SATURDAY
November 21, 2026

DELHI
CITY EDITION
16 Pages ₹ 12.00

THE HINDU

www.thehindu.com

INDIA'S NATIONAL NEWSPAPER SINCE 1878

Vol. 16 • No. 275
Regd. DL(ND)-11/6110/2006-07-08
RNI No. UPENG/2012/49940

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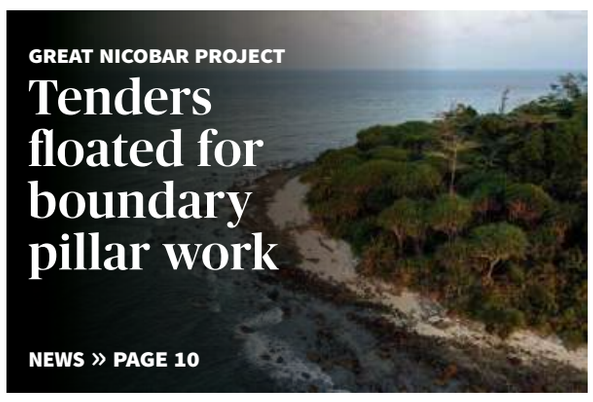
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TRANSNATIONAL TRAIL

NCB, U.S. agency bust drug network; six held

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GREAT NICOBAR PROJECT

Tenders floated for boundary pillar work

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SUMMIT OUTCOMES

India 'takes note' of Trump-Putin-Xi meet

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LEFT BEHIND

In Keralam, the children beyond healthcare

Ten infant deaths raise concerns in Attappady

GROUND ZERO » PAGE 7



WELLINGTON TEST

Jaiswal leads the way in India's strong reply

SPORT » PAGE 15

IN BRIEF



Setback for BJP in Rajasthan panchayat polls

JAIPUR
The ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) suffered a major setback in the panchayat elections in Rajasthan on Friday, with the Opposition Congress registering decisive leads and winning the majority of zila parishad and panchayat samiti seats. » Page 2

Delhi CM flags off 100 new electric buses

NEW DELHI
Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta on Friday flagged off 100 electric buses, taking Delhi's total bus fleet to 7,088, as part of the government's efforts to ease traffic congestion and curb pollution. » Page 2

Core sector growth hits record 10.9% in October

Coal production and electricity generation lead the growth, with cement and iron ore output also contributing; a low base, following 0.8% growth in October last year, also boosts the latest figure

T.C.A. Sharad Raghavan
NEW DELHI



Growth in the core industrial sectors of the economy climbed to a series-high of 10.9% in October 2026, driven by a surge in electricity generation and coal, cement, and iron ore production, and a low base effect, official data released on Friday showed.

Data released by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry on the Index of Core Industries show that growth in October surpassed 8.2% in September, the previous series high. The new index, released this year with a base year of 2022-23, has data that go back only up to April 2024. However, the data also show that the strong growth figure in October was likely aided by the fact that the index grew a relatively poor 0.8% in October last year.

"While core output surged by 10.9% in October 2026, this was supported by a low base related to the shift in the festive calendar, with output having expanded by a marginal 0.8% in the year ago month," Aditi Nayar, chief economist at ICRA, said. "While the growth print for October signals a strong start for the third quarter of FY2027, this is largely optical," she added. "The average performance for October-November would provide a better assessment, as this would adjust for festive base effects."

Within the index, the coal sector saw growth accelerating to 23.05% in October 2026, far faster than the 10.7% registered in September. October's performance, however, is likely also due to low base effect, since the sector contracted 8.4% in October last year. The growth in the index, however, is in line with what the industry itself has reported. Coal India, the country's largest coal company, reported that production increased about 19% to 67.2 million tonnes (MT) in October.

A major reason for the growth in coal production was likely demand from the power sector, which saw electricity generation jump by 21.6% in October 2026, up from 12.6% in the previous month.

CONTINUED ON
» PAGE 8

SC dismisses Tamil Nadu plea over Cauvery water

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI



Water divide: The Cauvery water dispute centres on water releases during the current irrigation year. K. MURALI KUMAR

The Supreme Court on Friday dismissed a plea by Tamil Nadu claiming that Karnataka has to make good a shortfall of 16.01 tmc ft (later modified to 11.719 tmc ft) of Cauvery water on a pro-rata basis during the current irrigation year of 2026-27.

A Bench headed by Justice Vikram Nath had reserved the case for judgment in mid-October after Karnataka argued that Tamil Nadu had even received excess water allocation.

Senior advocate Mohan Katarki, the counsel for Karnataka, said the decision was a welcome one and "puts a check on States frequently rushing to the court to challenge the decisions of the expert body – the Cauvery Water Management Authority (CWMA), constituted under Section 6A of the Inter-State River Water Disputes Act, 1956 – on distribution of water during a distress water year".

The judgment is based on applications filed by Tamil Nadu from September onwards, alleging that Karnataka failed to implement the binding judgment of the Supreme Court to ensure water to Tamil Nadu at Billigundulu on a pro-rata basis during distress years like the current one.

Tamil Nadu, represented by senior advocate G. Umapathy, had vehemently submitted that even flows directed by he CWMA to be ensured by Karnataka, from time to time, were released only after its reservoirs reached nearly full capacity, or in case of reservoir spills or after releasing water for its irrigation or intermittently, creating uncertainty.

CONTINUED ON
» PAGE 8

Heavy rain lashes parts of Odisha, Bengal as cyclone makes landfall

The Hindu Bureau
BHUBANESWAR/KOLKATA



NDRF members ride an ATV on the beach in Puri to prevent tourists and local people from venturing into the extremely rough seas. ANI

The Odisha government on Friday said no human casualties or damage to infrastructure was reported when Cyclone Akvan crossed the State's coast near Gopalpur, causing heavy rain in south-coastal and coastal districts early in the morning. Several districts of West Bengal were battered by rain, and flight and train services were affected due to the cyclone's impact.

The cyclone had considerably lost its intensity when it made landfall near Gopalpur in Odisha. "The cyclonic storm Akvan crossed the south coastal Odisha and north Andhra Pradesh close to Gopalpur with a wind speed of 70-80 kmph gusting to 90 kmph during 7.30 a.m. to 8.30 a.m.," the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said. "Except low-lying areas in urban regions filled with rainwater, everything is under control. There were 12 blocks in Ganjam district that recorded more than 100 mm rainfall during 24 hours ending 8.30 a.m.," said Anu Garg, Chief Secretary of Odisha.

Ganjam district and its adjoining areas received heavy rainfall, with Patrapur (209 mm) recording the highest rainfall.

CONTINUED ON
» PAGE 8

Gupta gets 19-year jail term for bid to kill Pannun

Press Trust of India
NEW YORK

Indian national Nikhil Gupta was sentenced to 235 months in jail by an American court on Friday for his involvement in a plan to murder Khalistani separatist Gurpatwant Singh Pannun on the U.S. soil.

Gupta, 55, had pleaded guilty earlier this year to charges of murder-for-hire, conspiracy to commit murder-for-hire, and conspiracy to commit money laundering, in connection with efforts to murder the separatist in New York.

Judge Victor Marrero announced 235 months prison term to Gupta.

FULL REPORT ON
» PAGE 8

Cultural connect is biggest guarantee of global peace, PM says at SCO forum

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI



Prime Minister Narendra Modi interacts with an exhibitor at the first SCO civilisational dialogue forum at Purana Qila, in New Delhi. PTI

Cultural connect is the biggest guarantee of global peace, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Friday. He was speaking at the first civilisational dialogue forum of the 10 nation Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) grouping. He said it was important that at a time when war and unrest were dominating the world, India was holding a dialogue on shared civilisations.

The SCO forum is being attended by Pakistan for the first time since the four-day conflict between the two countries in May 2025. Pakistan has nominated Federal Minister for Climate Change and Environmental Coordination, Mr. Musadik Masood Malik, to lead its delegation to the event being held in the historic Purana Qila in the national capital from November 20 to 22.

Speaking to the media at the SCO forum, Mr. Malik said, "It is a tremendous opportunity for us to have a multilateral dialogue about civilisation. I think cultures and civilisations cut across boundaries, and it is fantastic that we are here and talking about our history, geography, and our cultures and civilisations..."

He is scheduled to address the forum on November 21.

On Friday, Mr. Modi said Indian culture had taught "*Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*, that is, the whole world is our family". "Therefore, our desire for our own well-being is deeply rooted in the spirit of global well-being. We consider mutual harmony the foundation of global well-being."

CONTINUED ON
» PAGE 8

RAS 2024 RESULTS
36 in Top 50 Ranks
72 in Top 100 Ranks

सफलता का सम्राट स्प्रिंगबोर्ड !!
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CM: Chandni Chowk set for sanitation and traffic revamp

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Chief Minister Rekha Gupta on Friday announced a series of measures to improve Chandni Chowk, including construction of toilets for women, a QR code-based complaint system, better sanitation and traffic management, and removal of encroachments, according to a statement from her office.

The decisions were taken at a review meeting chaired by the CM at the Delhi Secretariat. Ms. Gupta also heads Indraprastha Virasat Punervikas Nigam.

According to the statement, she directed the Delhi police and the MCD to jointly deploy a team to prevent encroachments and asked the civic body to regulate the number of rickshaws.

Surveying and mapping of proposed civil works are also under way, while bollards and benches have been ordered, it added.

CM flags off 100 new e-buses amid push to curb pollution

City's bus fleet crosses 7,000 as Transport Minister sets 14,000-bus target for 2028-29; Gupta also launches 12 inter-State services; over 4,000 vehicles turned back at borders: traffic police data

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Chief Minister Rekha Gupta on Friday flagged off 100 electric buses, taking Delhi's electric bus fleet to 5,338 and its total fleet to 7,088, as part of the government's efforts to expand public transport, ease traffic congestion and curb pollution.

Ms. Gupta also launched 12 inter-State buses between Anand Vihar ISBT and Hapur bus station, providing regular public transport for daily commuters travelling between Delhi, Ghaziabad, Pilkhuwa and Hapur.

Speaking on the occasion, the Chief Minister said a large number of people from Delhi, as well as several cities in the National Capital Region (NCR) and neighbouring States, travelled to the Capital every day for work and other needs. "The government is therefore working to strengthen bus connectivity between these cities so that people do not have to depend on private vehicles," she added.



Chief Minister Rekha Gupta flagging off 100 electric buses from the ISBT at Kashmere Gate in New Delhi on Friday. R V MOORTHY

Govt.'s electric push

The 100 new electric buses comprise 50 nine-metre and an equal number of 12-metre buses. "All are zero-emission, low-floor and air-conditioned vehicles equipped with CCTV cameras, panic buttons, real-time tracking and facilities for persons with disabilities," the Chief Minister's Office (CMO) stated in a release. Transport Minister Pankaj Kumar Singh said the government is targeting around 14,000 buses by 2028-29.

'Shared responsibility'

Ms. Gupta attributed the improvement in Delhi's air quality during November to the public and the government fulfilling their shared environmental responsibility.

On Friday, Delhi's 24-hour average air quality index stood at 270, 10 points lower than the previous day. The overall air quality was in the 'poor' category, though morning pollution spikes were likely to persist over the next few days, a weather expert said.

Meanwhile, the Delhi traffic police turned back 4,272 "non-designated" vehicles at the Capital's borders between November 8 and 19 amid restrictions under the Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP), according to data shared by the Northern Range on Friday. "Non-designated" vehicles refer to those not permitted to enter Delhi under the prevailing GRAP restrictions.

A total of 41,986 "non-designated" vehicles were checked during the 12-day period, while 246 were challaned for violations.

Mahipalpur flyover a daily traffic bottleneck for city commuters

Lavpreet Kaur
NEW DELHI

With lakhs of commuters using the Mahipalpur flyover on National Highway-48 every day, according to Delhi Traffic Police estimates, the stretch connecting central Delhi with Gurugram has emerged as a major traffic bottleneck.

Vehicles begin slowing down well before reaching the flyover, with queues frequently extending beyond it and causing long delays for commuters travelling.

Gajender Rawat, a private-sector employee who travels from his residence in Paschim Vihar to Gurugram for work, said he spends at least 30-40 minutes crossing the flyover.

"Vehicles begin slowing down almost as soon as we enter the flyover while travelling from Delhi towards Gurugram, with congestion stretching towards the Gurugram side. It is the same story on the way back, especially if you travel during peak office hours," he said.



Traffic police are preparing a plan to regulate entry and streamlined traffic movement to ease congestion. FILE PHOTO

On Wednesday, he took over 1.5 hours to cross the stretch during peak hours.

Denis Gupta, another private sector employee who travels daily from Rohini to Gurugram, said he takes the Urban Extension Road (UER), despite the longer distance and toll charges. "I stopped using that route altogether because of the long traffic jams. I now take the UER. I'd rather pay and drive longer than get stuck in a traffic jam," he said.

Commuters have also repeatedly flagged the problem on social media, describing the flyover as a "permanent choke point" and raising concerns over traffic management and passenger pick-ups and drop-offs along the stretch.

Proposed measures

According to a traffic police officer, the Delhi traffic police have proposed a decongestion plan for the flyover, focusing on regulating the volume of vehicles entering the stretch and improving traffic dispersal beyond it.

"The plan recommends controlled entry of vehicles from feeder roads such as Telco Cut and Radisson, channelising merging and U-turn movements, and enforcing lane discipline to prevent sudden lane changes on the flyover. It also proposes installing temporary lane delineators and directional boards ahead of the flyover, prohibiting stopping, passenger pick-ups and drop-offs and unauthorised parking, and deploying traffic personnel at entry points, flyover approaches and the exit to coordinate vehicle movement," the officer said.

Police ban drones, paragliders, laser shows around IGI Airport for 60 days

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Delhi police have imposed a 60-day ban on the operation of drones, paragliders, hang-gliders and other unmanned aircraft systems, as well as laser beams at events and celebrations, in areas under the Palam Sub-Division around the Indira Gandhi International (IGI) Airport.

The orders cite possible terrorist threats from aerial devices and reports of laser beams distracting pilots during landing.

The restrictions are effective from November 18 to January 16, 2027.

Violations will invite punishment under Section 223 (disobeying a lawful order) of the BNS, the order stated.

HC to hear plea over Qadeemi Masjid demolition on Monday

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Friday scheduled for November 23 the hearing of a petition seeking protection of the over a century old Qadeemi Masjid inside the Krishi Bhawan complex from demolition as part of the Centre's Central Vista redevelopment project.

Justice Anish Dayal noted that another petition concerning the mosque was listed for hearing next week and deferred the hearing on the present plea filed by Mohd. Yasir.

Advocate M. Sufian Siddiqui, appearing for Mr. Yasir, submitted that the mosque was functional and faced an imminent threat of demolition.

Relying on a 1945 agreement between the then authorities and the predecessor of the Delhi Waqf Board concerning the use of the mosque, Mr. Siddiqui argued that legal restrictions made its demolition "arbitrary and impermissible".

"Before removing the mosque, the Union government must establish its legal right to do so, honour the registered agreement, fulfil the conditions for re-entry and follow due process for recovering possession and demolishing the structure," Mr. Yasir stated in his petition.

In the other petition, the Centre had argued that the mosque needed to be removed, as a "permanent religious structure within a government office complex was impermissible and incompatible".

CHENNAI METRO RAIL LIMITED
(A Joint Venture of Govt. of India & Govt. of Tamil Nadu)
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E-Tender Notice

CMRL invites bids through open tendering on the CPP Portal (https://eprocure.gov.in/eprocure/app) from eligible bidders who fulfill the qualification criteria as mentioned in the tender document under Single Stage Two Cover (Technical & Financial) system for the work mentioned below:

CMRL/CP/TDR-80-GS/2026: "Construction of Integrated Grade Separator with Rotary at Kattupakkam, including Drainage and Associated Works"

(I) Tender Document available from: 26/11/2026
(ii) Deadline for Bid submission: 29/12/2026 up-to 15:00 Hrs.

For Notice Inviting Tender (NIT), please visit:
www.chennaimetrorail.org>Tenders >NIT (Project)>Civil

The corrigendum/addendum to this publication & tender document, if any, will be uploaded only in the CPP Portal and will not be published through newspapers.

Sd/-
For Managing Director
Director (Projects)
Chennai Metro Rail Limited

DIPR/ 3705/Tender/2026

Office of the
Executive Engineer, Electrical Division, HP PWD Una
Tel/Fax: +911975223484, E-mail: ee-eleu-hp@nic.in
Online
*** INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB) ***

The Executive Engineer, Electrical Division HPPWD, Una-174303 on behalf of the Governor of Himachal Pradesh invites the Percentage rate bids, in electronic tendering system from the eligible class of contractors registered with HPPWD for the works as detailed in table:-

Sr. No	Name of Work	Estimated Cost. (In Rs.) excluding GST	Earnest Money (In Rs.)	Cost of Form (In Rs.)	Time limit	Eligibility of Contractor
1.	Construction of Indoor Multipurpose Sports Complex at Kharidi Ground Nadaun, Tehsil nadaun, Distt. Hamirpuyr (HP) (SH:- Designing, Supplying, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of Façade lighting, Campus lighting therein)	3,53,11,699/-	7,06,200/-	7,000/-	One month	Class-A
2.	Construction of 50 bedded Civil Hospital at Gagret, Tehsil Ghanari, Distt. Una (HP)(SH;- Supplying, Installation, Testing and Commissioning (SITC) of minimum 20 passenger elevator therein)	35,74,239/-	71,500/-	2,000/-	Three months	Specialized Job
3.	Providing service of One No. Electrical Foreman/Engineer for upkeep of Electrical Installation in Dr. RKGMC Hospital for Six month (CH:- RKGMCH Jolsappar)	1,51,200	3,000/-	350/-	Six months	Class-D
4.	Annual Comprehensive Maintenance Contract (AMC) of 01 Nos. 10 Passenger lift (Johnson make) in ADR Centre at Una Distt. Una (H.P)	1,15,200/-	2,300/-	350/-	One year	Specialized Job
5.	Providing Technical services in Auditorium for attending Electrical maintenance and repair under Electrical Sub-Division Bilapur Distt. Bilapur (HP)	1,24,200/-	2,500/-	350/-	Three months	Class-D
6.	Replacement of E.I. in residential building of DCSTE Bilapur (H.P) at Changer Colony Distt. Bilaspur (HP)	1,54,382/-	3,100/-	350/-	Six months	Class-D
7.	Construction of Judicial Court Complex at Amb Distt. Una (HP) (SH- Annual Video Comprehensive maintenance of CCTV Surveillance system and allied equipment therein)	6,67,655/-	13,400/-	350/-	Six months	Specialized Job
8.	Repair of E.I. in PHC building Behal, Tehsil Sh. Naina Devi Ji at Bilaspur in Dsitt. Bilaspur (HP)	2,69,047/-	5,380/-	350/-	Six months	Class-D
9.	Construction of 06 Nos. Type-III and 06 Nos. Type-II family Quarters at Police Station Ghumarwin Distt. Bilaspur (HP) (SH:- Supplying, Installation, Testing and Commissioning on 01 no. 08 Passenger Elevator in Type-II Police Quarters therein)	17,53,313/-	35,000/-	500/-	Three months	Specialized Job

Starting date of Downloading bid:- 21/11/2026 up to 09.00 A.M. **(For each above)**
Deadline for submission of bid :- 30/11/2026 up to 11.00 A.M. **(For each above)**

The bidders are advised to note other details of tenders from the Department website www.hptenders.gov.in. The Technical bids to be opened on dated **30/11/2026 at 01.30 P.M.**

Sd/-
Executive Engineer,
Electrical Division,
HPPWD Una.

