4	Felix Auger-Aliassime	25	4,390	23
5	Ben Shelton	23	4,160	22
6	Alex de Minaur	27	4,110	24
7	Taylor Fritz	28	3,765	22
8	Novak Djokovic	39	3,760	16
9	Daniil Medvedev	30	3,580	24
10	Flavio Cobolli	24	3,460	26
11	Alexander Bublik	29	2,620	26
12	Casper Ruud	27	2,425	22
13	Andrey Rublev	28	2,420	23
14	Jiri Lehecka	24	2,360	21
15	Lorenzo Musetti	24	2,325	22



F1 Drivers' standings				
#	Driver	Team	Points	Wins
1	A.K. Antonelli	Mercedes	171	5
2	G. Russell	Mercedes	131	2
3	L. Hamilton	Ferrari	125	1
4	O. Piastri	McLaren	80	0
5	L. Norris	McLaren	79	0
6	C. Leclerc	Ferrari	79	0
7	M. Verstappen	Red Bull	73	0
8	I. Hadjar	Red Bull	42	0
9	P. Gasly	Alpine	41	0
10	L. Lawson	RB	30	0
11	O. Bearman	Haas	18	0
12	F. Colapinto	Alpine	16	0
13	A. Lindblad	RB	14	0
14	C. Sainz	Williams	6	0
15	A. Albon	Williams	5	0
16	E. Ocon	Haas	3	0
17	G. Bortoletto	Audi	2	0
18	F. Alonso	Aston Martin	1	0
19	N. Hulkenberg	Audi	0	0
20	V. Bottas	Cadillac	0	0
21	S. Perez	Cadillac	0	0
22	L. Stroll	Aston Martin	0	0



Badminton Men's ranking			
#	Player	Points	Events
1	Shi Yu Qi	1,05,305	12
2	Kunlavut Vitidsarn	92,565	16
3	Anders Antonsen	91,155	17
4	Jonatan Christie	88,431	17
5	Christo Popov	84,682	20
6	Chou Tien Chen	80,280	27
7	Alex Lanier	74,525	17
8	Li Shi Feng	73,083	16
9	Victor Lai	72,915	20
10	Alwi Farhan	68,409	19
11	Kodai Naraoka	68,020	21
12	Lin Chun-Yi	66,594	18
13	Loh Kean Yew	65,700	18
14	Lakshya Sen	65,213	21
15	Weng Hong Yang	59,341	17



Test Batting			
#	Player	Rating	Career best
1	Travis Head	853	884
2	Harry Brook	852	898
3	Joe Root	840	932
4	Steve Smith	831	947
5	Temba Bavuma	775	806
6	Shubman Gill	743	807
7	Rachin Ravindra	740	740
8	Kamindu Mendis	737	784
9	Yashvir Jaiswal	733	858
10	Dinesh Chandimal	725	755

Test Bowling			
#	Player	Rating	Career best
1	Jasprit Bumrah	870	908
2	Matt Henry	861	870
3	Mitchell Starc	838	852
4	Pat Cummins	832	914
5	Marco Jansen	825	825
6	Scott Boland	820	820
7	Noman Ali	817	853
8	Kagiso Rabada	807	902
9	Josh Hazlewood	775	864
10	Nathan Lyon	753	812

Top Indians ▶	
	Sumit Nagal Rank 219 ▲ 66 spots
	Manas Dhamne Rank 386 ▼ 4 spots

WTA Women's Top 15				
#	Player	Age	Points	Events
1	Aryna Sabalenka	28	9,090	18
2	Elena Rybakina	27	8,143	22
3	Iga Swiatek	25	6,409	19
4	Jessica Pegula	32	5,881	19
5	Mirra Andreeva	19	5,653	20
6	Amanda Anisimova	24	5,523	15
7	Coco Gauff	22	4,879	18
8	Elina Svitolina	31	4,471	16
9	Karolina Muchova	29	3,878	20
10	Victoria Mboko	19	3,670	22
11	Belinda Bencic	29	3,385	18
12	Linda Noskova	21	3,359	22
13	Marta Kostyuk	24	3,156	17
14	Naomi Osaka	28	2,846	18
15	Diana Shnaider	22	2,458	24



F1 Constructors' standings				
Pos	Team	Points	Wins	
1	Mercedes	302	7	
2	Ferrari	204	1	
3	McLaren	159	0	
4	Red Bull	115	0	
5	Alpine	57	0	
6	RB	44	0	
7	Haas	21	0	
8	Williams	11	0	
9	Audi	2	0	
10	Aston Martin	1	0	
11	Cadillac	0	0	



Badminton Women's ranking			
#	Player	Points	Events
1	An Se Young	1,17,787	16
2	Wang Zhi Yi	1,06,839	16
3	Akane Yamaguchi	1,00,426	18
4	Chen Yu Fei	87,651	15
5	Han Yue	82,288	14
6	Putri Kusuma Wardani	73,473	18
7	Ratchanok Intanon	72,246	20
8	Pornpawee Chochuwong	67,977	16
9	Tomoka Miyazaki	63,646	22
10	P.V. Sindhu	61,401	14
11	Nozomi Okuhara	59,060	18
12	Chiu Pin-Chian	57,498	24
13	Michelle Li	55,227	20
14	Kim Ga Eun	54,921	16
15	Mia Blichfeldt	53,503	15



ODI Batting			
#	Player	Rating	Career best
1	Daryl Mitchell	815	840
2	Shubman Gill	791	841
3	Virat Kohli	768	908
4	Rohit Sharma	754	879
5	Ibrahim Zadran	712	756
6	Babar Azam	689	894
7	Shai Hope	683	782
8	Harry Tector	679	730
9	Charith Asalanka	659	705
10	Harry Brook	656	656

ODI Bowling			
#	Player	Rating	Career best
1	Rashid Khan	682	775
2	Abrar Ahmed	675	675
3	Jofra Archer	649	682
4	Keshav Maharaj	645	737
5	Maheesh Theekshana	641	680
6	Adil Rashid	629	671
7	Kuldeep Yadav	614	757
8	Mehidy Hasan	604	722
8	Shaneen Afridi	604	691
10	Mitchell Santner	599	656

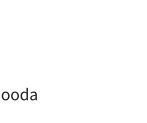
Top Indians ▶	
	Sahaja Yamalapalli Rank 339 ▼ 11 spots
	Vaishnavi Adkar Rank 395 ▲ 4 spots



T20I Batting				
#	Player	Rating	Career best	
1	Ishan Kishan	876	876	
2	Abhishek Sharma	869	931	
3	Sahibzada Farhan	848	848	
4	Phil Salt	792	881	
5	Pathum Nissanka	751	796	
6	Tilak Varma	747	845	
7	Jos Buttler	716	794	
8	Suryakumar Yadav	708	912	
9	Mitchell Marsh	706	706	
10	Dewald Brevis	702	738	

Top Indians ▶	
	P.V. Sindhu Rank 10
	Unnati Hooda Rank 24

T20I Bowling			
#	Player	Rating	Career best
1	Rashid Khan	753	828
2	Abrar Ahmed	736	757
3	Varun Chakravarthy	725	818
4	Adil Rashid	721	747
5	Adam Zampa	700	746
6	Jasprit Bumrah	688	783
7	Nathan Ellis	675	678
8	Corbin Bosch	669	745
9	Wanindu Hasaranga	668	809
10	Mujeeb Ur Rahman	663	757



T20I Batting			
#	Player	Rating	Career best
1	Ishan Kishan	876	876
2	Abhishek Sharma	869	931
3	Sahibzada Farhan	848	848
4	Phil Salt	792	881
5	Pathum Nissanka	751	796
6	Tilak Varma	747	845
7	Jos Buttler	716	794
8	Suryakumar Yadav	708	912
9	Mitchell Marsh	706	706
10	Dewald Brevis	702	738

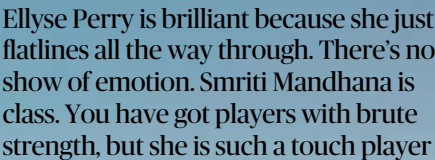
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Lord's was a third full – that was frightening because we weren't used to people

P.K. AJITH KUMAR

Clare Taylor

It was in Sweden. And we ended up on over-



We had lost to New Zealand in the round-robin phase. They just put a ring field and we played 60 overs and just didn't have the power; we had a lot of technically good players, though. They just stacked the offside; so it was covers: dot ball, dot ball. So we lost to New Zealand. We went back and I said, look, we have got to start,

I also remember being amazed by watching – it might be at Hyderabad, I think – lots of women on the outfield with sponges and buckets. And literally, it was a human super sopper.

Obviously not a left-hander, but Janette Brittin was very elegant.

SOURCE: TOUR DE FRANCE

GETTY IMAGES

Sport climbing featured in the Olympics for the first time in Tokyo 2020. The sport's major events are the World Cup and the World Championships.

SPECIAL MOMENT

Coincidence of life: Ronaldo after Jota tribute a year from his death



REUTERS

▲ Cristiano Ronaldo said it was a “coincidence of life” that Portugal’s World Cup last-16 win over Croatia on Thursday came almost a year after the death of his late teammate Diogo Jota. “We knew it before the game. It was a special moment. We speak today, our group, about that, the coincidence of life. It is unbelievable”.

LEGEND

‘Inspired millions’: Modric praised as his WC career appears to end



REUTERS

▲ Croatia coach Zlatko Dalic and Portugal’s Roberto Martinez paid tribute to Luka Modric. “This was probably his last World Cup, and I am sorry that it ended this way. He was leading Croatia until the very end,” said Dalic. “His example is going to stay in the folklore of football forever,” Portugal chief coach Martinez said.