HP / 4832/26-27 ***HIM SUCHNA AVAM JAN SAMPARK***

Government of Tamil Nadu
TAMIL NADU STATE HIGHWAYS AUTHORITY (TANSHA)
Chennai-25

NOTICE INVITING BID (through online only)

e-Tender Notice No: TANSHA/INDUSTRIAL EXPRESSWAY CORRIDOR/2026-27/01, Dated: 20.11.2026

For and on behalf of the Governor of Tamil Nadu, bids are invited for Selection of a Consultant for **"Preparation of Techno Economic Feasibility Study (TEFS) for the Proposed Industrial Expressway Corridor Connecting Chennai, Coimbatore and Thoothukudi in the State of Tamil Nadu"** by the Superintending Engineer, Tamil Nadu State Highways Authority, Chennai -25

All details regarding the Bid will be available online in the TN tender portal https://tntenders.gov.in from **12.00 Hrs (IST) on 23.11.2026 up to 15.00 Hrs (IST)** on **22.12.2026.** Deadline for online bid submission is **22.12.2026 up to 15:00 Hrs (IST).** Any Addendum/ Corrigendum will be uploaded in the TN tender portal only.

Superintending Engineer
On behalf of Chaiperson, TANSHA

DIPR/3704/Tender/2026

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES
OFFICE OF THE ADDITIONAL CHIEF ENGINEER,
EASTERN CIRCLE-I, CANTONMENT ROAD, KATAKA.
Email id :- seeccuttack@gmail.com

"e" Procurement Notice No.ACE, EC-I/16 of 2026-27

1.	Nature of work	: Stone Work
2.	Total no. of work	: 01 No.
3.	Tender Amount	: Rs.749.58 Lakh (Approx.)
4.	Tender paper cost	: Rs.10,000/- (Non refundable)
5.	EMD required	: Rs.7,49,600.00
6.	Class of contractor	: 'A' & 'Special'
7.	Period of completion	: 10 (Ten) Calendar Months
8.	Online for bidding	: 25.11.2026 at 10.00 hrs. to 09.12.2026 up to 17.30 hrs.
9.	Date & time of opening of Tender (Technical bid)	: 10.12.2026 at 11.30 hrs.

Other terms and conditions can be seen from the Govt. website "www.tendersodisha.gov.in".

All corrigendum / cancellation of tender if any, will only be uploaded in the above web site.

Additional Chief Engineer, Eastern Circle-I, Kataka.

32001/1440/2627 OIPR-32001/32370/1/26-27/0015

UNION TERRITORY OF JAMMU & KASHMIR
OFFICE THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER PWD (R&B) DIVISION JAMMU EAST

SHORT NOTICE INVITING TENDER

Short e-NIT No. 80 of 2026-2027/Jammu East Dated 18-11-2026

For and on behalf of the Lieutenant Governor, Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir e-tenders are invited on percentage basis from approved and eligible Contractors registered with Union Territory of J&K, CPWD, Railways, MES and other State / Central Govt. for each of the following works :-

S. No	Name of Work	Name of Division	Advertised Cost (Rs in Lacs)	Cost of document (in Rs)	Earnest Money (in Rs)	Time Allowed for Complete-on	Time and date of opening of tender	Class of Contractor
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1	Restoration and upkeeping works from Dogra chowk to Vivekanand Chowk via Fortune Hotel, Residency Road to DC office via CM House, Gummat to Gujjar Nagar bridge & all allied links for the year 2026-27 (Ph-2) (2nd Call)	PWD (R&B) Division Jammu East	**2.77**	600	2% of Advertised Cost	01 Months	(1300 Hrs) on or after 25-11-2026	A,B,C&D
2	Upgradation / improvement by creating New Offices for Officers along with retiring rooms, waiting room for general public and washroom at D.C Office Jammu. (2nd Call)	PWD (R&B) Division Jammu East	**23.67**	600	2% of Advertised Cost	02 Months	(1300 Hrs) on or after 25-11-2026	A,B & C

Position of AAA/ TS : Accorded

The Bidding documents Consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, Drawings, bill of quantities (B.O.Q), Set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be seen / downloaded from the departmental website http://jktenders.gov.in as per below schedule :-

1	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	18-11-2026
2	Period of downloading of bidding documents	From 18-11-2026 to 23-11-2026 upto 1800 Hrs
3	Date, Time and place of pre-bid meeting	21-11-2026 at 1200Hrs. in the Office of Executive Engineer PWD (R&B) Division Jammu East
4	Bid submission Start Date	18-11-2026
5	Bid Submission End Date	23-11-2026 upto 1800 Hrs
6	Date & time of opening of Technical Bids (Online)	25-11-2026 on or after 1300 Hrs in the Office of Executive Engineer PWD (R&B) Division Jammu East
7	Date & time of opening of Financial Bids	To be notified after technical bid evaluation is completed

No :- 9384-94
Dated :- 18-11-2026

Sd/-
Executive Engineer
PWD (R&B) Division
Jammu East

DIP/J-14665/26

JAMMU & KASHMIR STATE POWER DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION LIMITED
(A Government of Jammu & Kashmir Undertaking)

E - Tender Notice No. JKSPDC/FIN/Tariff/04 of 2026 Dated 17-11-2026
Tender Id: 2026_SPDC_331551_1

GIST OF NOTICE INVITING e-TENDERS

For and on behalf of the Managing Director JKSPDCL, e-tenders in two cover system (Technical & Price Bid) are invited from experienced consultants/consulting firmsfor the Engagement of a Consultant for Preparation and Filing of Petition for Approval of Capital Cost of 12 MWNew Karnah HEP&Filing of Multi-Year Tariff (MYT) Generation Tariff Petitions (control period 2026-27 to 2028-29) for 12 MWNew Karnah HEP before the Hon'ble JERC for UT of J&K and UT of Ladakh. The e-bids shall be uploaded on website www.jktenders.gov.inby or before 08-12-2026 up to 6:00 PM. Processing Fee & EMD shall be paid by Demand Draft/online payment in favour of General Manager, Accounts, JKSPDC, Jammu. Payment in the Bank Account must reach the office of GM Accounts by or before the last date of bid submission. A scanned copy of the DD/payment confirmation shall be attached with the technical bid and uploaded on www.jktenders.gov.in.

The detailed e-NIT can be downloaded from JK Tenders portal **www.jktenders.gov.in.**Further, e-NIT can also be downloaded from JKSPDC Portal **https://jkspdc.co.in/** or can be obtained from **SDGM (A&F), JKSPDC Cell No: 9906600522.**

Sd/-
(Dr. Asif Maqbool)
Senior Dy. General Manager(A&F)
JKSPDC

DIP/J-2902-P/26

Timings
DELHI

SATURDAY, NOV. 21		
RISE	06:48	SET 17:26
RISE	14:50	SET 03:02
SUNDAY, NOV. 22		
RISE	06:49	SET 17:25
RISE	15:26	SET 04:05
MONDAY, NOV. 23		
RISE	06:50	SET 17:25
RISE	16:07	SET 05:12

Delhi Weather	max	min
Delhi City	29	11
Safdarjang	29	11
Palam	25	11

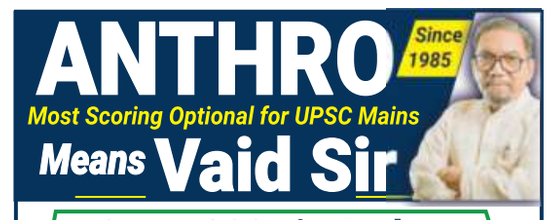
Delhi Palam Today
27°C The weather will be dry. Shallow fog and mist will occur in cool morning. Day will be comfortable. Night also will be cool.

Delhi Palam Tomorrow
26°C Morning will be cool with shalllow fog and mist. Dry weather to continue. Day will be comfortable. Night will be cool and hazy.

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TENDERS

TENDERS ARE invited for items 1: 3– Axis Gripper ; 2: MPSoC ZCU106 . For details, visit the website www.jntuh.ac.in

SITUATION VACANT
GENERAL

CHENNAI PORT AUTHORITY
No.1, Rajaji Salai, Chennai–600001.
GENERAL ADMINISTRATION DEPARTMENT
VACANCY NOTICE
File No.RC2/2035/2023/GA
Dated: 21.11.2026

Chennai Port Authority, an autonomous body under the Government of India, Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways, invites applications for filling up of 2 (Two) vacancies in the post of Pilot (Class-I) (SC-1 & ST-1) in Marine Department, in the scale of pay of Rs.70000 – 200000. Eligible candidates have to apply through "Online Application Portal" (OAP) of the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways **(http://onlinevacancyshipmin.nic.in).**

For further details, visit Chennai Port Authority's Website viz., **www.chennaiport.gov.in.**

Last date for receipt of applications is **04.01.2027.** Candidates already applied for the said posts in the Port's website should apply again.

Chennai – 600 001. Secretary

PUBLIC NOTICE

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is hereby informed to the general public that my client Mrs. Sudha Dhingra W/o Late Sh. S.S Dhingra R/o A-1/7, Hastsal Road, Uttam Nagar, Distt: South West Delhi-110059 has severed all relations with her elder son Mr. Ashish Dhingra and daughter-in-law Mrs. Shweta Jangra due to their misconduct and misbehaviour. My client has disowned and debarred them from all her movable and immovable properties. They shall have no right, title or interest in any of her properties. My client shall not be responsible for any acts, deeds, debts or liabilities undertaken by them in future.

Pawan Dutt (Advocate)
Off:- B-6, LGF, Greater Kailash Enclave-1, South District, New Delhi.

Maharashtra withdraws plea against Centre over food safety regulations

Vinaya Deshpande Pandit
MUMBAI

Two months after deciding to drag the Centre to court over a jurisdiction dispute, the Maharashtra government has decided to withdraw its petition accusing the Central government of usurping its power and creating new rules in a "clandestine manner".

'Parallel structure'
On September 3, 2026, the Maharashtra Food and Drug Administration (FDA) had filed a petition against Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI), challenging the constitutional validity of a few regulations. It had claimed that these regulations had led to the creation of "a parallel structure" which "encroached upon the powers and duties of the State Commissioner of Food Safety and his officers". On October 29, the government directed officials to withdraw this petition, which had caused a stir as it led to a tussle between the Centre and the State, both governed by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).

The petition had challenged the constitutional validity of a few provisions of the Food Safety and Standards (Licensing and Registration of Food Businesses) Regulations, 2011, and its amendment in 2026.It claimed that the FSSAI acted against the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006, which laid out a clear distribution of administrative responsibilities.

The Hindu has now accessed documents related to the State government's directions to officials to withdraw the petition. It was to be heard in the Bombay High Court on November 26.

On October 29, 2026, the Law and Judiciary department wrote a letter to the Government Pleader of the Bombay High Court. This was part of the string of communication initiated by the Maharashtra government on August 31, 2026, asking that a petition be filed. FDA Commissioner Tukaram Mundhe declined to comment.

5 held over teen's death in U.P.; members of PDA community framed: SP

Opposition party chief demands court take *suo motu* cognisance of matter and initiate probe; CM terms incident blot on State's identity, says those who create trouble during polls will be crushed

Mayank Kumar
LUCKNOW


Bharatiya Janata Yuva Morcha members with the bereaved family members, in Gorakhpur on Thursday. ANI

The Gorakhpur police on Friday said five persons, including a JCB operator, have been arrested in connection with the death of a 14-year-old boy on November 18. Following allegations that the incident occured during the Samajwadi Party's (SP) roadshow in the area, party president Akhilesh Yadav demanded that the judiciary take *suo motu* cognisance of the matter and investigate it. He also accused authorities of "committing injustice and arresting people" hailing from 'Pichhda, Dalit, Alpasankhyak (PDA)' communities on false charges.

"It is sad and condemnable that in the Gorakhpur accident case, news has been received that Shivang Nishad, Narsingh Yadav, Rahul Yadav, Virendra Yadav of PDA community have been sent to jail on false charges. Video evidence is available in this case, yet this injustice and atrocity is being committed. The court should take *suo motu* cognisance and investigate the matter," wrote Mr. Yadav on X.

Five local SP leaders and 66 unidentified party workers were booked in connection with the death of Aryavardhan Singh, the son of a BJP worker. The boy was allegedly hit by a JCB machine during Mr. Yadav's PDA Rath Yatra.

In the FIR, the father of the deceased alleged that the speeding JCB hit his son and that the driver and rally organisers fled the scene after the incident.

SP spokesperson Sharvendra Singh said, "Everyone is saddened by the death... but to politicise it is equally shameful. Our leader and party shared CCTV footage which shows that the vehicle is not part of any roadshow or political activity."

'Revolutionary's kin'
Meanwhile, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Friday described the incident as a blot on Uttar Pradesh's identity. "The student, who was on his way to pick up his younger sister from school, was the great-grandson of Pujan Singh, a revolutionary associated with the Chauri Chaura incident. Anti-social elements who emerge from their hideouts and create trouble during elections would be crushed completely," he said.

Ladakh all set to hold first-ever panchayat, civic elections today

Peerzada Ashiq
SRINAGAR

India's high-altitude Union Territory (U.T.) of Ladakh is all set to hold the first ever panchayat and municipal elections on Saturday since 2019, when the cold desert region was carved out as a separate U.T. from the erstwhile Kashmir division of Jammu and Kashmir.

Election materials and staff were fanned out for 1.87 lakh electors spread sparsely over the area of 59,146 square kilometre. Voters from Ladakh's lowest altitude of Drass at 10,800 feet and Korzok at 15,075 feet will cast their votes. The night temperature in these areas have already fallen between minus 7 to minus 9 degrees Celsius.

An official said buses were deployed to carry polling personnel in remote and interior polling stations in the Nubra valley. "Those buses bound for the farthest polling stations left first, followed by buses heading to nearby areas," said the official. In Leh and Kargil districts, the places with pro-Statehood and pro-Sixth Schedule protests on, officials said polling personnel, along with security personnel, were deployed.

'Focus on fair polls'
"All necessary arrangements have been made to ensure the smooth, timely, and efficient conduct of the electoral process, with a focus on free, fair, transparent, and peaceful elections," said an official in Leh.

Ladakh, where the Lieutenant-Governor administration has carved out six additional districts this year, will witness polls for 192 panchayat halqas and 1,428 panchs. However, 55 sarpanches and 1,186 panch candidates have been elected unopposed so far.

Officials said in the Leh Municipal Council, elections will be held in all 21 wards, while four out of 17 wards in the Kargil Municipal Council have elected representatives unopposed.

MoUs worth ₹1.72 lakh cr. for 6 energy projects inked in Bihar

Amit Bhelari
PATNA


Bihar Chief Minister Samrat Choudhary attending the MoU signing ceremony of the Department of Energy and the Department of Industries in Patna on Friday. ANI

In a step towards promoting industrial development and attracting investment in Bihar, memoranda of understanding (MoUs) were signed for six energy projects on Friday during the Entrepreneurs' Interaction and MoU Exchange Ceremony organised under the Bihar Business Connect-2026. These projects envisage a total investment of ₹1,72,885 crore in the State's energy sector.

The projects have two nuclear power plants and four pumped storage projects. The two nuclear power plants will be established in Banka and Siwan districts, while the four pumped storage projects will be developed in Nawada, Jamui and Aurangabad districts.

The ceremony was held in Patna with Chief Minister Samrat Choudhary, Deputy Chief Ministers Vijay Kumar Choudhary and Bijendra Prasad Yadav and Industries Minister Shreyasi Singh attending.

Among the total investment proposals worth ₹2.25 lakh crore received by the Energy and Industries Departments under the Bihar Business Connect, the agreements for these projects will strengthen the State's power generation and energy storage capacity.

The participating representatives included Sumit Verma, Head - Business Development and Strategy, Adani Group; Krishna Tungaturthi, Chief Operation Officer (COO) - Pumped Storage- Greenko Group; Jigish Mehta, Director, Torrent Power; S.D. Paraswar - Scientist and Member of the Board of Directors, Nuclear Power Corporation of India Limited (NPCIL) and Arnada Prasad Samal, Executive Director (Nuclear), NTPC.

ED searches fisherman's residence by mistake in Keralam; sparks protests

The Hindu Bureau
KOZHIKODE

Tension prevailed at Madakkara in Kozhikode district of Keralam on Friday after Enforcement Directorate (ED) officials mistakenly raided the residence of a fisherman, sparking protests by residents.

The incident occurred early in the morning as part of a coordinated Statewide crackdown by the Central agency.

The searches targeted alleged hawala transactions, violations of the Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA), and gold smuggling networks.

According to sources, the ED team had arrived with a warrant to search the house of a suspect named Valappil Noushad. However, due to a mix-up in identifying the property, the officers inadvertently entered the house of a local fisherman instead.

During the hours-long search, family members were allegedly prevented from leaving the house, while the officers pulled out household belongings.

Apology sought
When the mistake eventually came to light, outraged neighbours gathered outside the house and protested the lapse.

They demanded the ED officers issue a formal apology to the traumatised family and insisted all household items displaced during the search be restored before officers left.

The protesters also questioned how such a serious error in identifying the property could have occurred during a high-profile operation.

Nagpur court drops UAPA charges against journalist jailed in 2025

The Hindu Bureau
MUMBAI

A court in Nagpur on Friday discharged journalist Rejaz M. Sheeba Sydeek of offences under Sections 38 and 39 of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act and ordered that charges be framed against him under Sections 152 and 353(1) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023, while posting his bail application and framing of charges for December 4, according to the order document.

The court of District Judge 6 allowed the application in part. Mr. Rejaz was not produced from jail for the hearing; his counsel appeared. The document records that Mr. Rejaz has been in Nagpur jail since his arrest in May 2025 and spent 560 days in prison. Courts denied bail applications before the order.

The arrest was on May 7, 2025, in Nagpur. A week later, Maharashtra Anti-Terrorism Squad took over the investigation and invoked Sections 38 and 39 of the UAPA. The court discharged him of offences under UAPA and ordered framing of charges under Sections 152 and 353(1) of BNS, 2023.

Transgender persons to be roped in for tax collection

The Hindu Bureau
KOLKATA

The West Bengal government will engage transgender persons to collect municipal tax and spread traffic awareness. Urban Development and Municipal Affairs Minister Agnimitra Paul said the initiative, called "Brihannala Brigade", will provide an opportunity for a dignified livelihood for the transpersons. "The CM wishes that they no longer have to resort to begging at traffic signals. We have decided that they will receive training and be deployed at traffic signals," she said.

THE HINDU
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PIMPRI CHINCHWAD MUNICIPAL CORPORATION
Pimpri - 411018
TENDER NOTICE No: -8/1/2026-27
WATER SUPPLY PROJECT DEPARTMENT

Offers by way of e-tendering (Lump Sum Form) are invited by the Joint City Engineer, Pimpri Chinchwad Municipal Corporation from contractors in e-tendering system for following works.
1) The contractor shall quote his Lump sum offer on the Cost of work **excluding Royalty, Material testing charges and Schedule B amount** as mentioned below.
2) The offer for work shall be exclusive of GST. The GST at the applicable rate shall be paid separately by PCMC for work
3) Regarding the Royalty, the policy that the corporation determines will be binding on contractor.

Sr. No	Name of work	Estimated cost put to the Tender (Rs) (4+6+7)	Cost of Work excluding Royalty, Material testing charges and Schedule B amount (Rs)	Royalty (Rs)	Testing Charges (Rs)	Schedule B amount (Rs)	Earnest money (Rs)	Security Deposit (5%) (Rs)	Time limit in calendar months including Monsoon	Cost of Tender Document with G.S.T.(Non Refundable) (Rs.)
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1	Construction of Raw Water Pumping Station for lifting 100 MLD water from Andra Dam including construction of Jackwell, Pump House, Approach Bridge, Intake Channel and allied Electrical, Mechanical, Instrumentation, SCADA and other ancillary works, Rising Main from Jackwell to BPT at Navlakh Umbre, including Operation and Maintenance for 10 years.	1,98,40,24,596	1,98,11,46,503	19,12,763	9,65,330	-	99,20,123	9,92,01,230	30	74,704

Time table for the tenders shall be as follows:

Online sale of tenders	Date - 21/11/2026 to 11/12/2026
Last date of submission of tenders	Date - 11/12/2026 up to 3.00 pm
Pre Bid Meeting Date and Time	Date - 03/12/2026 at 3.00 pm
Place of Pre Bid Meeting	Office of Joint City Engineer, Water Supply Dept. 1st Floor, PCMC Main Building, Pimpri 18
Date of opening of tenders	Date – 14/12/2026 at 11.00 am (if possible)

The Municipal Commissioner PCMC reserves the right to accept or reject any tender partially or completely without any reason thereof. The details of above works, such as Security Deposit, Earnest Money Deposit, Terms & Conditions of the Tender and Schedule of works, are available on web site www.pcmcindia.gov.in, http://mahatenders.gov.in. In case of any technical problem related to the tender document, the same can be referred to the NIC email support at eproc@nic.in or on telephone numbers 0120-4200462, 0120-4001002, 0120-4001005,0120-627787.