POSSIBLE REPLACEMENT

Klopp in talks for Germany job after Nagelsmann exit: federation



AFF

▲ Jurgen Klopp has told the German FA (DFB) that he is “fundamentally willing” to take over as the Germany head coach after Julian Nagelsmann handed in his resignation, the DFB confirmed on Friday. Nagelsmann stepped down just four days after Germany’s disappointing last-32 exit from the World Cup.

SIGNING OFF

Mahrez retires from international football after World Cup ouster



REUTERS

▲ Riyad Mahrez announced his retirement from international football after Algeria’s World Cup exit. “It has been an immense honour and a great source of pride,” said Mahrez, a member of the 2019 Africa Cup of Nations winning squad. He retired with the second-most appearances (119) and the second-most goals (40) for Algeria.

Portugal edges Croatia amid VAR controversy

Gvardiol’s strike deep in stoppage time is disallowed leaving Ramos’ header as the winner; Ronaldo levels from the spot after Perisic’s opener

FIFA WORLD CUP

Agence France-Presse
TORONTO

Substitute Goncalo Ramos’ headed goal edged Portugal into the last 16 of the World Cup on Thursday after Croatia was dramatically denied an equaliser by VAR. Ramos settled a classic World Cup game when he connected with a superb pass from Rafael Leao in the fourth minute of stoppage time to snuff out a Croatia team which had created the lion’s share of the chances in sapping heat.

Croatia thought it had snatched a goal in the dying seconds of extra time, but Josko Gvardiol’s goal was chalked off for offside.

The Croatians were left stunned by the decision, and their fans began hurling rubbish on the pitch.

In the seconds before Gvardiol’s disallowed goal, the Portuguese bench and coach Roberto Martinez were growing increasingly livid, begging match officials for the final whistle.

Cristiano Ronaldo played his role in the victory, stroking home a penalty that cancelled out Ivan



Rising high: Ramos towers over the Croatian defence to nod home Portugal’s second. REUTERS

RESULTS

Round of 32: Spain 3 (Oyarzabal 36, 89, Porro 66) bt Austria 0. Portugal 2 (Cristiano Ronaldo 68-pen, Goncalo Ramos 90+4) bt Croatia 1 (Perisic 53). Switzerland 2 (Embolo 10, Ndoye 46) bt Algeria 0.

Perisic’s opener.

It was Ronaldo’s first ever goal in the knockout phase of the World Cup, and it made him the oldest scorer in that phase in the tournament’s history.

Portugal now faces Spain in Dallas on Monday.

After the match, Ronaldo shared a long exchange with Croatian legend Luka Modric, one of football’s all-time greats, whose World Cup career has almost certainly ended with Thursday’s defeat.

The match marked the first time that two outfield players aged over 40 took to the same pitch in a World Cup.

At the end, the Portugal players also paid tribute to late teammate Diogo Jota, who was killed in a car crash a year ago, by holding up his number 21 shirt.

Oyarzabal’s brace helps Spain sweep past Austria

Agencies
LOS ANGELES

Spain cruised past Austria and into the World Cup last 16 on Thursday, thoroughly outclassing its opponent in a 3-0 win after a brace from Mikel Oyarzabal and a Pedro Porro header.

The reigning European champion controlled possession and sliced through the Austrian defence as it set up a tantalising round-of-16 clash with Portugal.

Spain ratcheted up the pressure gradually through the opening period, creating a string of chances after the first hydration break.

Marc Cucurella thought he had scored from a Lamine Yamal corner, but Pau Cubarsi was judged to have encroached on the Austria goalkeeper.

Alexander Schlager then made a superb diving save, pushing Oyarzabal’s low shot around the post.

But Austria’s defence finally buckled in the 36th minute as Pedri delivered a pass on the left to Cucurella, whose cross to Oyarzabal was calmly side-footed past the ‘keeper.

After the break, Spain continued knocking on the door without quite putting the game to rest.

But it struck again in the 66th minute when Baena lifted a cross onto the head of Porro, who nodded in his first goal for the national side.

Some dogged defending, including a goalline clearance by David Alaba from Yamal, kept the scoreline respectable.

Stat attack

1 Portugal recorded its first comeback win in the knockouts since 1966 (against North Korea)

1 Ronaldo scored his first knockout stage goal in his sixth World Cup

1 Ronaldo is the first player in history to figure in a knockout game at the age of 41 or older

1 Simon (519 minutes) overtook Zenga to become the goalkeeper with the longest period without letting in a goal in the marquee event

1 Oyarzabal became the first Spaniard to score two or more goals in two matches of the same edition

2 Cubarsi and Yamal were the first pair of teenagers to start a knockout match in 68 years after Pele and Altafini (Brazil vs. Wales, quarterfinals, 1958)

3 Three players who have played in more than 20 World Cup games featured in the same match for the first time (Ronaldo 26, Modric 23, Perisic 21)

5 Manzambi became the only Swiss player to be

involved in five strikes (3 goals, 2 assists) in a single edition in the last 60 years

6 Perisic became the sixth to score in four different editions (after Cristiano Ronaldo, Messi, Klose, Seeler, and Pele)

37y 150d Perisic surpassed Olıc (34y 277d) to become the oldest Croatian to score at the football carnival

88 Switzerland registered its first knockout stage win since 1938 (4-2 vs. West Germany, Round of 16 replay)

Compiled by ANIRUDH VELAMURI

SIMON



But in the 89th minute, a pin-point Cucurella cross found a completely unmarked Oyarzabal in the penalty area and the striker slotted the ball home.

Switzerland through In Vancouver, Brael Embolo and Dan Ndoye scored a goal each as Switzerland moved into the last 16 with a controlled 2-0 win over Algeria.

The effervescent Johan Manzambi created the first goal, surging down the left wing before crossing for Embolo (10th minute) to tap the ball in.

Ndoye slotted in the second less than a minute into the second half, controlling Rafik Belghali’s weak clearance and shooting through a crowd of players. Algeria could not find a way back.

Samson in focus as India takes guard for second T20I

INDIA IN ENGLAND

Press Trust of India
MANCHESTER

With Vaibhav Sooryavanshi breathing down his neck, Sanju Samson will be under pressure to turn the busts in his performance graph into consistent booms as India takes on England in the second T20I here on Saturday.

The first game was abandoned after India posted a healthy 189 for seven in Chester-le-Street. The focus of attention during the next few games will be Samson and it remains to be seen whether he can weather the Sooryavanshi storm that is building up on the sidelines.

In an alternate universe, three back-to-back match-winning knocks in India’s T20 World Cup triumph would have given the opener a cushion for a year.

But with Indian cricket discovering a generational talent like Sooryavanshi, Samson’s margin for error



Samson. AFP

has become minimal.

With Abhishek Sharma smashing his way to 49 and 59 in two of the last three games, the pressure is on Samson to get some runs under his belt.

While the team management is firm on not pushing the 15-year-old Sooryavanshi, he possibly can’t be kept cooling his heels forever. However, it is not just Samson who is struggling in this batting order.

Tilak Varma’s approach in the middle overs is also an issue.

He is struggling to push the scoring rate once the slow bowlers come into operation or the seamers take pace off their deliveries.

The bowling unit is unlikely to change as the Old Trafford track offers some grip and the wrist spinners have had a profitable time at the venue.

For England, the power-packed batting line-up, led by skipper Harry Brook, Phil Salt and Tom Banton, is capable of taking the attack to the Indian bowlers.

The teams (from): England (XI): Harry Brook (Capt.), Phil Salt, Jos Buttler (wk), Jacob Bethell, Tom Banton, Sam Curran, Will Jacks, Liam Dawson, Adil Rashid, Jofra Archer, and Josh Tongue. India: Shreyas Iyer (Capt.), Tilak Varma (Vice-capt.), Sanju Samson (wk), Abhishek Sharma, Ishan Kishan (wk), Shivam Dube, Axar Patel, Ravi Bishnoi, Prasidh Krishna, Harshit Rana, Prince Yadav, Suryansh Shedge, Arshdeep Singh, Washington Sundar, Vaibhav Sooryavanshi, and Varun Chakaravathy. Match starts at 7 p.m. IST.

Djokovic equals Federer’s record

WIMBLEDON

Agencies
LONDON

Novak Djokovic equalled Roger Federer’s record for most match wins at Wimbledon as the seven-time champion battled past 25th seed Arthur Rinderknech to reach the fourth round here on Friday.

The 39-year-old notched up his 105th victory at the All England Club by winning 7-5, 6-4, 1-6, 7-6 (4) despite a spirited fight-back from Rinderknech on Centre Court.

“To be able to make history in this sport is a huge honour and privilege, especially here,” said Djokovic. “It has always been a dream tournament for me. I am just trying to win a match on a given day. Today, I was quite stressed out, more tension than usual. I propose a match-up between Roger and me for 106, let us stop it here and ask Roger to come.”

Djokovic also tied Federer for most appearances in the last 16 at Wimbledon in the Open era, making the fourth round for the 18th



Floored! Djokovic survived a spirited fight from Rinderknech to script history. AFP

time. He will next face qualifier Roman Safiullin on Sunday for a place in his 66th Slam quarterfinal and 17th at Wimbledon. Safiullin, ranked 132nd in the world, beat 24th seed Joao Fonseca 6-3, 6-3, 6-3.

Medvedev bows out Eighth seed Daniil Medvedev, a Wimbledon semifinalist in 2024, suffered a third-round exit when Germany’s Jan-Lennard Struff, ranked 74th, defeated him 7-6(4), 7-6(5), 7-5.

Meanwhile, Jannik Sinner’s title defence gathered pace as the World No. 1 swept aside Jensen Brooks-

by 6-4, 6-3, 6-4.

Having been dragged into a five-set battle in his opener and forced to negotiate two tie-breaks in the next, the Italian looked increasingly at home on the grass of Court One.