Sd/-
(Ajay Suryawanshi)
Joint Engineer,
Pimpri Chinchwad Municipal Corporation, Pimpri, Pune – 411 018.

ADVT No: 2026-27/200,
No: WS/8/KaVi/455/2026, Date: 20/11/2026

PAC
PITHAMPUR AUTO CLUSTER
(A. Government of M.P. Undertaking-Subsidiary of MPIDC)
1st Floor, Atulya IT Park, Khandwa Road, Indore-452001 (MP)
Website : www.pithampurautocluster.com
Email: md.pacl@gmail.com
No. PAC/IND/2026-27/217 Date: 20.11.2026

2nd Call-INVITES PROPOSAL
for O&M Contract for Operation, Maintenance & Management of Tool Room & Technical Service Centre



Pithampur Auto Cluster (PAC) had developed a Tool Room & Technical Service Centre facilities in the year 2009 at 113/2-A, Harniakhedi, A.B. Road, Opp. Veterinary College, Tehsil-Mhow, Dist. Indore (M.P.) with total initial investment of Rs.47.40 crores, spread on 5 acres' land. Since inception these facilities are being Operated & Managed by M/s Indo Toolings Pvt. Ltd. (A unit of M/s JMB Auto Ltd., Gurgaon). As the current O&M Contract is going to be expired, PAC is looking for an entity capable to take the responsibility to Operate, Maintain and Manage the Tool Room and Technical Service Centre facilities on **"as is where is basis"** for the period of 15 years. The complete details of the proposal may be seen at e-portal **https://mptenders.gov.in.** The last date of submission of proposal is 07.12.2026. The document can be purchased online from 23.11.2026 at 11.30 A.M.

For any further information/clarification you may contact CFO, PAC (Mob: 9424011969).

M.P. Madhyam/129207/2026

MANAGING DIRECTOR

A ND-NDE

INBRIEF



Amritpal leaves jail to attend grandmother's cremation

Jailed Punjab MP Amritpal Singh was on Friday flown to New Delhi from Assam's Dibrugarh under tight security after a court in Amritsar granted permission to attend his grandmother's cremation at his native village, Jallupur Khera, on Saturday. A team of Punjab Police took custody of Singh, who has been incarcerated since 2023 in connection with a police station attack case, to facilitate his visit as per the court order. The 'Waris Punjab de' chief's lawyer, Jasbir Kaur, told reporters here that Singh will be brought back to the Dibrugarh Central Jail on Sunday. PTI

SP seeks 15 seats in alliance with Cong. in Uttarakhand

The Uttarakhand unit of the Samajwadi Party (SP) on Friday said it has sought 15 seats from the Congress for the 2027 Assembly election. "Our party believes that Opposition unity is essential to challenge the BJP effectively in the State," SP State general secretary Atul Sharma said, adding that this would mark the first time the SP contests an Assembly election in Uttarakhand in an alliance with the Congress. The SP, however, has kept open the option of contesting independently. Its State president, Abdul Mateen Siddiqui, told reporters that if seat-sharing talks with the Congress fail, the party is prepared to field candidates in all 70 constituencies. PTI

Panchayat polls: setback for BJP in Rajasthan as Cong. registers big gains

Oppn. secures lead in 25 of 37 zila parishads, 213 of 419 panchayat samitis; result seen as 'midterm blow' to ruling party ahead of 2028 poll; BJP loses ground on home turf of CM and Union Ministers

Mohammed Iqbal
JAIPUR

The ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) suffered a major setback in the panchayat elections in Rajasthan on Friday, with the Congress registering decisive leads and winning the majority of zila parishad and panchayat samiti seats.

The Congress secured lead in 25 of the 37 zila parishads, while the BJP was ahead in just eight during the counting of votes. Of the 419 panchayat samitis, Congress was leading in 213. The BJP was ahead in 85, while independent candidates were leading in 56 panchayat samitis.

Smaller parties, such as Rashtriya Loktantrik Party (RLP) of Nagaur MP Hanuman Beniwal and the Bharat Adivasi Party (BAP), also performed well.

Votes were counted for 7,543 panchayat samiti seats and 1,275 zila parishad seats in 37 of the 41 districts. Results in the remaining four districts – Kota, Baran, Karauli and Sriganganagar – will be declared in December, when the five-year terms of the existing zila parishads and panchayat samitis expire.



State Congress chief Govind Singh Dotasra and LoP in the Assembly Tika Ram Jully celebrating the party's win, in Jaipur on Friday. ANI

Strong comeback

The strong comeback of Congress was perceived as a "midterm setback" to the BJP ahead of the 2028 State Assembly election. Senior Congress leaders claimed that farmers and rural voters were dissatisfied with the Bhajan Lal Sharma government and there was an "anti-BJP mood" in the villages just weeks before the completion of its three years in office.

The BJP lost ground on the home turf of Mr. Sharma as well as some Union Ministers, while the Congress made gains in the regions considered as the BJP's strongholds.

The RLP won the panchayat samiti in Jaipur district's Sanganer, which is the CM's Assembly seat, and the Congress won in Bharatpur, which is Mr. Sharma's home district.

Prominent BJP candidates who faced defeat included Urban Development Minister Jhabar Singh Kharra's wife Shanti Devi and son Ajay Singh in Sikar. Mr. Kharra's other son Durga Singh, who contested as an Independent, also lost.

Senior BJP leader and former Minister Rajendra Rathore's son Parakram Singh and daughter-in-law Kanika Singh won the zilla parishad elections in Churu. The Congress recaptured zila pramukh posts in Jaipur, Jodhpur, Bikaner and Bhilwara, while the BJP held on in Ajmer and narrowly escaped defeat in Udaipur. The BJP lost in Jodhpur, represented by Union Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, and Bikaner, represented by Union Minister of State Arjun Ram Meghwal.

According to political observers, the Congress has consolidated its traditional support among the Scheduled Castes and the Jat, Gujjar and Meena communities, besides making inroads into the Rajput vote bank, which is considered loyal to the BJP.

L-G: tear down terror, separatist ecosystem in J&K

Peerzada Ashiq
SRINAGAR

Days after security forces killed Lateef Bhat, "the last local recruit" of the Lashkar-e-Taiba, in an encounter in south Kashmir's Kulgam, Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant-Governor (L-G) Manoj Sinha on Friday chaired a high-level security review meeting that focused on "security scenario and winter readiness" at Lok Bhavan.

The L-G told officials that the goal cannot stop at neutralising terrorists. "We must tear down the entire terrorist, separatist ecosystem that sustains them."

Mr. Sinha instructed Deputy Commissioners and Senior Superintendents of Police "to appoint dedicated nodal officers and set district-specific targets for the seizure and forfeiture of properties linked to anti-national elements".

'Top priority'

"Attaching and forfeiting properties linked to terrorist and separatist elements must be treated as a top priority," he said.

According to police records, 277 properties were attached in the past two years under the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act.



L-G Manoj Sinha at a high-level security review meeting at Lok Bhavan in Jammu on Friday. PTI

The L-G asked the officers to make sure that grievances of the common man are heard. "Ensuring that citizens' grievances receive a fair hearing is a core duty, requiring a dedicated institutional mechanism for grievance redressal with zero tolerance for negligence at any level."

He also called for strict vigilance against encroachments along the Line of Control and the International Border. He also sought a crackdown on illegal mining, drugs and bovine smuggling and establishing joint social media cells to counter fake news.

"Operations against narco-terrorists must continue relentlessly. We must aim to dismantle the narco-terror ecosystem," he said.

BJP seeks Minister's dismissal over remarks on Army, stages walkout from H.P. Assembly

Press Trust of India
SHIMLA/DHARAMSHALA

Adamant about the dismissal of Revenue Minister Jagat Singh Negi, the Opposition BJP on Friday staged a walkout from the Himachal Pradesh Assembly in Dharamshala.

On the fifth day of the Winter Session, heated exchanges erupted as the BJP launched an offensive against the government over Mr. Negi's remarks regarding the Army on Wednesday.

As proceedings began, Leader of the Opposition Jairam Thakur raised the issue, saying that a senior Minister had made serious remarks concerning the Army and 'Operation Sindoor'.

Pressing for a public apology by Mr. Negi and his dismissal from the Cabinet, the Opposition led by Mr. Thakur staged a walkout when Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu defended the Minister.



LoP Jai Ram Thakur along with BJP MLAs staging a protest during the Winter Session of the Assembly in Dharamshala on Friday. PTI

'Allegations baseless'

Asking why the government is shielding a Minister who made controversial remarks, the LOP dismissed Mr. Negi's allegations over the Rafale deal as baseless, saying that merely expunging the controversial remarks is not enough.

Mr. Sukhu, defending Mr. Negi, said he had listened to the Minister's entire speech and that nothing had been said against the Army.

Taking a dig at the Opposition, the Chief Minister remarked they hold a "PhD in lying". He emphasised that the Congress party maintains the utmost respect for the Army.

SC says lamp can be lit on *deepathoon* as one-time measure

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Friday allowed the lighting of the lamp, as a "limited one-time arrangement", on the *deepathoon* at the Thiruparankundram Hill in Tamil Nadu's Madurai district on Karthigai Deepam day (November 24).

A Bench headed by Justice Aravind Kumar, however, stayed the conclusive findings of the Madras High Court in a January 6 judgment that upheld the right to light the lamp on the *deepathoon* as an essential practice. The court issued notice on the appeals filed by the State.

The interim order dealt with pleas by the State to stay the January 6 judgment and looked into the question whether the lamp could be lit on the *deepathoon* on November 24.

"What weighs with us at this stage is the peculiar nature of the occasion and the proximity of the festival. The opportunity to perform the ceremony on that particular day, if denied, cannot be restored by any subsequent adjudication. Equally, we are conscious that the performance of the ceremony, once permitted, cannot be undone," said the order.

'Need to ensure balance'

The Bench said there was a need to balance the immediacy of the festival with the need to ensure that the interim order would not prejudice the appeal of the State or become fodder for claims of a vested right.

"We are of the view that a limited, one-time arrangement, subject to stringent safeguards, would appropriately balance the interests involved pending further consideration," the court observed.

Madras HC orders statutory notices to three IAS officers in library book 'scam' case

The Hindu Bureau
MADURAI

Continuing the hearing in the case pertaining to the alleged scam in the procurement of books for public libraries, the Madurai Bench of the Madras High Court on Friday ordered statutory notices to three IAS officers – Chandramohan, former School Education Secretary; Jayanthi, former Director of Public Libraries; and Aarthi, former Managing Director of Tamil Nadu Textbook and Educational Services Corporation.

'Let them explain'

A Division Bench of Justices G.R. Swaminathan and M.D. Sumathi said the people at the helm of affairs were bound to answer. "Let them explain," the court said. The court directed the Tamil Nadu government to place before it the relevant files regarding procurement of books for the libraries, and posted the matter for hearing after four weeks.



The Tamil Nadu government told the court that a comprehensive policy with regard to the procurement of books for public libraries would be issued in eight weeks. FILE PHOTO

During the course of the hearing, the State government told the court that the suggestions collected by the court and placed for consideration would be deliberated upon, and a comprehensive policy with regard to the procurement of books for public libraries would be issued in eight weeks. The proposed policy would plug all the loopholes that had surfaced, the government said in its submission.

With regard to the case on the same subject matter that is pending before the principal seat in Chennai, the Bench requested the judge (Justice V. Lakshminarayanan) holding the roster (V and AC cases) at the Madras High Court to monitor the investigation.

Punjab Assembly poll: inter-State meeting reviews security plan

The Hindu Bureau
CHANDIGARH

Ahead of the Punjab Assembly election due in early 2027, a high-level inter-State coordination meeting was organised at the Punjab Police headquarters here on Friday, aimed to strengthen security preparedness and improve coordination among agencies, so that the polls are free, fair, transparent and peaceful.

Senior police officers and State nodal officers from Punjab, Rajasthan, Haryana, Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh and Chandigarh and representatives from Border Security Force, Central Reserve Police Force, Railway Protection Force, Intelligence Bureau, Narcotics Control Bureau, Anti-Narcotics Task Force of Punjab and the Excise & Taxation Department participated in the meeting. Punjab's Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) Anindita Mitra was also present.

Unified strategy

During the meeting, deliberations focused on strengthening inter-State coordination and formulating a unified strategy for law and order preparedness, handling communal and sensitive issues, tracking wanted criminals and gangster networks, and effectively curbing anti-social elements, said an official statement.

Racket selling newborns busted in Raipur; doctor among 6 held

Shubhomoy Sikdar
RAIPUR

Probe revealed that women from other States were brought to the hospital for deliveries

Six persons, including a doctor, have been arrested for forcing a woman to sell her infant, said a senior police officer. The officer added that the accused are now being probed for running a racket that sold newborns to childless couples across the country.

'Two dozen babies sold'

Deputy Commissioner of Police (West) Robinson Guria said that the arrested doctor Khir Sindhu Mahanand – the managing director of Diwakar Hospital, a private establishment in Raipur – and his accomplices are suspected to have sold nearly two dozen newborns to individuals, mostly childless couples, across at least five States since the beginning of this year.

"The accused would identify financially vulnerable women and unmarried pregnant women and get them admitted to a hospital for childbirth. Subsequently, they would arrange for the sale of the newborns and divide the proceeds among themselves. We are still in the process of identifying the biological parents of these sold children but there is record of financial transactions," said Mr. Guria, adding that in some cases, the money trail might be missing due to cash transfers.

Probe has revealed that women from neighbouring States such as Odisha and Madhya Pradesh would be brought to Diwakar Hospital where the deliveries would be carried out in a clandestine manner.

According to the established procedure, a memo has to be sent to the birth registration authority after each birth for the issuance of the birth certificate of the baby.

In the given case, however, said Mr. Guria, of the 26 deliveries carried out in the hospital, only three birth certificates were issued based on the memos sent by the hospital that had actual names of biological parents.

Abhishek's comments not contemptuous but painful, says HC

Shiv Sahay Singh
KOLKATA

The Calcutta High Court on Friday while extending interim protection to Diamond Harbour MP and Trinamool leader Abhishek Banerjee in a case filed by the police, said that the comments made by the Trinamool leader were painful and wondered why he was harming his position.

Justice Saugata Bhattacharya of the Calcutta High Court was responding to the comments made by Additional Advocate General Rajdeep Mazumder who informed the Court during the hearing that Mr. Banerjee has posted tweets in which he allegedly made derogatory remarks against the judiciary. "The Court finds these comments are not wilful, deliberate and contumacious contempt, though the comments are painful. Why is he harming his position," Justice Bhattacharya said.



Abhishek Banerjee

Plea to squash FIR

Mr. Banerjee had moved the High Court demanding that the FIR against him be quashed.

Trinamool supporters 'attacked' in Kolkata

The Hindu Bureau
KOLKATA

Supporters of Mamata Trinamool Congress faction were on Friday allegedly attacked by BJP activists outside the Girish Park police station in the city where Trinamool leader Abhishek Banerjee was questioned by the police.

Videos of the scuffle and the assault on women supporters of the Trinamool were shared on social media by the party.

In the videos, groups of women, allegedly BJP supporters, were seen chasing another group of women.

The Trinamool supporters had gathered outside the police station in support of Mr. Banerjee.

Published by Nirmala Lakshman and Printed by S. Ramanujam at HT Media Ltd. Plot No. 8, Udyog Vihar, Greater Noida Distt. Gautam Budh Nagar, U.P. 201306, on behalf of THG PUBLISHING PVT LTD., Chennai-600002. Editor: Suresh Nambath Chandrasekar (Responsible for selection of news under the PRP Act).
ISSN 0971 - 751X



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Three to tango

U.S., China, Russia must draw up a roadmap for talks on nuclear weapons

The first trilateral summit between the Presidents of China, the U.S. and Russia, held in Shenzhen on November 19, reflected both the changing global order and the leaders' shared desire to remain engaged with one another in an increasingly unpredictable world. For U.S. President Donald Trump, the summit was a platform where he could push for joint talks between the world's three largest nuclear powers on reducing nuclear warheads. After the New START treaty between the U.S. and Russia expired in February 2026, Moscow had signalled that it was ready for talks, but Mr. Trump wanted to involve China as well. For President Xi Jinping, the summit reinforced China's position as a peer competitor to the U.S. While Russia seeks to deepen partnership with China, the U.S. is looking to build strategic stability. And for Russian President Vladimir Putin, whom the West sought to isolate after he launched the invasion of Ukraine, the summit offered a seat at the high table. The decision to start trilateral talks on nuclear arms and the joint declaration, which stated that 'a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought', are steps in the right direction. But much will depend on what follows.

Many had compared the meet to the 1945 Yalta Conference, when Russian leader Joseph Stalin, U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt and British Prime Minister Winston Churchill met to discuss the future of post-War Europe. But Shenzhen was not a summit of the victors of a major war. This was more about three great powers setting terms of engagement in a changing world. The summit failed to achieve any breakthrough on any of the issues on the agenda – nuclear arms reduction, non-proliferation or the Ukraine war – or even offer a road map for the future. Moreover, it is not clear if the Shenzhen spirit could be sustained in the medium to long-term as another President in the U.S. could take a very different approach towards Russia and China. The three leaders have called for reform of the UN. While it is a welcome move, any attempt to reform the international system and institutions must also involve other powers, particularly rising middle powers such as India, South Africa and Brazil. But the Shenzhen framework could bring greater stability and predictability to great-power relations. This is important given that two of the Big Three are currently waging two separate wars. The leaders should draw up a clear road map for nuclear talks and other key issues outlined in the Shenzhen declaration, with realistic and achievable objectives. Otherwise, the summit would amount to little more than another diplomatic photo-op.

Going public on AI

India can no longer afford its silence on the multi-trillion dollar AI arms race

The Initial Public Offering (IPO) of Anthropic, PBC is a mile marker in the arms race to develop superintelligent systems driven by generative AI. Traders valued the firm at $1.27 trillion, a denomination that is bound to become more and more familiar in an industry backed by an endless appetite for capital and unprecedented forms of financialisation. Anthropic's statements emphasise warnings on the safety of its systems and the consequences of unbridled development of advanced systems. In the history of the development of this technology, this PR spin may just be a blip. After all, their testing has led to AI agents that have broken out of sandboxes and infected unsuspecting organisations' internal systems: a deluge of agentic chaos that is already a reality has led to little signs of the firm backing its words with action. A familiar trend is playing out, with open source LLMs showing frontier capabilities that can back their erratic impulses, appearing in the space of just months, or sometimes weeks. Advocates of pacing the frontier and managing these emerging risks have been marginalised in a way that has little precedent in this century. It is time for governments to get involved, and specifically, for India to raise its voice on these risks, loudly and unequivocally.

While India's AI industry is nascent, its positions on international forums carry the weight of a sixth of humanity. A mix of cynical calculations and practical considerations have blunted the use of that voice, for example in the U.S.'s hugely destabilising war of choice against Iran, and Israel's ongoing genocide in Gaza. In taking a strong position on what could be the defining transformation of this decade, India has little to lose, and a lot to contribute. India's AI policies are geared towards diffusion and research of helpful capabilities that can trickle down to the common citizen. The capabilities that the Union government and State governments seek to boost by leveraging AI are removed from the frontier research wreaking havoc within the information security profession around the world. Out-of-control AI agents promise, moreover, significant disruption to outdated government and private systems online. While India has little commercial leverage to curb San Francisco's accelerationism, its voice is sure to be noticed. India's focus on AI in international fora, such as the AI Impact Summit in Delhi, has been on consensus. This approach must change. India cannot be silent amid a U.S.-China technological race which could lead to catastrophic damage. New Delhi must not allow the U.S. to stop it from pushing for AI safety.