Long wait ends

On the women’s side, Japan’s Naomi Osaka ended her long wait to reach the Wimbledon fourth round for the first time with a 6-1, 6-3 win over Australian Daria Kasatkina. Osaka has caused a stir with her eye-catching outfits, but the 28-year-old is finally stealing the spotlight with her per-

IMPORTANT RESULTS

Men: Third round: Safiullin bt 24-Fonseca (Bra) 6-3, 6-3, 6-3; 7-Djokovic (Srb) bt 25-Rinderknech (Fra) 7-5, 6-4, 1-6, 7-6(4); 1-Sinner bt Brooksby 6-4, 6-3, 6-4; Struff (Ger) bt 8-Medvedev 7-6(4), 7-6(5), 7-5; Mochizuki (Jpn) bt 23-Jodar (Esp) 1-6, 7-6(5), 6-4, 6-4; Hurkacz (Pol) bt 21-Paul (USA) 4-6, 7-6(5), 7-5, 6-2; 22-Fokina (Esp) bt Fucsovics (Hun) 7-6(3), 6-2, 6-3. Second round: 17-Tiafoe (USA) bt Choinski (GBR) 4-6, 6-2, 7-5, 6-2; Dimitrov (Bul) bt 15-Mensik (Cze) 7-6(5), 4-6, 7-5, 6-3.

Women: Third round: 11-Bencic (Sui) bt 19-Kalinskaya 6-4, 4-6, 7-6(6); 14-Osaka (Jpn) bt Kasatkina 6-1, 6-3; 4-Pegula (USA) bt Maneiro (Esp) 6-1, 6-3; 16-Jovic (USA) bt 18-Alexandrova 6-3, 3-6, 6-4; 1-Sabalenka bt Ostapenko (Lat) 6-4, 6-4; 10-Muchova (Cze) bt Sawangkaew (Tha) 6-2, 7-6(1). Second round: 25-Mertens (Bel) bt Timofeeva (Uzb) 2-6, 6-3, 6-0; 2-Rybakina (Kaz) by McNally (USA) 6-1, 6-2; 13-Paolini (Ita) bt Golubic (Sui) 7-6(0), 6-4; 9-Noskova (Cze) by Osorio (Col) 6-3, 4-6, 6-2. Fallen seeds: Men: 8-Medvedev, 15-Mensik, 21-Paul, 23-Jodar, 24-Fonseca, 25-Rinderknech. Women: 18-Alexandrova, 19-Kalinskaya.

formances as well. World No. 1 Aryna Sabalenka powered past Jelena Ostapenko 6-4, 6-4.

FIDE bans Kramnik for two years

Sports Bureau

The FIDE has imposed a two-year worldwide ban on Vladimir Kramnik from participating in its chess competitions or acting in official chess functions for alleged violations of the Ethics Code and Disciplinary Code.

The FIDE Ethics & Disciplinary Commission (EDC) issued its decision in disciplinary proceedings involving the former World champion. The proceedings arose from complaints submitted by the Management Board and the Fair Play Commission concerning a series of public statements and posts made by Kramnik about GM David Navara and the late GM Daniel Naroditsky.



Kramnik. FILE PHOTO: REUTERS

INBRIEF



Sai Sudharsan and Padikkal lead strong India-A reply

Opener B. Sai Sudharsan notched up his second successive century of the series as India-A finished day two of the second ‘Test’ at a strong 247 for one in Galle on Friday. Devdutt Padikkal (94 batting) was giving Sai Sudharsan company. India-A trails by 119 runs, after bowling out Sri Lankan-A for 366 in the first innings.

The scores: Sri Lanka-A 366 in 110 overs (Sahan Arachchige 127, Saransh Jain 4/92, Gurnoor Brar 4/77) vs India-A 247/1 in 63 overs (Sai Sudharsan batting 104, Devdutt Padikkal batting 94).

Coles and Tongue named in England ODI squad

Uncapped all-rounder James Coles and fast bowler Josh Tongue were on Friday named in England’s 16-member side to face India in a three-match ODI series later this month.

The squad: Harry Brook (Capt.), Tom Banton (wk), Jacob Bethell, Joe Root, Ben Duckett, Jos Buttler (wk), Will Jacks, Rehan Ahmed, Jofra Archer, Gus Atkinson, James Coles, Sam Curran, Liam Dawson, Saqib Mahmood, Adil Rashid and Josh Tongue.

Indian challenge ends in Canada Open badminton

Tanya Hemnath and Aakarshi Kashyap lost their women’s singles second round matches to draw curtains to the Indian challenge at the Canada Open here. Tanya lost to third seed Riko Gunji of Japan 11-21, 11-21 while Aakarshi went down to fourth seed Beiwen Zhang of USA 22-20, 17-21, 17-21.

Two more medals assured for India at Asian youth TT

India continued its impressive campaign at the ITTF-ATTU Asian Youth Table Tennis Championships, assuring itself of two more medals in Bangkok on Friday.