India's civilisational gambit in China's backyard



Vinay Kaura

Assistant Professor in the Department of International Affairs and Security Studies at the Sardar Patel University of Police, Security and Criminal Justice, Rajasthan, and Non-Resident Fellow, Institute of South Asian Studies, National University of Singapore

There are buildings which hold memories that run deeper than those of the people walking within them. The Purana Qila is one of them. The walls of the Purana Qila were built by Sher Shah Suri during the 16th century, and as per tradition and substantial archaeological evidence, the ancient city of Indraprastha can be found under it. And now, beginning November 20, the Ministers of culture of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), along with dialogue partners from over 25 countries, have gathered within the walls of the Purana Qila for the first Civilisational Dialogue Forum of the SCO. The idea was proposed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi during his visit to Tianjin in 2025, and is being conducted by the Ministry of Culture along with the Ministry of External Affairs.

If one wants to have a better sense of why India wants to host such a forum, one needs to realise that the term 'civilisation' has become a contested territory in international politics. In the two decades since the end of the Cold War, the West had a monopoly over the language of universal principles such as democracy, markets and human rights. While the language was meant to be universally applicable, it implicitly belonged to those who had written the textbooks.

Emerging powers while not rejecting the language, have relativised it. Beijing, for example, moved quickly to institutionalise it. Xi Jinping unveiled the Global Civilization Initiative in 2023. One year later, the UN General Assembly, on a Chinese initiative, designated June 10 as the International Day for Dialogue among Civilizations. In association with the 2023 initiative, China also organised a Ministerial-level meeting of the Global Civilizations Dialogue in July 2025, while the Nishan Forum on World Civilizations launched its 12th edition in September 2026 with the theme 'Civilization, Order, and Justice' at the birthplace of Confucius. Even the Internet conference at Wuzhen this month featured a sub-forum dedicated to civilisation. Clearly, China is not just experimenting in this area; it is developing a franchise which signals a much-recycled message – that modernity has many addresses.

India's rebranding within the SCO

India has viewed these developments with the look of a man who has found someone selling his family silver at the fair. After all, India has the better claim of being the centre of civilisation than many of the current claimants vying for the position. The conference in Delhi is India's attempt to set up its own stall in an organisation that has its secretariat in Beijing. It also fits a pattern of agenda-setting, with the AI Impact Summit earlier this year and the BRICS chairmanship now.

New Delhi's success lies in constructing an Asian identity where China could participate without dominating, and India becomes the bridge between the Global South, the West and Central Asia

The behaviour of a great power is driven more by what it believes about itself than by what it states as its objective. There are three objectives of India here, and only one is explicitly stated: soft connectivity, which includes Buddhist circuits, Sufi lineages and the trade routes that ran from Taxila to Samarkand much before anyone drew maps.

The other objective is to achieve authorship within the SCO. India has never been a comfortable guest in the SCO household. It rejects the Belt and Road Initiative; has a dispute with Pakistan at almost every conference; and even though it has been trying to normalise ties with China since 2024, it cannot shake off the bitter taste of Galwan. A flagship project by India gives it something more valuable than just a veto – a brand name. It lets India highlight that the SCO is not just China's platform but one which India also helps shape.

The third goal, which is least discussed, is to establish that civilisational depth and democratic pluralism are not at odds. China's civilisational argument implies that ancient continuity justifies centralised order. India counters this by arguing that its continuity has been plural, argumentative and layered from the very beginning; proof can be found in the Purana Qila itself.

Moreover, this event is in complete conformity with India's foreign policy. But this can also be a weakness. Multi-alignment is not just non-alignment with a fresh coat of paint. It is the art of belonging to all relevant clubs without giving the key to any one of them. In September, India hosted the BRICS summit. On November 9, India and the European Union held their seventh Strategic Partnership Review in Delhi, just after concluding talks regarding India's membership in Horizon Europe, the EU's flagship research program. On November 17, India participated in the Quad Leaders' Summit in Manila.

The real currency of soft power

The West holds no rival meeting of civilisations. Nonetheless, a Huntingtonian frame of reference is increasingly creeping into Western debates on migration and identity, suggesting that the contrast is beginning to fade. By temperament, the West approaches diplomacy, not in civilisational terms, but in technological, commercial and regulatory ones. Rulebooks on AI, chips and carbon borders are its civilisational statements. India's counterweight to the SCO stage is therefore not a copycat event but one which moves on a parallel track: semiconductors with Brussels, supply chains with Washington and Tokyo, and maritime security through the Quad. Each track hedges the others.

China will also benefit from the Delhi forum. Every forum that sees the world in terms of civilisations strengthens China's argument that universal standards of conduct are simply a Western imposition. A Delhi forum, hosted by a democracy, makes that claim look less like China's self-serving argument and more like an Asian consensus. The risk is that Delhi's democratic legitimacy could become the wrapper for Beijing's content. China will bring its five thousand years of history, its Silk Route and finally, its claim to Buddhism, which matters for the succession of the Dalai Lama.

While it would flatter New Delhi to call this a clever move to outflank China, it would also be an undersell to call it mere pageantry. What is unfolding is a contest over words rather than territory. India can never out-spend China in Central Asia. But it can deny Beijing a monopoly over the term 'civilisation' in the diplomatic language of Eurasia. This may sound like a small objective, but it is a realistic one. And in statecraft, realistic aims usually succeed more often than grand ones. Agenda-setting, not attendance, is the real currency of soft power.

An inclusive alternative

States often become hostage to the language they choose. The civilisational argument carries a danger in that it is often seen by critics as a favourite alibi of authoritarian regimes. India must be careful not to lend its democratic credibility to a language that such regimes use to justify repression.

As the session unfolds, the effectiveness of the forum will not depend on its declarations, but on the nature of the Asia that India wants to build. Multipolarity does not mean inclusivity because rival claims of antiquity can breed more conflict.

New Delhi's success lies in constructing an Asian identity where China could participate without dominating, and India becomes the bridge between the Global South, the West and Central Asia.

Purana Qila is older than any dynasty that called it home. The lesson from this is that civilisations derive their strength from embracing and absorbing; not by claims that they are better than others. For Beijing, civilisation is not a shared inheritance but a claim of ownership. If India uses the forum to show the inclusive alternative, it will have won something that China cannot copy. If instead India uses the forum to prove that it is older than its competitors, it walks straight into Beijing's trap.

After Shenzhen: how India can forge a fourth pole



Raja Karthikeya

geopolitics researcher and former international civil servant

After leaders of the U.S., China and Russia met for an unprecedented trilateral in Shenzhen on November 19, a Chinese proposal suggested that the new world order be called the "Shenzhen International System". Whether or not the name sticks, it's clear that these three nations now regard each other as the only powers that matter in the world.

For decades, whenever Indians spoke of the desirability of a "multipolar order", they implicitly assumed that India would be a pole. But nothing is pre-determined in history, and we cannot take it for granted that our rise is inevitable. India, which comprises one-sixth of humanity and is legatee to a rich civilisation, is certainly deserving of great power status. But this is a status that has to be achieved, and is not granted. India need not wait for others to recognise its worth. It also should not presume that its heritage privileges it to claim the role of a *Vishwaguru*. What India can be, however, is the friend that others are willing to be led by.

The question then is how. India's economic reality which is defined by unsatisfactory per capita income and deepening inequality will mean that it will take a long time for it to stake a claim as an economic power. And until the country achieves complete self-reliance in arms manufacturing, its military might will also remain incomplete. However, this does not mean that we've hit a dead-end. Just as we advanced the non-alignment movement, India can take creative pathways in forging a 'fourth pole'.

An action plan

First, India should lead in declaring that a truly multi-polar order won't be just "tri-polar"; there will be a "fourth pole". However, the fourth pole will be "not one country, but a collective of nations". It should be a collective that will not compromise on sovereignty; that will not give in to expansionism; and whose member nations are unwilling to adhere to decisions that they are not consulted on. India is after all not the only country that is striving for "strategic autonomy" in an uncertain world. From Tokyo to Taipei, from Rabat to Riyadh, from Kyiv to Berlin, from Yaounde to Manila, from Copenhagen to Brasilia – there now exist similar fears, hopes and a quest to secure peace while preserving sovereignty and independence of action. Securing such unity will be a test of India's statesmanship.

Groupings such as G20 and BRICS may be helpful in building networks of trust in an uncertain world but cannot replace the legitimacy of multilateral forums

Second, India needs to rewire its diplomacy to squarely address the conflicts in today's world that have consumed nearly half a million lives in the last five years alone, and which have rendered supply chains and capital markets vulnerable. Launching a "diplomacy of conscience", India should take a strong stand against mass civilian casualties including ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. An instance such as the 2024 ethnic cleansing in Nagorno-Karabakh should never be allowed to recur on our watch. The civil wars in Sudan and Yemen that are threatening regional stability are a concern for all.

India will need to position itself as a mediator and facilitator. The recent moves by New Delhi to mediate on Ukraine are welcome, but a "diplomacy of conscience" would require that the country puts the protection of civilians at the very heart of its mediation.

Enhancing the multilateral system

Third, groupings such as G20 and BRICS may be helpful in building networks of trust in an uncertain world but cannot replace the legitimacy of multilateral forums. India needs to rebuild its presence in the multilateral system. It can do so, for instance, by becoming the host country for significant UN and allied multilateral agencies. Embracing the spirit of multilateralism requires us to eschew short-term gains for long-term friendship. India is currently fighting for an elected Security Council seat for 2028-29 against Tajikistan (which is trying to enter the Council for the first time). India could consider the reputational benefits it will achieve among nations of the Global South by bowing out of the race this time in favour of Tajikistan.

Similarly, in the ongoing race for the election of the next UN Secretary-General, India could help rally the elected members of the Security Council around a candidate from Latin America, whose rightful turn it is for the post.

Fourth, the fourth pole of a new world order would need to step away from the cynical transactionalism of today's world and stem the irreverent dismantling of international law. India should lead the collective of nations in signing and ratifying key instruments of international law including human rights conventions such as the Convention Against Torture and the Refugee Convention.

Need to stand firm

Fifth, India cannot afford a post-Shenzhen world order in which the three "foremost nuclear-armed powers" – as the international media describes them – become the only powers to preserve their strategic weapons or become the sole arbiters of international security on the basis of their large arsenals. It should be conceivable for like-minded nuclear powers in the collective to devise common rules on strategic arsenal growth, and perhaps even create a joint nuclear umbrella.

A new world order is emerging, but nations that were not at Shenzhen need not resign themselves to taking orders. India can and should lead in making the fourth pole a reality.

Views are personal

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Democracy in peril

Prof. D.V. Kumar (Editorial, "The changing dynamic of nationalism in India", November 20) is correct in stating that ethnic nationalism has swept over the civic nationalism once espoused by our freedom fighters. The core values of humanity and democracy seem to be in peril.

Udai Bhan Singh
Lucknow

Check on hegemony

The much-anticipated U.S.-China-Russia trilateral summit in Shenzhen has concluded with a joint statement emphasising their commitment to maintaining strategic stability and international security. This suggests that their immediate objective was to explore common ground rather than strike a grand bargain. However, the challenge for India and the rest of the world is to navigate the possibility of the Shenzhen troika evolving into an instrument of great-power hegemony.

M. Jeyaram
Tamil Nadu

Not mere talk

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's chastisement of the private sector in general, and industry leaders in particular, cannot be downplayed merely as sanctimonious talk (Front page, "PM slams industry leaders over static wages, employment", November 20). There was in it a subtle threat when he invoked the name of Gandhiji who prophesied "What is needed is not mass production but production by the masses". Modi's words are indicative of the fear of whether his government's economic and industrial policies are not as successful as they had thought.

Ayyasseri Raveendranath
Keralam

Beyond cricket

If there is any cricketer of calibre in the world who could be written about at length for his communicative talent and general leadership quality as much as for his cricketing abilities, it must be M. S. Dhoni (Opinion page, 'M. S. Dhoni: A Diplomat, a Wit, and a Man of Few Words', November 20). Sporting greats have to leave the field on an appointed day, which some do ceremoniously and some others quietly. But arenas do not let some sportspersons like MSD step out. He is a known 'finisher' in the game, but the cricket field and cricket lovers will never "allow" him to finish.

T. S. Sanath Kumar
Thrissur

To read more letters online, scan the QR code.
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In Attappady, a predominantly tribal area of Palakkad district in Keralam, a mother soothes her baby. SAKEER HUSSAIN

Attappady's recurring infant deaths this year point to a crisis that goes beyond malnutrition and access to timely healthcare. Poverty, land alienation, and the erosion of traditional food systems are taking a toll on maternal and child health in this predominantly tribal region of Keralam. Despite years of government interventions, families continue to struggle, finds Abdul Latheef Naha

In Keralam, the children beyond healthcare

Between the pages of a logbook recording Dakshina's treatment are ₹100, ₹50, ₹20, and ₹10 notes. Dakshina's mother, Minnal Rani, had filed them away for her daughter's medical expenses. The child is gone, but the money remains untouched. "We will never spend it," she says, fighting back tears.

Dakshina was five months old when doctors detected a hole in her heart. Born on June 13, 2025, she was taken to many hospitals, including one in Thiruvananthapuram, Keralam's capital. With surgery ruled out, she was eventually referred to a cooperative hospital at Perinthalmanna, in Malappuram district, a two-and-a-half-hour drive away from home. She died there, on April 13, 2026.



Rani and her husband Chandra Sekhar say the hospital refused to release their daughter's body until they paid a bill of ₹10,000. They managed to raise the money with the help of a ward councillor.

"We buried her under that tree," says Rani, pointing to a coconut tree near their house at Vechapathi hamlet in Sholayur panchayat of Attappady, Palakkad district.

Dakshina's death is among a series of 10 tribal infant deaths reported this year from Attappady, a predominantly tribal settlement in Keralam. There have been four back-to-back deaths in October. Of the 10 infant deaths, six involved congenital anomalies. An expert committee of doctors and researchers is examining the deaths.

Despite years of government interventions and healthcare programmes for tribal populations, Keralam's most vulnerable struggle with grief and unanswered questions. Tribal leaders say the government must also address the social and cultural conditions affecting families. The loss of land, declining traditional agriculture, changing food habits, alcohol dependence, and weakening community institutions cannot be separated from maternal and child health.

Infant deaths in Attappady

In Vadakottathara hamlet, 23-year-old Sivakami lost her second child on October 25, barely 15 days after giving birth. The baby, born weighing 2.3 kg at Government Medical College Hospital, Thrissur, on October 10, had a heart condition and underwent two surgeries, on October 17 and 24, she says. The child died the following day. Sivakami and her husband Murukesan believe their baby suffered because they belonged to a tribal community.

In Vechapathy settlement, Jyothimani and her husband Biju lost their third child on October 21. Their baby was born weighing 1.75 kg at Medical College Hospital, Thrissur, on October 2 and discharged a week later. When the child fell ill on October 15, the couple rushed to the Keralam government's Tribal Speciality Hospital at Kottathara, a 15-minute auto ride away from home.

A paediatrician there told them that their baby was dead. The frightened parents were then sent to Thrissur in an ambulance. To their surprise, the baby began crying during the journey. "The doctor had clearly told us that our baby was dead," says Jyothimani, still shaken by the experience.

Their baby opened his eyes the following day and received a blood transfusion on October 19. His condition deteriorated the next day. The parents say doctors told them their baby had suffered seizures, a claim they dispute. Their baby died on October 21. Pneumonia was cited as the cause. "We are helpless. They even declared a living baby dead. It shows their attitude towards us," says Jyothimani.

> In my 40 years of work among tribal communities, I firmly believe that infant deaths are not merely a health issue. They have social, cultural, and economic connections
>
> **RAJENDRA PRASAD**
> President, the tribal collective Thampu, Attappady

Murugi, the ASHA worker who looks after Vechapathy, says the baby was underweight and the mother had a fever and difficulty eating during the final days of pregnancy. The child also had difficulty breastfeeding. She asks why the underweight baby was discharged from hospital. "I don't know where things went wrong," she says.

The case has also exposed delays in financial assistance. Jyothimani says she received ₹8,000, covering four months under Janani Janma Raksha (JJR), a Keralam government scheme for pregnant and lactating Scheduled Tribe women, only after her baby's death. Under the scheme, tribal pregnant women receive ₹2,000 a month, directly credited to their bank accounts, from the third month of pregnancy until the child turns one.

In Varakampadi hamlet, 20-year-old Srudhi lost her first baby barely a month after birth. The baby, born with a heart condition, died despite multiple surgeries in a Thiruvananthapuram hospital. Srudhi received no JJR payments until after her child's death, her relatives say.

"They cited a shortage of funds. Two months' instalments reached her account only after the baby died," says her sister-in-law Rajeswari. The money can often mean all the difference to the mother's and baby's health.

Health challenges

Infant deaths first came to public attention in Attappady in 2012, when tribal collective Thampu took up the issue. The government responded with measures, including a special Cabinet meeting in Attappady and the introduction of JJR.

Over 180 community kitchens were present across the region in 2015-16, and their number increased during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, Thampu and the late anthropologist P.R.G. Mathur opposed the model, citing tribal customs and the belief that food should be prepared at home. Critics also argued that community kitchens discouraged men from working and encouraged idleness and alcohol dependence.

News of infant deaths subsided and gradually disappeared from public attention. They resurfaced briefly in 2021-22. R. Prabhudas, then superintendent of the Kottathara hospital, identified a breastfeeding issue as one of the reasons for infant deaths, though activists contested it.

"In my 40 years of work among tribal communities, I firmly believe that infant deaths are not merely a health issue. They have social, cultural, and economic connections," says Thampu president Rajendra Prasad.

Rangiyamma Vaidyar, 78, from North Ommala Muduga hamlet, has carried on her grandfather's tradition of herbal healing since childhood. She treats many ailments, including skin diseases, diabetes, and joint pain. "We were healthier when we grew our own millets. Today, we eat food sprayed with pesticides, and illness is increasing," she says.

Attappady has recorded 55 infant deaths since 2022, according to Kottathara hospital superintendent Dr. Shijin John Aloor. Congenital anomalies are emerging as a major concern. Nineteen babies with congenital anomalies were born this year, eight of whom died. Possible genetic links, including consanguinity, are among the factors being examined.

Dr. Aloor says malnutrition is no longer a major contributor to infant deaths as it was a decade ago. Birth weights have improved. However, access to advanced treatment remains a challenge. Thrissur Medical College Hospital, nearly five hours away, is the main referral centre, while Kottathara lacks superspecialists, including a neonatologist.

Coimbatore is much closer, around 40 km from Kottathara and accessible in about an hour. But there is no formal understanding between the Keralam and Tamil Nadu governments to facilitate referrals.

There are other health challenges. A study published in 2023 by the Indian Council of Medical Research-National Institute of Nutrition, Hyderabad, found that 97.7% of children between 12 and 23 months and 96.6% of adolescent girls in Attappady suffered from anaemia.

Beyond nutritional anaemia, sickle cell disease is a major concern. As many as 18 of 80 samples had tested positive for sickle cell disease at a government medical camp in 2024, sources say. Health observers are also concerned about the possible prevalence of carriers in the population.

A matter of faith

For some tribal families, travelling outside Attappady for treatment is also a cultural and emotional challenge. Some fear that a visit to Kottathara hospital could lead to a referral to Thrissur, where the patient might die. Others believe the soul remains wherever a person dies.

Death and its rituals are deeply rooted in community life. A cemetery near Vechapathi hamlet lies hidden under a bamboo canopy, and women are forbidden from entering it, says social worker Suja Gonjiyoor. At funerals, liquor, drumbeats, and dancing are part of the ritual. When Nagamma, who says she is 115, died last week, the Irula community marked her passing with music and dancing rather than mourning.

Post-mortem examinations have also caused distress. In 2015, force was allegedly used to subject an infant to a post-mortem against the family's wishes. Under tribal custom, an unnamed child who undergoes a post-mortem cannot be buried in the community's burial ground. The family regards this as a matter of faith, and the incident remains a source of distress. "Lots of cultural issues are intertwined with faith. We should address them too," says Prasad.

A loss of land and food culture

Attappady has 192 tribal hamlets spread across Agali, Pudur, and Sholayur panchayats. The population comprises three major communities: Irula, Muduga, and Kurumba. The Kurumbas live in 19 hamlets, mostly along the Bhavani river and the forest fringes. The Mudugas are spread across 24 hamlets in Pudur and Agali. The remaining hamlets are predominantly inhabited by the Irulas. The region spans about 750 sq km and has a large forest cover. But its tribal communities have lost much of their traditional agricultural land.

Migration from other parts of Keralam and Tamil Nadu into Attappady began in the 1940s. Integrated Tribal Development Project (ITDP) records show that tribal communities had lost more than 10,500 acres by 1982. Land grabs have continued, and signboards advertising land and plots for sale are now common across the region.

The loss of land has also meant the loss of traditional food systems. Lakshmi Unnikrishnan, 47, a social worker from Nallasinga hamlet in Sholayur, believes the shift from traditional food to a rice-based diet has contributed to malnutrition. "We once cultivated a wide variety of millets and nearly 60 types of spinach. Only a few remain in use today," she says.

The decline of traditional agriculture also reflects changing economic conditions. Farmers are abandoning cultivation because of various factors, including land grabs, crop losses, poor returns and alcoholism.

Launched in 2019 under ITDP, the Namathu Vellame (Our Grains) initiative promotes millet and pulse cultivation in 50 hamlets across three panchayats, covering 1,228 farmers. The Agriculture Department's separate millet promotion project, however, has stalled, says an official.

But reviving traditional food habits requires more than seeds and subsidies. Farmers need access to land, water, and viable markets to make cultivation worthwhile.

Drinking water remains another major concern. Agali, Sholayur, and Pudur panchayats draw water from the Bhavani and Siruvani rivers and supply it to settlements. The water quality has come under scrutiny, with health officials repeatedly detecting coliform bacteria in samples.

Many families consume water without boiling it. "Most tribal people prefer drinking water in its natural form. They believe boiling takes away its life," says Revathi, a social worker, who herself lost her child.

Water shortages compound the problem. While the 19 Kurumba hamlets in the reserve forest have relatively good access to water, many other settlements face shortages. In summer, water is supplied through tanker lorries. Sudheesh, a farmer from Pattanakkallu hamlet in Pudur, says his settlement has faced water shortages for nearly half a century.

Problems with the system

The Irula, Muduga, and Kurumba communities have distinct languages, and Prasad argues that health awareness campaigns must be conducted in tribal languages. Irula, spoken by nearly 80% of the tribal population, could be used as the principal language, with Muduga and Kurumba also included.

Thampu's street plays staged in the early 2020s offer an example. The organisation used them to communicate the importance of vaccination. The Health Department felicitated Thampu in 2022, because his organisation's work helped raise coverage to 98% that year.

The government has a system to monitor pregnant women in Attappady, involving eight categories of frontline workers. These include ASHA workers, public health nurses, women-empowerment programme Kudumbashree's outreach personnel, tribal promoters, ICDS staff, and health inspectors. Regular review meetings help track visits and ensure follow-up care.

"We have followed this system diligently for the past several years," says V.K. Suresh Kumar, ITDP Project Officer. ITDP has 144 tribal promoters in Attappady, including nine posted in hospitals and 135 working in the field.

However, delayed antenatal registration remains a problem. Health officials say women should be counselled even before they become pregnant. They also stress the need for folic acid and other essential nutrients during early pregnancy.

The government has spent ₹490 crore on healthcare in Attappady over the past 10 years, according to Prasad. Though 24 government departments have implemented projects in the region, he says there remains a wide gap between government interventions and their impact on the ground.

Doctors posted to Attappady receive an incentive of ₹20,000 a month and access to a special postgraduate quota for higher studies. But attracting doctors is only part of the challenge. They also need to understand the communities they serve.

K.A. Ramu, Thampu's convener, says tribal representatives are rarely included in decision-making bodies, including hospital management committees. He also calls for greater financial assistance to tribal youth who wish to become entrepreneurs. The Scheduled Tribe Department's startup assistance is capped at ₹50,000, he says.

Ramu also wants urgent action against alcoholism and the sale of illicit liquor. Though Attappady has been a prohibition zone since 1995, illicit liquor continues to circulate in the hamlets. Before prohibition, the region had around 140 arrack shops. The ban was followed by bootlegging and illicit brewing.

The government has announced fresh interventions following the latest deaths. Minister for Welfare of SC/ST and Backward Classes K.A. Thulasi says the government is considering reviving community kitchens. Their number has fallen to 28. "We will examine the reasons for the decline and take a decision on restoring them soon," she says.

She has also promised to resume review meetings every three months. "We are taking every possible measure to prevent such deaths. There should be no recurrence of such tragedies in a civilised society," Thulasi says.

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Jyothimani and Biju struggling to hold back their tears, a month after losing their baby. SAKEER HUSSAIN

From Page One

Core sector growth hits record 10.9% in October

However, this sector too could have benefited from a low base effect, since it contracted nearly 7% in October 2025.

Within the index, the infrastructure-related sectors were the only ones that grew strongly without the aid of a statistical low base effect.

The iron ore sector, for example, grew at a three-month high of 23.4% in October 2026, compared to 18.4% in September and 8.7% in October last year. One of the factors driving this strong growth was that steel production grew at 7.3% in October, the fastest rate in seven months.

The cement sector also grew at a series-high of 15.4% in October 2026, compared to 10.1% in September, and 5.2% in October last year.

The fuel-related sectors in the Index other than coal continued to perform relatively poorly.

SC dismisses T.N. plea over Cauvery water

Noting that Karnataka had paid scant respect to its commitments, Tamil Nadu said it was still waiting for the former to ensure that the backlog in the quantity due was made good to it.

Tamil Nadu had referred to the Cauvery Tribunal decision of 2007 and the Supreme Court judgment of 2018 affirming the award of the Tribunal, both of which had underscored that Cauvery waters had to be proportionately shared among Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Puducherry.

The Tribunal award, along with the top court judgment in 2018, had assessed the total annual flow of the Cauvery basin at 740 TMC (thousand million cubic feet) at 50% dependability at Lower Coleroon Anicut. This water was apportioned between Karnataka (284.75 TMC), Tamil Nadu (404.25 TMC), Kerala (30 TMC), and Puducherry (7 TMC), alongside allocations of 10 TMC for environmental flows and 4 TMC earmarked as inevitable wastage to the sea. In case the annual yield was less than 740 TMC in any water year due to distress caused by less rainfall, the States were directed to share distress proportionately (pro rata).

But Tamil Nadu had said the State of Karnataka was heavily drawing water for irrigation through canals and river releases from its reservoirs since August 2026.

Cultural ties guarantee of world peace: PM

He said empires had certainly changed the map of the world, but civilisational dialogues had changed the way the world thinks, adding, "That is why the SCO civilisational summit is not merely a ceremonial platform. It can become a platform for giving the world direction". "In recent years, SCO has significantly increased cooperation in security, economy, connectivity and Cultural, civilisational cooperation will strengthen relations among various countries," Mr. Modi said. Pointing out that that 21st century technology has created new possibilities for cultural connectivity, Mr. Modi proposed that the SCO countries collaborate on digitisation and translation of ancient texts.

Cyclone crosses Odisha coast, no major damage

After the cyclone crossed the coast near Gopalpur, coastal areas such as Kendrapada, Baleshwar, Chandbali, Kataka and Paradip received more than 30 mm of rainfall. During the day, Kendrapada recorded the highest rainfall of 57 mm. IMD sources said the cyclone first weakened into a deep depression, subsequently into a depression and finally into a well-marked low-pressure area during the day.

Indian man gets 19-year jail term for bid to kill Pannun

Nikhil Gupta had pleaded guilty earlier this year to charges of murder-for-hire, conspiracy in connection with efforts to murder Khalistani separatist Gurpatwant Singh Pannun in New York

Press Trust of India
NEW YORK

Indian national Nikhil Gupta was sentenced to over 19 years in jail by a U.S. court on Friday for his involvement in a murder-for-hire plot against a Sikh extremist on American soil.

Gupta, 55, had pleaded guilty earlier this year to charges of murder-for-hire, conspiracy to commit murder-for-hire, and conspiracy to commit money laundering, in connection with efforts to murder Khalistani separatist Gurpatwant Singh Pannun in New York.

Judge Victor Marrero of the Southern District of New York announced 235 months prison term to Gupta after an almost 80-minute hearing.

The judge did not impose any sentence of supervised release on Gupta, saying he will be put in deportation and removal proceedings once he completes the prison term.

Gupta, wearing a tan prison suit, was escorted into the courtroom by marshals. He scanned the room as he entered and sat flanked by his lawyers.



In this courtroom sketch, Nikhil Gupta appears in a federal court in New York on June 17, 2024. REUTERS

Pannun says the threat to his life kept him from practising law for over 1,200 days

Words of regret

Gupta, in the courtroom, invoked the teachings of Mahatma Gandhi, Mother Teresa, Nelson Mandela and Martin Luther King and said he had hoped to live by the ideals of these leaders.

Gupta apologised for his actions in a brief six-minute statement that he delivered in English in court.

"I cannot undo what I have done. I am sorry to Pannun, to the community and the fraternity. I'm sorry," Gupta said, turning to look at Pannun, who was seated in the courtroom and had several members of the Sikh community accompanying him for the hearing.

Gupta said his family, wife, mother and children have suffered and are being punished for something that they did not do. He appeared to choke and get emotional as he addressed the court.

He said he would accept whatever sentence the court accords him and would come out a "better" individual after he finishes his sentence.

Pannun made his statement claiming that he has not been able to do his regular legal practice for over 1,200 days since the threat to his life was uncovered.

In imposing the 235-month sentence, the judge said it is "reasonable and appropriate" given the nature of the crime.

The defence lawyers, speaking after the verdict, expressed disappointment over the sentence, saying they would have wanted a lesser prison term for Gupta. Several supporters of Pannun had gathered outside the courthouse in New York with effigies of Gupta and others ahead of the hearing.

Govt. 'takes note' of Shenzhen summit, awaits more details

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The trilateral summit ended with a joint statement that described the meeting as 'historic'

India said it had "taken note" of the trilateral summit of the leaders of the U.S., Russia and China in Shenzhen, held on the sidelines of the Asia Pacific Economic Conference (APEC).

In its first comments on the meeting between U.S. President Donald Trump, Russian President Vladimir Putin and Chinese President Xi Jinping that has been dubbed a "G-3", the External Affairs Ministry was non-committal.

"We have taken note of this meeting between three APEC member countries," said the Ministry's spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal, responding to a question at a briefing on Friday. "We await a fuller account of the concrete outcomes of this meeting before offering our assessment," he added.

The trilateral summit ended with a joint statement that described the meeting as "historic".

The Opposition had criticised the government, suggesting that India should have been included in the summit where global issues were being discussed.

India is not a member of the 21-nation APEC grouping, and Prime Minister Narendra Modi had met Mr. Trump on Tuesday at the Quad summit in Manila.

"There were some concrete outcomes which came out of [the Quad Summit] including the Quad Business Leaders Forum which is to be held next year," Mr. Jaiswal said, listing initiatives announced after the Quad meeting, including on emerging technologies, maritime surveillance, cybersecurity cooperation and security issues.

"These decisions are [examples of] practical cooperation that is delivering for the people and countries in the Indo-Pacific region," Mr. Jaiswal added.

NIA seeks UAE assistance on flydubai co-pilot probe

Vijaita Singh
NEW DELHI

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) has sent a mutual legal assistance (MLA) request to the United Arab Emirates to probe any "Indian footprints" of the flydubai co-pilot who attacked Indian Captain Smit Machchhar in an apparent bid to crash the Israel-bound flight on September 30, 2026.

The first officer has been identified by the NIA as an Omani national in a First Information Report (FIR) filed by the NIA on October 9. The NIA registered the case as it involved the Indian national, Captain Machchhar.

NIA Director-General Rakesh Aggarwal said on Friday that the Mutual Legal Assistance Treaties (MLATs) request was made to the UAE to seek copies of certain documents and also permission to examine certain persons.

"There are issues of the co-pilot having studied in Australia and the U.K. Who did he come in contact with? Are there any Indian footprints of his friends circle who could be lurking. We will go ahead as soon as we get the documents and permission from the UAE to join the investigation," Mr. Aggarwal said. The official said the NIA could investigate offences committed outside India under certain legal conditions.



NIA D-G Rakesh Aggarwal

Speaking on the conclusion of the two-day Anti-Terror Conference, the NIA D-G said there had been a significant improvement in bringing back fugitives who had escaped to other countries. He said that one of the six sessions was on international cooperation in combating cross-border terrorism involving mutual legal assistance treaty, letters rogatory and extradition requests.

"The main issue discussed was how we can use these channels more effectively. When we ask for somebody's extradition, or we ask some other country to help us in the investigation of an offence, then whatever offence we are talking about should also be an offence in that country. Only then the request can be processed... Since there are different laws in different countries, sometimes the other country does not understand or is not able to appreciate which offence under Indian law corresponds to an offence in their country," Mr. Aggarwal said.

He said extradition, deportation or any such movement ultimately depends on the legal process of another country, and the agencies must ensure that evidence and documentation met the legal standards to support extradition and overseas investigations.

Cannot charge U.S. citizen under UAPA now: NIA D-G

Vijaita Singh
NEW DELHI

India did not invoke terror charges against Matthew Van Dyke, the U.S. citizen arrested along with six Ukrainians for allegedly crossing into Myanmar through Mizoram and training armed ethnic groups in weapons handling and drone warfare, as investigators are yet to establish whether any of those trained were Indian insurgents, said National Investigation Agency (NIA) Director-General Rakesh Aggarwal on Friday.

Mr. Van Dyke, who was released on bail in September, has returned to the U.S. The NIA D-G said lots of data associated with the accused are being examined forensically. He said the agency would pursue legal remedies available under law if Mr. Van Dyke failed to return to India after the investigation, indicating that he could be declared a fugitive in such a scenario. The D-G was speaking on the sidelines of the conclusion of the two-day Anti Terror Conference.



Mathew Van Dyke

To a question from *The Hindu* why the NIA, which had arrested Mr. Van Dyke and others under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967 (UAPA) in March, did not pursue terror charges against the accused, Mr. Aggarwal said, "The second part of the investigation involves exactly identifying the insurgents who were trained by them. Unless we are able to establish the identity of the persons trained by them, it will not be possible to charge them under the UAPA, because that is the offence under the UAPA which is the allegation in the FIR." Explaining their arrival in India, Mr. Aggarwal said that they entered India on valid visas. "He and other persons entered India legally. They had crossed over from India to Myanmar illegally and there they had trained certain insurgents, some of whom are suspected to be Indian insurgents. They returned to India illegally and they have been charged for that," the officer said.

Asked if Mr. Van Dyke's allegations against the Indian government on social media violated his bail conditions, the D-G said, " He did not make any such allegations before the judge. Why do I need to comment on that? He never raised any complaint during the six times he was produced in court while he was in judicial custody (Tihar jail) here for six months. He left India and returned once to attend the court proceedings.. The law will take its own course. If he doesn't come back after the investigation, then as a fugitive, of course."

AI Express, Air India extend suspension of Jeddah flights

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

Air India and Air India Express on Friday announced extending the suspension of flights connecting Jeddah till November 24 amid the prevailing security situation in Saudi Arabia. The two airlines have already suspended services to and from Riyadh and Dammam till November 30.

Earlier, the services to Jeddah were suspended till November 21.

On November 18, IndiGo extended the cancellation of flights connecting Saudi Arabian cities till November 30. Akasa Air has cancelled its flights to and from Riyadh and Jeddah till November 30.

NCB-DEA operation cracks U.S. drug ring

Devesh K. Pandey
NEW DELHI

The Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) and the United States Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), in a coordinated operation, have busted a transnational network supplying psychotropic and opioid drugs across the United States. Six accused persons have been arrested.

In the crackdown, codenamed Operation Monsoon Thunder, the Indian module supplying drugs and opioid/NRx medicines to consumers in the U.S. was identified.

Based on shared intelligence inputs, the NCB conducted raids at multiple locations, including Hyderabad, Delhi, Kolkata and Lucknow, from November 4 to November 13, during which six persons allegedly linked to the network were held.



(From left) Tej Deepak Jaiswal and Arti Soni, both from U.P., and Talabathula Manoj from Telangana. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

They have been identified as Tej Deepak Jaiswal, Arti Soni, Deepak Kumar Tiwari and Jaswant from Lucknow; Talabathula Manoj from Allapur, Hyderabad; and Abdul Muttalib from Kolkata.

Records and digital evidence examined by the agency so far indicate that the network handled nearly 3,000 parcels containing close to five lakh tablets

NCB found over 1,500 tablets in consignments bound for multiple destinations

between June 2022 and November 2026 across the U.S., the agency said. During the investigation, the NCB identified multiple live consignments containing more than 1,500 tablets that were scheduled for delivery to different destinations. Actionable intelligence was shared with the DEA to facilitate enforcement operations.

The DEA has seized two consignments. Further, customer databases covering more than 59,000 individuals, containing transaction records, details of past consignments, delivery addresses, USPS tracking IDs and types of drugs, among other information, have also been shared with the DEA to help identify customers and drop-shippers operating in the U.S.

According to the NCB, the network maintained consignment and consumer details in shared digital records, including Google Sheets. Drug orders were received by Indian operators through digital communication platforms such as Telegram, Skype and WhatsApp. Consignments were dispatched through postal and other delivery channels, including the United States Postal Service (USPS), by operatives based in the U.S.

The DEA is currently developing leads provided by the NCB. Although the dataset covers approximately 59,000 individuals, the DEA has said it will conduct a thorough intelligence analysis and allocate dedicated resources to disrupt the "illicit pharmaceutical" network.

It is alleged that the Indian operators received payments through digital payment platforms such as Venmo, a U.S.-based payment app, bank accounts held in the names of other individuals, and UPI. Hawala channels were also allegedly used to receive commission payments.

One Indian seafarer missing after second attack on LPG ship

M. Kalyanaraman
CHENNAI

The ship had 25 crew on board, with 21 of them Indian and headed by a captain from Ukraine

One Indian seafarer of the Panama-flagged LPG tanker *Tara Gas* remains unaccounted for after the vessel was attacked a second time in the Strait of Hormuz, just off the northern coast of Oman's Musandam Peninsula.

The missing seafarer has been identified as K. Subramanian of Aruppukottai in Tamil Nadu, who was serving as third officer on board the vessel.

Tara Gas, a Very Large Gas Carrier that can carry more than 53,000 tonnes of LPG, had 25 crew on board – 21 of them Indian headed by a captain from Ukraine. The tanker was first hit by a missile on November 16 and sent out a MAYDAY signal. The missile struck the port side aft of the ship, near the purifier room. It left a hole of about 1.2 m x 1.2 m in the hull, just above the waterline, and a fire broke out. After that attack, all crew were reported safe and shipboard power was restored.

After the second attack, the crew had abandoned the ship. Four were initially unaccounted for.

Modi blamed business community for his own failures, says Congress

Kharge says the Congress has always advocated a level playing field, but the Modi govt. has handed over the country's resources to 'capitalist cronies'; Ramesh says verbal assault shows Modi is rattled by thought of becoming 'outgoing PM'

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Congress on Friday said Prime Minister Narendra Modi's "verbal assault" on industry leaders reflected his realisation that he would soon become an "outgoing PM".