The results: U-19: Girls: Quarterfinals: Syndrela Das bt Yuna Ojio (Jpn) 11-5, 11-7, 5-11, 3-11, 8-11, 11-6, 11-3; Mao Takamori (Jpn) bt Divyanshi Bhowmick 7-11, 11-6, 11-9, 11-5, 11-9.

Doubles: Semifinals: Syndrela & Divyanshi Bhowmick bt Yao Ruixuan & Jiang Yiyi (Chn) 7-11, 11-7, 7-11, 11-8, 11-6.

Quarterfinals: Syndrela & Divyanshi bt Thasita Kanaphong & Pimmada Thongnak (Tha) 11-6, 13-15, 11-9, 11-8.

Boys: Quarterfinals: Kohaku Nakano (Jpn) bt P.B. Abhinand 11-4, 16-14, 11-5, 8-11, 12-10; Ankur Bhattacharjee

Pre-quarterfinals: Abhinand bt Yang Hao-en (Tpe) 11-9, 6-11, 9-11, 6-11, 11-8, 14-12, 11-6.

Mixed doubles: Semifinals: Thitaphat Preechayan & Kulapassr Vjittviriyagul (Tha) bt Abhinand & Divyanshi 11-7, 11-9, 5-11, 11-5.

LIVE TELECAST

Wimbledon: Star Sports 2, SS Select 1, 2 & JioHotstar, 3.30 p.m.

Formula One: British GP, Sprint Shootout, F1 TV, F1 TV Pro App & FanCode, 4.30 p.m. ; Qualifying, 8.30 p.m.

England vs India: Second T20I, Sony Sports Ten 1 & JioHotstar, 7 p.m.

West Indies vs Sri Lanka: Second Test, Day 2, FanCode, 7.30 p.m.

FIFA World Cup: Unite8 Sports 1, 2 & Z5 App, 10.30 p.m. & 2.30 a.m. (Sunday)



Froome, AP

Froome calls time on career

Reuters
LONDON

Four-time Tour de France champion Chris Froome has retired from professional cycling, bringing the curtain down on a glittering career spanning over two decades in the sport. Froome also won two Vuelta a Espana and one Giro d’Italia with Team Sky (now Team Ineos).



Sciver-Brunt sparkles as host England sets up summit clash with Australia

The skipper puts on 133 with Knight to set South Africa a target of 170; the Proteas suffer yet another reversal in an ICC event knockout fixture

T20 WORLD CUP

P.K. Ajith Kumar
LONDON

Lauren Bell smiled winsomely at the phone camera, with fans behind her in the stands. Linsey Smith posed with a baby. Charlie Dean was happily taking selfies as well.

It was indeed a night to remember for the England women at the Oval here on Thursday. They took their well-deserved spot in the final of the T20 World Cup after beating South Africa by 40 runs in the second semifinal, in front of a near full house.

They will meet old rival Australia in Sunday’s final at Lord’s. Like the English,



Making the difference: Sciver-Brunt smashed 75 off 47 balls to lead England’s fightback. AP

the Australians had also scored a convincing win against the West Indies in the semifinal at the same venue.

But, unlike Australia, the home team had to survive a crisis early in the match. England had been reduced to 23 for three by a

superb spell with the new ball by Shabnim Ismail and Marizanne Kapp. Among those back in the dugout was Danni Wyatt-Hodge,

the tournament’s leading scorer.

It took an extraordinary innings from skipper Nat Sciver-Brunt (75, 47b, 11x4, 1x6) and her 133-run stand with former captain Heather Knight (58, 47b, 6x4, 1x6) for England to pose what would turn out to be a formidable total, 169 for five. And this was Sciver-Brunt’s first match after retiring hurt during the game against Ireland a fortnight ago.

The South African chase got off to a bright start, with skipper Laura Wolvaardt and Tazmin Brits adding 43. But Wolvaardt, who failed to take her brilliant form from the home series against India to the World Cup, fell to a superb catch by Sophie Ecclestone off Smith, and it was another

er miserable tale of failure for South African in an ICC event knockout fixture.

And it was another fine effort in the field by England, for which Bell and Dean picked up two wickets each. After the win, Sciver-Brunt admitted it was an emotional moment.

“I was very nervous going in and I suppose quite emotional about the occasion and what we have been able to do as a team,” she said. “I am excited and proud of what I have been able to do as a captain.”

The scores: England 169/5 in 20 overs (Nat Sciver-Brunt 75, Heather Knight 58, Shabnim Ismail 2/31, Nonkululeko Mlaba 2/25) bt South Africa 129/8 in 20 overs (Tazmin Brits 51, Lauren Bell 2/28, Charlie Dean 2/31). **Toss:** SA; **PoM:** Sciver-Brunt.

Knight gears up for another grand finale at Lord’s



Knight. REUTERS

P.K. Ajith Kumar
LONDON

Heather Knight led England to victory in the 2017 World Cup, beating India in the final at Lord’s. She is gearing up for another Lord’s final.