Mr. Modi's remarks also amounted to an acknowledgement of what the Congress had been highlighting for several years about the state of the economy, the party added.



State of the economy: Congress leader Jairam Ramesh addressing the media at the AICC office in New Delhi on Friday. R.V. MOORTHY

Woken up after 12 years

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge said the Prime Minister acted like the Leader of the Opposition by blaming the business community for the failures of his government. "True to habit, PM Modi blamed the business community for his own failures in his speech at FICCI! It felt as though the Prime Minister were the leader of the opposition. He has woken up after 12 years," Mr. Kharge said in a post on X.

Mr. Kharge pointed that the Congress had always advocated a level playing field, but the Modi government had handed over the country's resources to "capitalist cronies". "The lack of healthy competition stifled innovation, compromised manufacturing quality, and weakened the credibility and global brand value of Indian products," he said, adding that the country was facing a situation of high inflation, unemployment and declining savings. "Make in India" had become "Buy from China", the Congress chief alleged.

On Thursday, addressing the FICCI annual general meeting, Mr. Modi had questioned industry leaders over the lack of commensurate job creation and salary increases despite the government's tax concessions. Referring to income tax relief of up to ₹12 lakh per year and reductions in corporate tax and GST rates, he asked industrialists whether they had increased their employees' salaries or expanded their workforce. "I know you won't applaud. I know that very well, because your appetite is so enormous that no matter how much you are given, it is never enough," he told the gathering.

'Frustrated, dejected'

Reacting to these remarks at a press conference on Friday, Congress general secretary (communications) Jairam Ramesh said the Prime Minister's remarks showed that he was "rattled, frustrated, dejected, concerned and disappointed".

He said Mr. Modi was now making the same arguments that the Congress had raised in its 2024 Lok Sabha election manifesto, the *Nyay Patra*, but he had then dismissed it as reflecting "urban Naxal thinking".

The Congress manifesto for 2024 Lok Sabha election had flagged stagnant incomes, inadequate job creation, declining private investment and widening inequalities, Mr. Ramesh said. "He attacked the same wealth creators. He repeated what we had said in our manifesto," he added.

"It seems he has realised that he would soon become the outgoing PM and, before picking up his '*jhola*', he is defaming others when the reality is that economic failures are due to his policies," Mr. Ramesh said.

He also accused the government of allowing economic power to become concentrated in the hands of a few business groups, at the expense of competition and smaller enterprises. A record trade deficit with China and growing dependence on imports, demonetisation and the implementation of a faulty Goods and Services Tax (GST) hurt the domestic micro, small media enterprises (MSMEs) which were into manufacturing, said Mr. Ramesh.

Cong. proposes four-point formula for delimitation, says INDIA bloc on board

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

It proposes retaining the existing strength of 543 seats in the Lok Sabha; reserving one-third of the seats for women

The Congress on Friday said it favoured resolving the issue of delimitation through consultations with all political parties, but accused the government of making no effort to engage the Opposition on the matter.

Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh said the party's position was guided by a four-point formula: retaining the existing strength of 543 seats in the Lok Sabha; maintaining the present State-wise distribution of seats; reserving one-third (182) of the existing seats for women; and imposing a 25-year freeze on all three arrangements.

Mr. Ramesh said the need for an early consensus on the issue had become more pressing because Article 82 of the Constitution will come into force and delimitation would be held once the results of the ongoing Census exercise are out early next year. This could be unfavourable to some southern States – which have made progress in population control – and hence not feasible, he added.

Mr. Ramesh said the Congress was not opposed to delimitation as such, but believed that the exercise should not place any State at a disadvantage.

He claimed that all parties in the INDIA bloc were on the same page on the four-point formula. The Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK), he said, was also party to a resolution opposing any change in the number of Lok Sabha seats and seeking safeguards to ensure that Tamil Nadu was not disadvantaged by delimitation.

The Congress leader said seeking consultation was necessary because the government had not initiated any meaningful engagement with the Opposition. He claimed that, as per his information, the government has not shared a concrete proposal on delimitation even with constituents of the NDA.

The Congress wanted the matter to be discussed with all political parties and stakeholders to arrive at a consensus, Mr. Ramesh added.

The Monsoon Session of Parliament has remained unprorogued since both Houses were adjourned *sine die* on August 13. The decision has fuelled speculation about the possibility of the government convening Parliament at short notice to consider the proposed constitutional changes linked to women's reservation and delimitation.

An extended or special sitting within the same session requires a minimum notice of two days, while convening a fresh session requires at least 14 days' notice. Speculation also continues over the timing of the Winter Session.

Nepal PM to begin state visit to India tomorrow; talks with PM on agenda

Kallol Bhattacherjee
NEW DELHI


Balendra Shah

Nepal Prime Minister Balendra Shah will be on a two-day visit to India from November 22, the External Affairs Ministry (MEA) announced on Friday.

Official spokesperson for the Ministry, Randhir Jaiswal said Mr. Shah's trip will be a "state visit, during which he will be accorded state honours".

"He will meet with our President and hold discussions with our Prime Minister. Given that this is a highly multifaceted relationship, the talks will cover a wide range of topics, including our development partnership, economic cooperation, and various other matters," said Mr. Jaiswal during the biweekly media briefing.

The MEA, in a statement, said that India-Nepal bilateral cooperation has witnessed progress across sectors, including trade and commerce, development partnership, energy and water resources, and physical and digital connectivity, with growing engagement in areas such as start-ups, technology and innovation, and sports.

In Kathmandu, Nepal's Foreign Secretary Amrit Bahadur Rai told the media that Mr. Shah will be accompanied by a 34-member delegation.

Mr. Rai said the two countries are expected to sign several memorandums of understanding covering different areas of cooperation, and a few completed projects are expected to be inaugurated following Mr. Shah's meeting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Sources said the Dharchula Bridge, the land port of Banbasa at the Uttarakhand-Nepal border, and a train route between Janakpur and Gorakhpur are slated to be opened.

Formal engagements will begin Monday morning with a ceremonial reception at the Rashtrapati Bhavan, followed by a visit to Rajghat, where Mr. Shah will lay a wreath at Mahatma Gandhi's memorial. He will then meet Prime Minister Modi at Hyderabad House, where the MoUs will be signed. He will leave for Kathmandu later that afternoon.

This will be the Nepal Prime Minister's first visit to India since he took charge last March. Finance Minister Swarnim Wagle and Foreign Minister Shisir Khanal, who both visited India earlier this year, will join the delegation.

Akhilesh fuels talk of wider Opposition alliance in U.P.

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Over the past two days, Samajwadi Party (SP) president Akhilesh Yadav met CPI(ML)L general secretary Dipankar Bhattacharya and Aam Aadmi Party leader Sanjay Singh, raising speculation about a wider coalition of Opposition parties ahead of the Uttar Pradesh Assembly election scheduled early next year.

The SP and the Congress are yet to finalise their seat-sharing arrangement. A meeting between the two sides is scheduled for November 23.

On Thursday, Mr. Bhattacharya, along with other party leaders, met Mr. Yadav at his office in Lucknow.

"We took stock of the developing situation in U.P. and discussed ways to strengthen the INDIA bloc and turn the elections into a massive people's movement for political change in the State," he posted on X on Friday.

SP leader backs alliance talks with Congress, takes 'biryani' jibe at Owaisi

Anuj Kumar
GHAZIABAD


Azam Khan

Taking a swipe at AIMIM chief Asaduddin Owaisi's political ambitions in Uttar Pradesh, senior Samajwadi Party leader Azam Khan has stated that people in his region do not prefer "Hyderabadi biryani" and instead favour "pulao and mutton biryani".

Following his release on interim bail, Mr. Khan returned to Rampur and outlined his political stance ahead of the State Assembly elections early next year.

Addressing reporters at a press conference on Thursday, he dismissed the electoral prospects of the Samajik Parivartan Morcha while striking a reconciliatory tone with the Congress.

When asked about the coalition with the Congress for the polls, Mr. Khan expressed openness to an "honourable understanding and a respectable seat-sharing arrangement".

Explaining his positive outlook toward the party, Mr. Khan noted that he shared good personal relations with current Congress leaders, saying: "This is not the same Congress that remained silent on December 6 [1992] during the Babri Masjid demolition, or under whose rule the Maliana and Hashimpura communal riots [in Meerut, 1987] occurred. Today's leadership is different." Mr. Khan further said he was willing to make concessions, even "sacrificing" additional seats if necessary to secure a dignified agreement. Expressing faith in the judiciary, he hoped he would be able to contest the polls and said the upcoming elections will be fought on public issues affecting youth, farmers, and women, rather than solely along caste and religious lines.

"While the SP has put forward a development programme, the BJP is only responding with hate. If you touch your television screen, you can feel the heat," he remarked.

Reacting to Deputy Chief Minister Keshav Prasad Maurya's remark that interim bail does not amount to acquittal and that "criminals will not be allowed to roam freely", Mr. Khan struck a sarcastic tone. "I am well aware of my status. I am just grateful to be alive," he said, before reminding the BJP leader of how criminal cases against Mr. Maurya and other party leaders were withdrawn after the BJP came to power in the State.

Don't impose Siang project: Arunachal Congress

The Hindu Bureau
GUWAHATI

Hours before Union Home Minister Amit Shah began his three-day tour of Arunachal Pradesh on Friday, the Congress asked him if the Centre would give a written assurance that it would not "impose" the 11,000-megawatt Siang Upper Multipurpose Project (SUMP) on the State's indigenous communities.

Mr. Shah is expected to discuss national security and infrastructure development during his visit.

Violent protests had erupted against the project due to fears that it would displace or affect over 1.25 lakh people, mostly from the Adi community.

The party said communities likely to be affected by SUMP had raised serious concerns regarding ancestral land, displacement, environmental and geological risks, livelihoods, cultural heritage and the future of indigenous institutions.

Rahul targets PM over India's place on the global stage

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi on Friday targeted the Narendra Modi government over its standing on the global stage, claiming India would have been a participant at the Shenzhen summit if the Prime Minister was from the Congress.

"If Congress were in power, India's Prime Minister would be sitting at this table. A compromised PM can never sit at this table," Mr. Gandhi said in a post on X, along with a photo of U.S. President Donald Trump, Chinese President Xi Jingping, and Russian President Vladimir Putin at a trilateral summit in China's Shenzhen.

On Thursday, the leaders of the United States, China and Russia met at an Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit. Mr. Gandhi's comment, even though India isn't a member of APEC, was aimed at targeting the Modi government's handling of foreign policy issues.

"India should be involved at the global level in these conversations... I am pretty shocked that Pakistan is busy negotiating with the Iranians and Americans and India is just looking," he said during a separate interaction with students of the University of Chicago on Wednesday.

Opposition forces House panel to defer scrutiny of FCRA Bill

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Bill seeks to tighten government oversight of NGO's and foreign funding in the country

Protesting what they described as a hurried consultation process on the contentious Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Amendment Bill, 2026, the Opposition members in Parliament's Joint Committee (JPC) on Thursday forced the panel to defer a clause-by-clause consideration of the legislation.

The Bill seeks to tighten government oversight of non-governmental organisations and foreign funding in the country.

Officials from the Ministries of Home Affairs and Law were initially scheduled to appear before the panel to begin clause-by-clause discussions on the Bill. However, Opposition members objected, pointing out that several stakeholders who had sought to depose before the committee had not yet been heard.

Following these objections, the meeting with government officials was deferred. Instead, the panel met senior advocates, activists, and representatives of minority organisations on Thursday. The committee held its first sitting on September 18 and has met seven times so far.

Opposition members have strongly opposed the Bill, particularly on provisions relating to a government-appointed "designated authority", which would enjoy wide-ranging powers.

Under the proposed law, if an organisation's FCRA certificate is cancelled, surrendered, or lapses automatically, foreign contributions and assets created from them would vest in the designated authority, without a prior hearing or judicial determination. Opposition parties have argued that the provisions could lead to governmental overreach and lack adequate safeguards.

Opposition members have also alleged that the committee's proceedings have not been "adequately and accurately" recorded, particularly with regard to questions raised by members and clarifications provided by witnesses.

Resignation turned removal proceedings infructuous: ex-judge

Sobhana K. Nair
NEW DELHI


Justice Yashwant Varma

Justice Yashwant Varma has informed the Lok Sabha Secretary-General that parliamentary proceedings to remove him are "infructuous" following his resignation from the Allahabad High Court. The inquiry into the former judge began after burnt cash was discovered at his residence last year.

In his letter, dated September 10, to Lok Sabha Secretary-General Utpal Kumar Singh, he responded to the report of the inquiry committee constituted by Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla. The letter was circulated among Lok Sabha MPs by the Secretariat on Thursday.

He reiterated his "innocence", defending himself against the allegations that the currency found at his residence belonged to him and was removed with his knowledge. He also asserted that his resignation should not be construed as an acknowledgement or admission of any allegation or finding.

Manipur district issues liquor advisory after 11 deaths

The Hindu Bureau
GUWAHATI

The Chandel district administration in Manipur on Friday issued an advisory, urging people to report suspected manufacturing, storage, sale or distribution of adulterated liquor after 11 people died following its consumption in Chakpikarong Sub-Division since Tuesday.

The Chief Minister's Office said 180 others were being treated at two private hospitals in Imphal, which CM Yumnam Khemchand Singh visited on Friday. The administration urged people to avoid locally brewed liquor and seek medical attention if they develop unusual symptoms.

INBRIEF



Insurance scheme unveiled for temporary forest personnel

A five-year accident insurance programme will cover 10,000 temporary forest personnel working in seven States in India, an initiative announced by Britain's Prince William on Thursday as part of an effort to improve the welfare of frontline conservation workers. Though there have been local initiatives on these lines earlier, this is the first time an international partnership has been organised for such a cause. The programme, which will begin in December 2026, will cover personnel in Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka, Assam, Uttarakhand, Maharashtra, Keralam, and Rajasthan. The insurance will provide round-the-clock accident protection.

Gangster linked to Dawood Ibrahim shot dead by police

Gangster Naseem Durrani, accused of gunning down a 26-year-old man near the office of Delhi Law Minister Kapil Mishra in northeast Delhi earlier this week, was killed in an "encounter" with the police in Uttar Pradesh's Bulandshahr on Friday, senior officials told *The Hindu*. Durrani, 37, who was allegedly linked to underworld don Dawood Ibrahim's D-company and was in contact with gangster Chhota Shakeel, was killed in a joint operation by the Delhi Police and the Noida Special Task Force (STF). He emerged as the prime accused in the November 16 murder of Sameer, who was shot dead near Kuda Khatta at Zero Pushta in Sonia Vihar.

Tender floated for Nicobar project boundary pillars

Tender was made public on Oct. 26, a month before the final hearing in the Calcutta High Court on challenges to the forest clearance granted for the project over alleged violations of the FRA

Abhinay Lakshman
NEW DELHI



The challenges to the project's forest clearance are set for the final hearing in the Calcutta High Court on November 25 and 26.

The Andaman and Nicobar Islands administration has issued a tender inviting bids for building reinforced cement concrete boundary pillars to demarcate the entire 166.1 sq. km area earmarked for the Union government's ₹92,000-crore mega-infrastructure project on Great Nicobar Island (GNI), even before a final hearing is set to take place in the Calcutta High Court on challenges to the forest clearance granted for the plan.

According to the markings in the tender document seen by *The Hindu*, it has been issued to build a boundary of about 43.4 km demarcating infrastructure. The area shown within this region on the map includes 121.87 sq km area of forest land, the diversion of which has been opposed by the Tribal Council of Great and Little Nicobar.

The Tribal Council has asserted that consent procedures under the Forest Rights Act (FRA) of 2006 had not been undertaken. The challenges to the project's forest clearance are set for the final hearing in the Calcutta High Court on November 25 and 26.

The boundary marked in the tender document is identical to the total area shown as part of the GNI Holistic Development Project in the Draft Master Plan notified earlier this year.

'Survey demarcation'

The tender document says that it is being issued for "Survey Demarcation and stacking out of points and erection of RCC cast-in-situ Boundary pillars for Forest Boundary for a length of 43.40 KM in GNI". This work, the notice inviting e-tenders said, is for an estimated cost of about ₹7.55 crore. The scope of the work covered under this includes "clearing jungle, surface dressing of ground and making temporary path, temporary crossing in streams/nallahs, etc., for movement of men and materials" for conducting the boundary survey and erecting concrete boundary posts at an interval of 20 metres from each other along 43.4-km boundary.

The tender was made public by the Office of the Executive Engineer in the Andaman Public Works Department at Campbell Bay on October 26.

Ahead of the final hearing in the High Court, the Andaman PWD also issued a tender for laying an about 25.7-km-long HDPE pipeline from the Cheema Nallah to waste treatment plants in Gandhi Nagar, Laxmi Nagar, and Shastri Nagar to "augment water supply for the Holistic Development Project at GNI". This tender was made public on November 10.

On November 2, another tender was issued by the Office of the Divisional Forest Officer in Campbell Bay for building a conference hall that will be used "for monitoring conservation plans for the GNI project".

The tenders come even as administration officials in Great Nicobar Island have been holding meetings throughout the year with representatives of the Nicobarese community over an earlier-drafted plan that was meant to "relocate" Nicobarese communities to their "ancestral lands" – a draft plan that had led to confusion and increased anxiety amongst the communities it was meant for.

The draft plan intends to focus on building tourism as the "primary economic driver" of growth and getting the "population to settle here".

There are books dating back to 1702: SC in library case

Aaratrika Bhaumik
Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI



A view of the 135-year-old Central Secretariat Library.

The Supreme Court on Friday told the Union government that culture is not confined to preserving the Lutyens neighbourhood in the national capital but extends to protecting centuries' old books of the 135-year-old Central Secretariat Library that are about to lose their home.

Appearing before a Bench headed by Justice Sanjay Kumar, Solicitor-General Tushar Mehta and Additional Solicitor-General Aishwarya Bhati agreed with the court that the books are a "treasure that we love". The government repeated its November 16 undertaking to the court to not shift the books from its premises in Shastri Bhavan.

"We are more concerned about the books. Heritage is not just the Lutyens... There are books dating back to 1702," Justice Kumar expressed the court's concern.

"The government will sit with the *amicus curiae*, senior advocate Haripriya Padmanabhan, and resolve the issue. Meanwhile, we stand by the undertaking given to the court on November 16," Mr. Mehta assured.

Suo motu case

Justice Kumar said the case was taken up by his Bench on a *suo motu* basis. However, his Bench did not have the public interest litigation (PIL) roster. The judge said the *suo motu* case would now be referred to the Chief Justice of India, who would allocate it to the appropriate Bench. Justice Kumar urged the government to hold true to its November 16 undertaking in the meanwhile.

The *suo motu* case was initiated on the basis of reports that the library was asked to vacate by September 30 as part of the Central Vista redevelopment project.

Study shows most births in private hospitals taking place via C-section

Ramya Kannan
CHENNAI

As the debate about the rising number of Caesarian sections being conducted in India reaches a crescendo, new data on 1,60,000-plus delivery-related hospitalisation insurance claims show that the average rate of such births has hit at an all-time high of 69%.

The data were based on hospitalisation claims by corporate employees and white-collar workers in the country secured by insurer Plum.

A Plum Data Labs analysis of the claims looked at patterns in delivery care in hospitals, the choice of hospitals, and the percentage of out-of-pocket expenditure, including some regional variations.

The medical reasons for a C-section include breech presentation (baby is not in a head downwards position), complications with the placenta or umbilical cord, women bearing more babies per pregnancy, and high blood pressure in mothers.

As per the World Health Organization, since 1985, the international healthcare community has considered the ideal rate for C-sections to be between 10% and 15% of all births.

While high, the Plum Data Labs findings are in line with trends in the National Family Health Survey for 2023-24 released earlier this year, which showed that 54% of deliveries in the private sector were C-sections.

While Telangana (62%) and Andhra Pradesh (52%) led the pack, the number of C-sections in Kolkata was also high at over 44%.