But for her tenacity, grit and class, England may have struggled to earn that ticket to the T20 World Cup final. The top-order had been dismantled with the new ball by the South

African quicks, but she stayed calm and firm, lending admirable support to skipper Nat Sciver-Brunt, who came up with another of her big match-winning knocks in the shortest format.

Knight had every reason to smile when she met reporters in the mixed zone after England’s 40-run victory in the second semifinal.

And remember, her place in the team had been

questioned by some, pointing at her strike-rate.

But her coach Charlotte Edwards, from whom she took over the England captaincy back in 2016, has kept faith in her.

“The more people were writing her off, the more I knew she was going to put in a performance like this,” Edwards had said after Knight’s 42-ball 70 not out helped England win the third T20I against India just ahead of the World

Cup at Taunton.

Knight said the partnership against South Africa was one of the best she has had with Sciver-Brunt. “And we have had a few, but this is up there,” she said.

“I think our cricket complements each other really well. She is obviously quite leg-side dominant, I am a bit more off-side dominant. I like playing in finals at Lord’s, it is always very special.”

Gukesh rises to joint second

Press Trust of India
ZAGREB

World champion D. Gukesh made good use of white pieces to beat Dutch Grandmaster Anish Giri in the final game of the day to rise to joint second after the second day of the Zagreb leg of the Grand Chess Tour here.s

Grandmaster Alireza Firouzja is at the top after extending his lead to three points with 10 points in his kitty out of a possible 12.

Standings (after sixth round, Rapid): 1. Alireza Firouzja (Fra, 10); 2-5. Maxime Vachier-Lagrave (Fra), D. Gukesh, Deac Bogdan-Daniel (Rou), Vincent Keymer (Ger) 7 each; 6-8: R. Praggnanandhaa, Anish Giri (Ned); Nodirbek Abdusattorov (Uzb) 6 each; 9-10. Jordan van Foreest (Ned), 10. Ivan Saric (Cro) 2 each.

C. Shyam Sundar
CHENNAI

Ethan Vaz was about six and hooked to cartoons with his elder sibling when he was introduced to chess primarily as a fun indoor activity and to wean them off television.

He took a liking to the game and displayed talent which probably made his parents link up with a coach.

“After just eight months of coaching, Ethan represented Goa at the National under-7 championship in 2018 and finished among the prize winners in his very first National tournament.”

“That performance gave us confidence that he possessed something special,” Edwin said about his 14-



Rising star: Ethan became India’s 96th Grandmaster a few days ago. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

year-old son, who became India’s 96th Grandmaster a few days ago with a tournament win in Sarajevo.

Edwin and his wife Linda, software professionals, moved back to Goa in 2011 from Japan where they

were working after the tsunami struck and have since turned their attention to furthering their younger son’s chess ambitions.

“As Ethan has grown older and gained a deeper understanding of profes-

sional chess, his aspirations have evolved.

Today, besides dreaming of becoming a World champion, he envisages becoming the World No. 1,” Edwin told *The Hindu*.

“The gap between a GM and an elite player is enormous, and we fully understand that there is still a very long road ahead,” he added.

Travelling abroad for events was tough for the boy due to financial constraints and the family turned to crowdfunding to raise money and Edwin is grateful to those who chipped in.

Ethan’s immediate objective is to continue improving by competing regularly in strong tournaments against elite opposition.

Circle Of Dreams primed to deliver in main event

RACING

BENGALURU: Circle Of Dreams, who has been well prepared, is expected to score in the D.M. Kumaraswamy Memorial Trophy (1,600m), the main event of the races to be held here on Saturday (July 4). False rails (width about 6.5m from 1,600m to the winning post) will be in position. The jockey for Flamingo Dream in the second race will be declared later.

1. MAURITIUS PEARL PLATE (1,400m), maiden 3-y-o only. (Terms), 2:30 p.m.: 1. Shining Dawn (2) Sandesh 56, 2. Fortissima (1) Pavan 54.5, 3. Garzian (6) Jagadeesh 54.5, 4. Mystic Dew (3) Neeraj 54.5, 5. On The Rise (5) Arvind K 54.5 and 6. Yarra Yarra (4) Antony 54.5.

2. SKYLINE PLATE (DIV. III), 1,400m, rated 00 to 25, 3-00: 1. Rightly Noble (7) Suhask K 60, 2. Infinite Spirit (3) Vishal 59, 3. Sling Shot (2) Faizan Khan 59, 4. Whitney (5) G. Vivek 58.5, 5. Flamingo Dream (6) (-) 58, 6. Double Scotch (4) Antony 55.5, 7. Loven’s

Glory (1) Kiran Rai 54 and 8. Wakizashi (8) Vishal Bunde 53.5.

1. WHITNEY, 2. DOUBLE SCOTCH, 3. RIGHTLY NOBLE

3. VETERINARIAN’S CUP (1,200m), rated 20 to 45, 3-30: 1. Magestic Persona (4) S. Sachin 60, 2. Makoto (11) Kiran Rai 56, 3. Adelanto (1) Abhishek Mhatre 55.5, 4. Rosaline (12) Antony 55.5, 5. Aphelion (9) Sandesh 54.5, 6. Dr Ash (5) Rafique S.K 54.5, 7. Vibrant Queen (7) R. Pradeep 54.5, 8. Aatherv (10) Akshay K 53, 9. The Golden Dream (3) Sid daraju 52.5, 10. Xailly (6) Shivam 51.5, 11. Khazana (2) Neeraj 50 and 12. Supernal (8) P.P. Dhebe 50.

1. AATHERV, 2. MAGESTIC PERSONA, 3. APHELION

4. D.M. KUMARASWAMY MEMORIAL TROPHY (1,600m), rated 40 to 65, 4-00: 1. Circle Of Dreams (4) Akshay K 60, 2. D Fronx (7) Sai Kiran 60, 3. Gordon (1) Darshan 57.5, 4. Hazel (6) Antony 57.5, 5. Finley (5) Md. Aliyar 56, 6. Manwar (3) G. Vivek 55.5, 7. Multi Success (8) Vishal Bunde 55 and 8. Scarlett Lady (2) Girish R 54.5.

1. CIRCLE OF DREAMS, 2. MAN-

WAR, 3. HAZEL

5. SKYLINE PLATE (DIV. II), 1,400m, rated 00 to 25, 4-30: 1. Anzac Parade (6) S. Sachin 60, 2. Indian Mission (-) (-) 60, 3. White Secret (5) Rafique S.K 60, 4. Diesel (1) Sandesh 59.5, 5. Glaze (8) Kiran Rai 59.5, 6. LG’s Script (7) Vishal 59.5, 7. Best Of Us (2) Md. Talib 59, 8. Fiery Love (3) P.P. Dhebe 59 and 9. Queen Maxima (-) (-) 59.

1. LG’S SCRIPT, 2. ANZAC PARADE, 3. DIESEL

6. SKYLINE PLATE (DIV. I), 1,400m, rated 00 to 25, 5-00: 1. Sherlock (6) Vishal Bunde 62.5, 2. Vorfrende (1) Ritesh Gochhi 62.5, 3. Divo (8) Jagadeesh 62, 4. Peridot (3) Faizan Khan 62, 5. Cr Seven (2) Kiran Rai 61, 6. Joyful Spirit (9) Shivam 61, 7. LG’s Star (4) Girish R 61, 8. Treasure Queen (5) Rafique S.K 61 and 9. Turkoman (7) Arul 61.

1. DIVO, 2. SHERLOCK, 3. VORFREUDE
Day’s best: **CIRCLE OF DREAMS**
Double: **WHITNEY – AATHERV**
Jkt: 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6; Mini Jkt: 3, 4, 5 and 6; Tr (1: 1, 2 and 3; (ii): 4, 5 and 6.

Antonelli is something else, reckons Hill

FORMULA ONE

S. Dipak Ragav

Former Formula One World champion Damon Hill praised Mercedes driver Andrea Kimi Antonelli as a special talent and backed him for the F1 drivers’ title this year.

“I think the favourite is Kimi because I think that he’s got the equipment. Mercedes has been the most consistent, and he’s got an advantage (40 points), and I think that he’s still on a learning curve. So George (Russell) has got a mountain to climb, I think, to rein him in. I’m not saying he can’t do it, but I think from what I’ve seen this guy is something else. So we’ll see,”



Antonelli. REUTERS

said Hill ahead of this weekend’s British Grand Prix.

Antonelli’s teammate Russell heads into his home race after winning the previous round in Austria last weekend, only his second of the year. Hill felt it should give the local hero a much-needed boost at a time when the crowd would have heightened

expectations.

“George having got a win and closed the gap to Kimi, that’s going to be a positive for him and a massive relief because it was, as he said at one point, he didn’t know what to say. He was at a loss for words given the amount of bad luck he had, but he finally got a good victory; a genuine win, he got pole position and so forth. I think that’s going to restore some of his confidence,” the 1996 F1 champion added.

When asked if Russell was a bit unsettled by Antonelli hogging all the attention when he won five races on the bounce, Hill remarked that it was something a driver has to deal with, even if he had been at a place for longer.

“When a driver is in a team, they can’t consider that they are the primary concern of that team. The problem with being a racing driver in our sport is that you’re not really part of the team. For the time you’re there, you’re part of the team, but you still have to prove yourself against the other guy. So you’re in a constant battle to establish your position.”

Hamilton’s day out

Lewis Hamilton took the sprint pole at his home race, edging Antonelli. Max Verstappen and Charles Leclerc completed the top four. It was a huge boost for Hamilton’s hopes of a record 10th win at Silverstone.

(Watch the British GP live on FanCode)