The Data Labs study showed that nursing homes, single-speciality private hospitals, multi-speciality hospitals and mother-and-child speciality hospitals all conducted C-section deliveries in 67%-72% of cases. Single-speciality private hospitals in non-Metro cities had the highest rate of 72%-73%, compared with 51% at mission and trust hospitals.

Saurabh Arora, chief technology officer of Plum, explained that clinical factors – including gestational diabetes, thyroid conditions, other pre-existing conditions, the mother's weight and a prior C-section – decided whether a birth would be via C-section.

Lowest rates

Interestingly, the data showed that the percentage of C-sections in Tamil Nadu (39% in Chennai, 27% in Coimbatore, 20% in Madurai), where mothers give birth earlier, was lower than in Mumbai, the Delhi-NCR and Bengaluru, where nearly 60% of mothers are 30 or older. The four cities with the lowest C-section rates are all in Tamil Nadu: Chennai, Coimbatore, Salem and Vellore. Vellore is the lowest of all, with only 34% of births happening via C-sections.

The other big surprise in the report was the revelation that 82% of insured families still pay out of pocket.

Standard policy limits are often ₹50,000 for a normal delivery and ₹75,000 for a C-section and have not been revised in a long time, Mr. Arora said.

"Median claims are about ₹60,000 and ₹94,000, so even a typical delivery crosses the limit, and complications push costs higher. If the policy has no baby day-one cover, NICU costs for the newborn also fall on the family," Mr. Arora said.

'Regulation better than ban': SC dismisses Karnataka govt.'s appeal against bike taxis

Krishnadas Rajagopal
NEW DELHI



Karnataka govt. had found bike-taxis dangerous, considering low safety standards and higher accident fatality rates. SUDHAKARA JAIN

The Supreme Court on Friday dismissed an appeal by the Karnataka government challenging a High Court decision to allow bike taxis as public transport, removing the brakes on taxi aggregators like Ola, Uber, and Rapido from offering two-wheeler taxi services in the State.

A Bench headed by Justice Satish Chandra Sharma said regulation was better than a blanket ban.

The judge said even the staff in his office opt to travel by bike taxi rather than autorickshaws and cabs due to the considerable fare difference.

The judge noted that bike taxis with GPS were safer for women, and two-wheeler taxis are already operating across 25 States.

The Karnataka government had found bike taxis dangerous, saying they were not meant for public transport, considering the low safety standards and higher accident fatality rates. The State, represented by advocate Sanchit Garga, argued that the restriction on using two-wheelers as taxis was reasonable, proportionate, and in the public interest.

"The State has not imposed a blanket prohibition on the use of motorcycles for commercial purposes; rather, it has only restricted their use for carrying passengers. Motorcycle riders continue to have viable alternative avenues of livelihood, including under the Karnataka Platform-Based Gig Workers (Social Security and Welfare) Act, 2025, which provides statutory protection and welfare measures for such workers," Karnataka submitted.

A Division Bench of the High Court in January 2026 set aside a Single Bench order from April last year, which stopped bike-taxi services pending the framing of a policy by the State. The Division Bench decision, challenged by the State in the apex court, had held that taxi aggregators and individual motorcycle owners possessed a "crystallised right to obtain permits for operating motorcycles as taxis under the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988".

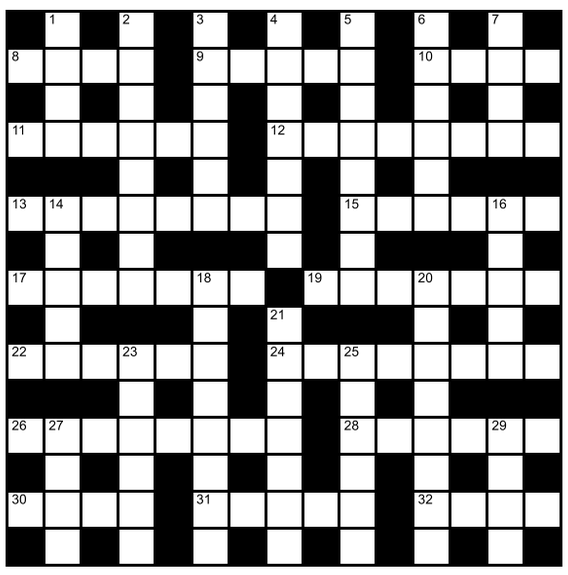
The HC had further held that motorcycles fell within the category of 'transport vehicles'. It directed the State authorities to positively consider applications for carriage permits for motorcycles. The State argued that the Division Bench's January 2026 decision had effectively reduced the discretionary powers of the State and Regional Transport Authorities to grant or refuse permits to a "mere formality".

TH CROSSWORD + 14954

(set by Incognito)

Solve this puzzle online and access more puzzles at *https://thehindu.com/crosswords*

SCAN TO PLAY



Across

8 Desire to say "Good morning" for instance (4)
9 State: I had returned love (5)
10 A police department producing vinegar, for example (4)
11 For example, Earth plot with alien (6)
12 Egad! Poem about a large-footed bird (8)
13 Beseeches brat with legendary fables (8)
15 Eccentric tutor eats boy's fish (6)
17 Gift may be despatched earlier (7)
19 Go away with Virginia elk (7)
22 Horribly ran the capital (6)
24 Point out, "Charlie is in India with note" (8)
26 Vessel with an elite force in state (8)
28 Saint hugs tree in road (6)
30 Give up church notes (4)
31 Fruits consumed by ladybug listed (5)
32 After Tories leave, terrorises badly and makes a mistake (4)

Down

1 Assassinate sick king first (4)
2 Disease from small English organisation (8)
3 Book covered in twisted wire in cold time (6)
4 Handy foreteller? (7)
5 Large Germanic person in Indian state's execution site (8)
6 Hinder in accordance with bad actor initially (6)
7 Feral woman is lethally dangerous, for starters (4)
14 Additional protection for small code (5)
16 Throwing stone for attack (5)
18 Is one sun rotating? It is not of material significance... (3-5)
20 Copper surrounded by broken record came to mind (8)
21 Sir returned fish and fried dish (7)
23 Stern editor brought up (6)
25 A part of Andes is tough! Stop! (6)
27 Wrongly hear, "A bird" (4)
29 Lugs part of spears (4)

SUDOKU

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

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★☆☆☆

No.SS7067 Distribution: www.knightfeatures.com

Solution to previous puzzle

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

A	L	A	R	M	I	S	T	
■	H	■	N	■	A			
O	R	■	Y	O	D	E	L	
■	D	■	M	■	I	■	L	
O	R	E	G	A	N	O		
F	■	■	■	N	■	W		
T	U	T	O	R	I	A	L	
H	■	E	■	■	■	P		
E	■	F	L	A	R	E		
R	■	E	■	T	■	T		
I	S	R	A	E	L	I		
N	■	E	■	L	■	T		
G	I	G	A	N	T	I	S	M
O	■	S	■	D	■	E	■	A
L	A	U	R	E	L			

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

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

FAITH

With Garuda's guidance

When there was a threat to the Srirangam Ranganatha temple, the utsava vigraha was taken away to Melkote in Karnataka. Around this time, the Nammazhvar vigraha in Azhvar Thirunagari was also taken to Melkote. After some years there, Lord Ranganatha was taken to Tirumala, while devotees decided to take Nammazhvar back to Azhvar Thirunagari. As they made their way through dense forests, they were waylaid by robbers, said Thenthiruppperai Aravindalochanan in a discourse. Afraid that the robbers would take away the vigraha of Nammazhvar, they tied a chain to the vigraha and dropped it into a deep valley. Later a request was made to the king of Malayala desam to rid the forest of the robbers. The king killed them and the forest was now safe to travel through. A devotee called Kandadai Thozhappar along with others went to the forest to get back the Nammazhvar idol.

Kandadai Thozhappar volunteered to retrieve the idol. He was tied to a chain and lowered into the valley. Though he searched hard, he could not find the idol. As he continued searching in vain, a Garuda sat on a mound of soil and called out, "Satakopa!" Satakopa is Nammazhvar's name. Kandadai Thozhappar wondered what a bird, which should be flying at high altitudes, was doing in a valley, and why it was calling out Nammazhvar's name. He decided to search under the mound of soil, and there, buried under the soil was the image of Nammazhvar. He tied the vigraha to the chain and those above pulled it up. They then lowered the chain for him to come up. But he was so happy about having retrieved the image, that he did not take care. He lost his grip and fell to his death.

INBRIEF



TVS family dispute: Singhvi to represent Venu Srinivasan

Senior Advocate Abhishek Manu Singhvi is preparing a reply on behalf of Venu Srinivasan, chairman emeritus of TVS Motor Company, to a partition notice issued by his daughter Lakshmi Venu in a family property dispute, *The Hindu* learnt. Ms. Venu has sought a 'fair and equitable division' of the assets of Mr. Srinivasan's branch of the TVS family, including interests held through the TVS Trust, which holds a controlling stake in TVS Holdings, the parent of TVS Motor.

Canadian Coast Guard deploys Ramco unit software

Chennai-based Ramco Systems has deployed its aviation software at the Canadian Coast Guard's Aircraft Services Directorate (ASD), digitising inventory, procurement, repair and component maintenance operations across its 14 bases and vessels. This marks completion of the first phase of a digital transformation programme aimed at modernising ASD's maintenance and inventory management and improving services to Canadian government departments, Ramco said.

IRDAI slaps ₹2 crore penalty on Star Health for violations

The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) levied ₹2 crore penalty on Star Health and Allied Insurance Co. In its order, IRDAI said ₹1 crore penalty was being imposed as claims processed were inconsistent with its own policy terms and conditions and a violation of IRDAI Circulars on Covid claim settlements. IRDAI levied one more penalty of ₹1 crore on the insurer for various violations.

SEBI may cut FPI onboarding time to up dollar investment

By simplifying procedures and reducing avoidable compliance burdens, we aim to attract a wider pool of international capital, improve financing opportunities for Indian businesses, says Pandey

Gowri Lakshmi
MUMBAI

The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) is looking to reduce the onboarding time for foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) to as short as five days, SEBI Chairman Tuhin Kanta Pandey said at the CII Financing Summit here. Speaking about the developments and milestones achieved by the regulator and the Indian equity market, Mr. Pandey said SEBI's core philosophy is driven by optimum regulation.

He highlighted SEBI would soon come out with a consultation paper to further simplify ease of investment for FPIs. SEBI is likely to consider the removal of some of the constraints pertaining specifically to India.



Tuhin Kanta Pandey PTI

Next phase of reforms

"The next phase of reforms must enable our capital markets to finance a wider range of businesses, attract longer-term investments and remain resilient as they grow," he said.

He underscored the simplification of access to capital and regulatory compliance as one of the top priorities to develop and deepen capital markets. SEBI initiated a comprehensive review of the Issue of Capital and Disclosure Requirements (ICDR) framework and is also reviewing the Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements (LODR) framework. SEBI is also working towards frameworks to eliminate duplicate reporting, simplify compliance and reduce the regulatory burden on listed entities.

"By simplifying procedures and reducing avoidable compliance burdens, we aim to attract a wider pool of international capital and improve financing opportunities for Indian businesses while maintaining investor safeguards," Mr. Pandey said.

Corporate bonds

In an effort to deepen the corporate bond market, SEBI has been working in collaboration with the Reserve Bank of India and the Ministry of Finance towards a market-making framework or a fixed-income channel framework.

The framework is expected to widen bond distribution and issuer outreach programmes. It is also aimed at identifying and addressing challenges and barriers in bond financing, Mr. Pandey said.

"To promote secondary trading, we have a market-making framework. You will get to know about its contours. It is a work in progress," Mr. Pandey told reporters later.

Sensex jumps 1%, rupee settles above 93

Press Trust of India
MUMBAI

Benchmark equity indices ended sharply higher on Friday bucking a weak trend in the global markets, with the Sensex rallying 898 points and the Nifty surging to 25,800.60, on buying in bank stocks, uninterrupted foreign fund inflows and moderation in crude oil prices.

Rising for the second day, the 30-share BSE Sensex jumped 897.96 points, or 1.08%, to settle at 83,919.71. NSE Nifty rallied 286.30 points, or 1.12% to end at 25,800.60. So far this month, the Sensex has gained 9,460.18 points, or 12.70% and Nifty climbed 2,747.5 points, or 11.91%.

"Indian equities advanced even as a deepening tech rout swept through Asian markets. Private banks extended their record run as foreign investors, rotating out of global AI trades, continued to favour the sector's liquidity. Cooling AI trade lent support to Indian IT by easing concerns over disruption to traditional services," Vinod Nair, head of research, Geojit Investments Ltd., said.

Stronger Rupee

The rupee sustained its ascending order for the fifth consecutive session to settle 70 paise higher at 92.62 against U.S. dollar, closing above 93 for the first time in over seven months on inflow of foreign funds and a domestic stock rally.

Anuj Choudhary, research analyst, Mirae Asset Sharekhan, said, "We expect the rupee to trade with a positive bias on strength in the domestic markets and sustained foreign inflows."

'Gold scam': GJC calls for vigilance

Lalatendu Mishra
MUMBAI

Taking note of the alleged 'gold scam', the All India Gem and Jewellery Domestic Council (GJC), the apex body representing Indian gems and jewellery trade, urged the industry and consumers to remain vigilant but not panic.

The call comes amid media reports on some materials, commonly referred to as Rhenium and Iridium-based alloys, allegedly used by scamsters to raise the weight of gold without a proportional increase in purity.

As per the reports, the materials are used to raise gold caratage. For example 20 carat gold when mixed with adulterants turns 22 carat when tested with established testing methods failing to detect the same.

GJC said it has already informed the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) about the issue. "The Bureau is taking the matter very seriously and is maintaining close vigilance." GJC said.

Rajesh Rokde, chairman, GJC, said: "While there have been media reports from certain quarters regarding the possible misuse of materials such as Rhenium and Iridium in gold, we want to assure the entire jewellery industry and all gold buyers there is absolutely no reason to panic. The Bureau of Indian Standards is treating the matter with utmost seriousness." At the same time, vigilance remains essential, he stated.

"Every jeweller must undertake stringent quality control checks of gold procured from manufacturers, wholesalers and suppliers and keep consumer service as top priority and not fall prey to lower making charges offers and buy from your trusted jewellers only," he said.


GJC said it will work closely with the BIS on the issue.

'Verify hallmark'

"Consumers should also verify hallmark details through the BIS Care App, insist on GST-paid invoices. Any proven case of adulteration or malpractice will be strongly pursued with the appropriate authorities, and strict action should be taken against anyone found manufacturing, supplying or using such materials for fraudulent purposes," he added.

Avinash Gupta, vice-chairman, GJC, said, "We encourage jewellers to boost internal quality control processes and ensure complete compliance with BIS hallmarking regulations. Consumers should purchase jewellery only from reputable jewellers, obtain proper invoices and verify hallmark credentials before making a purchase," he added.



Under the spotlight: The maker of Claude AI began trading on Nasdaq, a premium of 34.3% over its IPO price of $83. AFP

Anthropic's 17% gain fails to lift AI stocks as Nasdaq slips 2.25%

Balasubramanyam C.P.
CHENNAI

Anthropic's stock market debut delivered a strong listing-day gain but failed to revive sentiment towards technology and artificial intelligence (AI) stocks as broader markets came under selling pressure amid concerns over stretched valuations.

The maker of Claude AI began trading on Nasdaq at $111.50, a 34.3% premium over its IPO price of $83.

It touched a high of $115.10 before retreating to intraday low of $92.72. It closed at $97.17, up 17.1% over offer price but almost 13% below opening trade. About 857 million shares changed hands.

Nvidia drops

In contrast, the Nasdaq Composite fell 2.25%, the S&P 500 declined 2.02% and the Dow Jones Industrial Average shed 2.19%. Nvidia, a major supplier of chips used in AI training, fell 3.3%, extending its losing streak to six sessions.

At the opening bell ceremony, Anthropic president Daniela Amodei said more than 50% of Fortune 500 firms used Claude for applications spanning drug discovery, insurance underwriting and financial fraud prevention.

IPO fails to lift sector

The stock's strong debut had raised expectations of a broader rally in AI shares. However, Gene Munster of Deepwater Asset Management termed this expectation "classic group think" in a post on X. He argued the sell-off did not indicate waning faith in AI but reflected investors' crowded positioning. Capital raised via IPO, he added, could finally flow into AI infrastructure and applications.

Economist Mohamed El-Erian suggested investors may have sold existing holdings to free up money for Anthropic's sizeable offering, exerting pressure on other stocks without necessarily signalling declining confidence in AI.

Valuation concerns

Capital Economics markets economist Joe Maher warned on November 19 record levels of corporate share issuance had historically coincided with market peaks in 1999, 2007 and 2021.

He said the AI-driven market rally could be approaching its peak.

OFFICE OF THE MAHABUBNAGAR MUNICIPAL CORPORATION
'E' - PROCUREMENT NOTICE
Tender Notice No. E2/MMC/1557/2026, Dt: 20-11-20266
On behalf of the Mahabubnagar Municipal Corporation Expression of Interest (E.O.I) is invited from the Similar Experienced Firms for the Maintenance and Management of **SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT Establishment of 108 TPD Municipal Solid Waste Processing, Treatment and Management Facility on EPC (Engineering Procurement and Construction) and O&M Basis at Mahabubnagar Dump Site for a Period of 5 Years under SBM (U) 2.0 and Procurement of Required Machinery and Equipment for Processing of Municipal Solid Waste at Mahabubnagar Municipal Corporation on Turnkey Basis** and Sale of RFP Dt. 21-11-2026 and Last Date for Submission of RFP Dt. 30-12-2026 @ 03.00 PM. For further details see on e-procurement platform i.e **http://tender.telangana.gov.in.** For Further Details, Contact: 9705710924 & 7331184222.
Sd/- Commissioner
Mahabubnagar Municipal Corporation
DIPR R.O.No.14145-PP/CL/ADVT/2026-27 Dt. 20.11.2026

Advt. No. NSIC/HR/01&02/2026
THE NATIONAL SMALL INDUSTRIES CORPORATION LIMITED
(A Government of India Enterprise) CIN-U74140DL1955GOI002481
The National Small Industries Corporation Ltd (NSIC), (A Schedule 'A' premier Mini-Ratna Govt. of India Enterprise under Ministry of MSME) invites applications from Indian citizens for the regular appointment to the various positions in different functional areas in Executive grade: Chief General Manager, General Manager, Dy. General Manager, Chief Manager, Manager, Deputy Manager and Assistant Manager.
1. Advt. No. NSIC/HR/01/2026: Special Recruitment Drive for SC, ST, OBC including PwBD) for various positions in different functional areas in Executive grade at lateral and entry level
2. Advt. No. NSIC/HR/02/2026: Recruitment for various positions in different functional areas in Executive grade at lateral and entry level
Interested candidates may visit Career Section of NSIC website: **www.nsic.co.in** for further details. Any further notification, information, corrigendum / addendum/updates regarding Advt. No. NSIC/HR/01& 02/2026 will only be published on NSIC website. The last date of submission of online application is 14.12.2026.

MALKAJGIRI MUNICIPAL CORPORATION
O/o The Superintending Engineer, SWM & Tr., MMC, Hyderabad
NATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING
Short Tender Notice No. 19/SE (SWM & Tr.)/MMC/2026-27, Date: 19-11-2026

Item No.	Name of Work:	Est Cost
1.	Establishment of 200 TPD Construction & Demolition (C&D) Waste Processing Plant in Sy. No. 226 situated at Rampally Village, Keesara Mandal of Ghatkesar Circle, under SBM (U) 2.0 Funds on PPP Mode cum Build-Operate-Transfer (BOT) Basis in Malkajgiri Municipal Corporation, Telangana (3rd call)	Rs. 12.00 Crores
	Total	Rs. 12.00 Crores

S.No	Events:	Date and Time
1.	Start date	26-11-2026 from 02.00 PM
2.	Last Date & Time for Receipts of Bids	04-12-2026 upto 03.00 PM
3.	Opening of Technical bid	04-12-2026 after 03.30 PM

Note: The Bidders are advised to visit www.tender.telangana.gov.in to download RFP & other Documents. Any Queries can be addressed to eeswmtr@gmail.com, achealthmmc@gmail.com *Address of the officer concerned Superintending Engineer (SWM & Tr.), Malkajgiri Municipal Corporation, Hyderabad (9154768808).*
Further details can be seen at 'e' Procurement **https://tender.telangana.gov.in.**
Sd/- Superintending Engineer
(SWM & Tr.), MMC
DIPR R.O.No.14147-PP/CL/ADVT/2026-27 Dt. 20.11.2026

KARNATAKA STATE NATURAL DISASTER MONITORING CENTRE (KSNDMC)
(A Regd. Society of Govt. of Karnataka)
Major Sandeep Unnikrishnan Road, Near Attur Layout, Yelahanka, Bengaluru - 560 064. Ph.: 080-67355000
No. KSNDMC/ADM/7/2025-ADM Date: 19.11.2026
E-TENDER NOTIFICATION
KSNDMC invites tenders for the following through e-procurement portal on **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in.** Tender is invited for **(1)** Providing Manpower Services for Data Centre Support and IT Technical Services at KSNDMC. Tender No. KSNDMC/2026-27/SE0027/CALL-3. Pre-bid meeting on **25.11.2026.** Last date for submission of bid is **17.12.2026 at 05:00 PM., (2)** Supply, Installation & Commissioning of ups and batteries with buy-back of existing ups system & batteries. Tender No. KSNDMC/2026-27/IND0009. Pre-bid meeting is on **26.11.2026 at 11:00 AM,** Last date for submission of bid is **11.12.2026 at 05:00 PM.** Further the tender details can be obtained through e-procurement portal of GoK
DIPR/DD-C.P/3810/KSMCA/2026-27 **Sd/- Director**

WORKS DEPARTMENT
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF CONSTRUCTION ENGINEER, EASTERN CIRCLE (R&B), BALESHWAR
e-mail:- seec_bls@rediffmail.com
Government of Odisha **"e" Procurement Notice**
Bid Identification No. CCEEC-20/2026-27
No. : 7682 / Dt.:11/11/26
1. Nature of work :- Short term road maintenance Works.
2. Number of works : - 03 No. Roads.
3. Amount put to Tender :- Rs. 182.35 lakh to Rs. 350.76 lakh.
4. Class of Contractor :- "B" & "A"
5. Date & Time of availability of bid document in the portal :- Dt. 20.11.2026 at 10:00 AM
6. Last Date / Time of receipt of bid in the portal :- Dt. 04.12.2026 up to 05:00 PM
7. Date of opening of bid :- Dt. 05.12.2026 at 11:00 AM
8. Name & address of the Office inviting bid :- Chief Construction Engineer, Eastern Circle (R&B), Baleshwar.
9. The bidders have to participate in ONLINE bidding only. Further details can be seen from the e-Procurement portal "http//tendersodisha.gov.in."
10. All future corrigendum will be available on ONLINE mode only.
Chief Construction Engineer, Eastern Circle (R&B), Baleshwar
34001/1205/2627 OIPR-34001/34026/1/26-27/0023

POSTGRADUATE INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL EDUCATION & RESEARCH CHANDIGARH
CORRIGENDUM
Ref: Global Tender Enquiry Notice No. PI(EP)/26-27/G/02
Following changes are made :-

Sr No.	Equipment/Item Name	Original Bid Submission Date	Revised Bid Submission Date	Original Bid Opening Date	Revised Bid Opening Date	Deptt. Name
10	Hemodialysis Machine with Accessories	17.11.2026	17.12.2026	18.11.2026	18.12.2026	Pediatrics Medicine
11	Mobile Endoscopy Unit	17.11.2026	15.01.2027	18.11.2026	18.01.2027	ENT

All other details shall remain the same.
PGI/RC/Advt./2026/HR-000583 Professor In-Charge (EP)

POSTGRADUATE INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL EDUCATION & RESEARCH CHANDIGARH
CORRIGENDUM
Ref: E-Tender Notice No. PI(EP)/26-27/G/01
Following changes are made :-

Sr No.	Equipment/Item Name	Original Bid Submission Date	Revised Bid Submission Date	Original Bid Opening Date	Revised Bid Opening Date	Deptt. Name
09	Lower Tract Endoscopy Set for Emg. OT	14.11.2026	30.11.2026	16.11.2026	01.12.2026	Urology
10	Lower Tract Endoscopy Set for TURP, TURBT, OIU, Cystoscopy	14.11.2026	30.11.2026	16.11.2026	01.12.2026	Urology

All other details shall remain the same.
PGI/RC/Advt./2026/HR-000581 Professor In-Charge (EP)

Himachal Pradesh Jal Shakti Vibhag
"NOTICE INVITING TENDER"
Online bids on items rate basis are invited by the Executive Engineer, Jal Shakti Division Rajgarh on behalf of Governor of Himachal Pradesh, in electronic tendering system in two covers for the under mentioned work from the contractors/firms of appropriate class enlisted with Himachal Pradesh Jal Shakti Vibhag.

S. No.	Name of Work	Estimated. Cost	EMD	Cost of form	Time limit
1.	Providing Sewerage Scheme to Rajgarh Town in Tehsil Rajgarh Distt Sirmour (SH:- Survay, Level Marking, Bench Marking and alignment of each pipe line up to STP & Bio Digester and Laying & Jointing of DI pipes, C/O Circular Manholes & Drop Manholes and C/O House Connection.)	Rs: - 9,40,78,135/-	Rs: - 974355/-	Rs: - 10000/-	Two year

Eligibility criteria:- Experience on similar works executed during the last seven years and details like monetary value, clients proof of satisfactory completion should be furnished in online mode. The eligibility criteria are: -
1. The bidder must have completed three similar works costing each not less than 40% of the given estimated cost for which the bid is invited. Or
2. The bidder must have completed two similar works costing each not less than 50% of the given estimated cost for which thee bid in invited. Or
3. The bidder must have completed one similar works costing not less than 80% of the given estimated cost for which the bid is invited.
Note: - The work shall be considered complete if it is executed 90% of either awarded physical quantity or financial values.
Similar work means: -The bidder must have experience of construction of sewage treatment plant for secondary treatment based on any biological process failing which summarily rejected.
1. Tender documents and other instructions can be **downloaded** or viewed online from the portal **http://hptenders.gov.in**by the firms/individual registered on the website which is free of cost.
1. As the bids are to be submitted online are required to be encrypted and digitally signed, the bidders are advised to obtain Digital Signature Certificate **(DSC)** from suitable venders or from any authorized agency at the earliest.
2. **Key dates will be as under:-**

1.	**Key dates: -**	
a)	Date of online publication	16-11-2026
b)	Period of availability of bidding document on website https//hptenders.gov.in	From 16-11-2026 at 5:00 PM up to 11:00 AM on 30-11-2026
c)	Date of submission of e-tender	From 16-11-2026 at 5:00 PM up to 11:00 AM on 30-11-2026
2.	**Opening of bids. The bids will be opened online by the authorized officer at the appointed time**	
a)	Time and date of opening of part one of the bid) the technical qualification part)	Up-to 1:30 AM on 30-11-2026
b)	Time and date for opening of part two of the bid (the financial bid) of bidders who qualified in part 1 of the bid.	**Shall be intimated separately.**
3.	Last date of bid validity.	30-11-2026 at 1.30 AM
4.	Officer inviting bids	Executive Engineer Jal Shakti Division Rajgarh

The Terms and Conditions may be read online in E-Procurement site.
HP / 4826/26-27 **HIM SUCHNA AVAM JAN SAMPARK**
Executive Engineer
Jal Shakti Division Rajgarh

OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE

DEATH

M KASINATH (61) , Retired Manager - Pre Press, The Hindu, Chennai passed away on 20 - November - 2026. Address : 20, OVM Street, Triplicane, Chennai-600005.Contact: 9952956089

For enquiries on announcements in this section, please contact our office at the following number between 10a.m. to 8p.m.
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NORTH EASTERN RAILWAY
OPEN TENDER NOTICE
No. SrDEE-TRD-BSB-2026-27-T47
Date: 19.11.2026
Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer/ TRD, North Eastern Railway, Varanasi for and on behalf of President of India, invites sealed "OPEN" E-Tender for the following work: **Tender Reference No.:** SrDEE-TRD-BSB-2026-27-T47; **Name of Work:** 25 KV OHE Electrification work in connection with Extension and raising of Platform for 24 coaches at Gari Bazar, Bhatani & Chauri-Chaura, Part-A in N.E. Railway of Varanasi Division; **Approx. Cost(in ₹) :** ₹1,05,58,090.47; **Earnest Money(in ₹):** ₹2,11,200/-; **Cost of Tender documents(in ₹):** Nil; **E-Tender closing date and time:** 11.12.2026 upto 14:45 hrs.; **Completion Period:** 9 Months; • Open E-Tender Online will be submitted upto 14:45 Hrs. on date 11.12.2026. • For Full details and submission of bid kindly visit the official website of Indian Railway i.e. **www.ireps.gov.in.**
Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer/ TRD, Varanasi
CPRO/EL-269
DO NOT SMOKE BIDI/CIGARETTE IN TRAINS

RIYADH

Saudi-led coalition says it targeted Hodeida, other attacks 'ongoing'



AFP

The Saudi-led coalition fighting Yemen's Houthis said it targeted Hodeida port and other sites around the country on Friday, after the group warned of widespread reprisals. "We targeted operational capabilities at Hodeida port that were used in the transport of weapons," spokesperson Turki al-Malki posted on X. AFP

BANGKOK

U.S. sanctions Myanmar armed group leader over scam links



The United States has frozen the assets of General Saw Shwe Wah, commander-in-chief of the Democratic Karen Benevolent Army (DKBA), an ethnic armed group in Myanmar, and one of his lieutenants, Colonel Saw A One, accusing them of facilitating cyberscammers who target Americans. AFP

ISLAMABAD

Pak. Army chief Munir vows to eliminate terrorism from country



AFP

Pakistan's Chief of Army Staff Field Marshal Syed Asim Munir on Friday expressed the "unwavering resolve" of the security forces to eliminate terrorism from the country during a visit to the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. Mr. Munir, who is also the Chief of Defence Forces (CDF), said this during a visit to Miranshah. PTI

VILNIUS

Estonia to close border with Russia, Moscow decries 'new Iron Curtain'



REUTERS

Estonia will close its road border crossings with Russia on security grounds for at least six months, the Baltic country's government said on Friday, prompting a warning from Moscow that it would respond with diplomatic measures. "Such moves are tantamount to attempts to erect a new Iron Curtain," Foreign Ministry said. REUTERS

U.K. and EU move closer with deals on carbon permits, youth mobility

The youth mobility scheme will provide 100,000 places for 18- to 31-year-olds, allowing them to spend up to three years across the U.K.-EU border; the U.K. govt. plans to introduce legislation next week involving the adoption of certain EU laws

Sriram Lakshman
LONDON

At their second Summit, the U.K. and EU on Friday announced agreements on freer trade in certain food products, youth mobility and the linking of their emission trading systems (carbon permits).

British Prime Minister Andy Burnham, who travelled to Brussels for the Summit, said this was the "limit" of what the two sides would converge during this Parliament (U.K.), i.e., until 2029.

A "structured" discussion on migration, a digital partnership and a dialogue on economic security were also set in motion at the Summit.

"Today, we do draw a line on a decade of drift and division by reconnecting with old friends, by building a much more constructive relationship with our nearest neighbours and our largest market," Mr. Burnham said at a joint press conference in Brussels with European leaders.

The two sides have stated that they will conclude a deal on tuition fees in six months. The EU has rejected the discounted fee that the U.K. has offered its students and wants the fee to be lowered until it equals what British students pay at U.K. universities.

The U.K. government would introduce legislation in the U.K. Parliament next week, Mr. Burnham said. This will involve the U.K. adopting EU law in certain areas (such as SPS, or Sanitary and Phytosanitary measures).

The youth mobility scheme, with 100,000 places for 18- to 31-year-olds, would allow young people to spend up to three years across the U.K.-EU border to study, travel and work.

The deal would add 0.5% or GBP 17 billion to U.K. GDP, according to Mr. Burnham. His government has argued that the deal on food and drink will bring down the cost of food for British consumers in supermarkets.



Andy Burnham attends a roundtable with business leaders during his visit for the EU-U.K. Summit, in Brussels on Friday. AP

Adhering to red lines

Mr. Burnham, who is taking forward some of the discussions held with Brussels by his predecessor Keir Starmer, committed to adhering to the red lines outlined in the Labour 2024 manifesto for the duration of this Parliament (2029).

These red lines include not joining the bloc, its customs union or its single market, and not allowing the "free movement" of people across U.K.-EU borders. However, Mr. Burnham has said the U.K. would have to decide on its long-term options for its ties with the EU - including rejoining the EU. On Friday, Mr. Burnham and EU leaders suggested there would be an "informal brainstorming process" ahead of next year's summit to determine the long-term options for the U.K.

The EU remained open to the "closest possible relationship between the European Union and the United Kingdom", European Council President Anotnio Costa said at Friday's briefing, while reiterating the "indivisibility" of the bloc's "four freedoms" - a reference to the EU's principle of the free movement of people, goods, services and capital within its borders.

The nature of the future relationship between the U.K. and the EU is likely to be a campaign issue when Britain approaches its next general election. The leader of the Reform UK party, Nigel Farage, who was the de facto leader of the British campaign to leave the EU in 2016, held a rival press conference in Brussels on Friday. He called Mr. Burnham a "globalist" and said the Prime Minister lacked a mandate to make these changes to the U.K.-EU relationship.

More arson in Bangladesh amid Hasina's return plan

Agence France-Presse
DHAKA

New arson attacks erupted in Bangladesh on Friday as authorities restored communications with the home town of convicted former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, after days of unrest over her planned return from exile.

Ms. Hasina, 79, has vowed to return to Bangladesh in December from India, despite being sentenced to death in absentia for crimes against humanity over a deadly crackdown during the 2024 uprising that ousted her.

Ms. Hasina's former ruling party, the Awami League, whose activities are now banned, called for strikes this week to mark the anniversary of the day Ms. Hasina received her death sentence.

Hundreds of paramilitary troops have been deployed to contain the unrest, in which at least three people have been killed.

A petrol bomb was hurled at the residence of a junior Foreign Minister, Humaiun Kobir, in the northeastern city of Sylhet on Friday, police said.



Policemen stand guard outside the ancestral home of Muhammad Yunus after it was set on fire, in Chattogram on Wednesday. AP

Mr. Kobir said Dhaka would deal with attacks "very firmly".

"It is not possible to bring back a 'fled terrorist' by throwing petrol bombs," he told pressperson on Friday.

Rampant attacks

Ms. Hasina has said repeatedly she wants to return next month, telling AFP in an email this week that she was "fully aware" she could be hanged.

Attackers also set fire to the home of a former junior Foreign Minister from the Awami League in Rajshahi on Thursday.

Protesters wielding machetes also torched a police station in Gopalganj, Ms. Hasina's political stronghold, the same day. Communications have since been restored.

The police said 124 people linked to the Awami League had been arrested in the capital Dhaka over the past 24 hours, without providing further details.

The family home of Nobel laureate and former interim leader Muhammad Yunus in the port city of Chittagong was also targeted in an arson attack.

Grameen Bank, founded by Mr. Yunus, said more than 20 of its branches had been targeted in arson attacks this month.

Russia strikes Ukraine after Putin warns of 'painful' reply

Agence France-Presse
KYIV

Moscow pounded Ukraine with massive strikes on Friday, with Kyiv saying at least six people were killed in the capital, and neighbouring Poland reporting two Russian missiles likely landed in the southeast corner of the NATO country, accusing Moscow of a "provocation".

Hours earlier, Russia's Vladimir Putin vowed a "painful" response to Kyiv's strikes on Moscow's Crimea bridge after holding a summit with China's Xi Jinping and U.S. President Donald Trump.

'Russian terror'

Ukraine's Volodymyr Zelenskyy called the nighttime strikes one of Moscow's largest of the entire war, denouncing Russian "terror". Mr. Zelensky – who met with allies in Berlin on Thursday – said Mr. Putin's attempts to "redraw the world" with Mr. Xi and Mr. Trump had been a "failure".

In China, Mr. Putin said he "shared responsibility" for global peace with Mr. Xi and Mr. Trump and issued a "declaration toward peace" that made no mention of Moscow's invasion of Ukraine.

Explosions rang out through the night as Ukrainian officials reported more than 80 missiles and 400 drones were fired, in which at least 15 people were injured.

International court's genocide ruling 'not fair', says Myanmar

Agence France-Presse
NAYPYIDAW

A historic ruling by the top UN court that Myanmar committed genocide against its Rohingya minority was unfair, the country's presidential spokesperson said on Friday.

The International Court of Justice (ICJ) on Thursday laid out searing evidence of Myanmar's atrocities against the mostly Muslim Rohingya during a 2017 crackdown in western Rakhine State.

Myanmar's security forces killed thousands of Rohingya civilians, committed sexual violence against women and "extreme violence" against children, the court found. At a press meet, spokesperson Khaing Khaing Soe said the 9-6 ruling was "not a unanimous decision", and that it was "not fair".

COCHIN PORT
कोचिन पत्तन प्राधिकरण
Cochin Port Authority
COCHIN PORT AUTHORITY
FA & CAO's Office
Cochin-682009

E- TENDER NOTICE

No. FIN/EDP/NW Upgradation/2026
Dated: 16.11.2026

E-Tenders are invited for the work of **'Supply, Installation, Testing and Commissioning for the Upgradation of the Campus Networking & Security Infrastructure of Cochin Port Authority'** due on 15.12.2026.

For more details, visit -
www.cochinport.gov.in or www.eprocure.gov.in/epublish or www.tenderwizard.com/COPT

Sd/- FA & CAO
(Ph. No. 0484-258 2602)

BHAKRA BEAS MANAGEMENT BOARD
NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER

Name of Office	NIT No./ Name of work	I. Starting Date(Time)/ II.Closing Date (Time) III. Opening Date (Time)	Estimate Cost/ Earnest Money in (Rs.)
Executive Engineer Bhakra Dam Division, BBMB, Nangal Township	NIT No.1/DRIP/BDD/ 2026 Strenghening & refurbishing of E-surveillance security system for Bhakra Dam Complex (Rs. 93926929.00)	(I) 21.11.2026 at 9.00 AM (II) 21.12.2026 at 3.00 PM (III) 21.12.2026 at 3.30 PM Pre-bid meeting 30.11.2026 at 11.00 AM o/o Xen. Bhakra Dam Division	Rs. 93926929.00 Rs. 1878000/-
Executive Engineer Pong Dam Division BBMB Talwara Township	NIT/02/PDD/BBMB/ DRIP/V/NOTCH Modernization of observation system of instruments installation of V Notches in various galleries Right Lelft Additional and Inspection gallery at Beas Dam Under drip II and III.	**Starting Date(Time)** 18.11.2026 AT 05:00 PM **Closing Date(Time)** 21.12.2026 AT 10:00 AM	₹72,55,938/- ₹145119/- (Including GST)

The detailed NIT/Term & Condition etc. please visit/download from the BBMB Web Site www.bbmb.gov.in and www.etenders.gov.in
Note : If any corrigendum shall be upload on website only.
343-PR-Bd. Sectt.-6 FOR YOUR BETTER TOMORROW SAVE ENERGY TODAY

BENGALURU SOUTH CITY CORPORATION
Office of the Executive Engineer, Padmanabhanagara Division, Opposite to Sagar Hospitals, Kumaraswamy Layout, Bengaluru-560111.
No:EE(PN)/TEND/ 09/2026-27 **Date: 20-11-2026**

TENDER NOTIFICATION
(TWO TENDER DOCUMENT SYSTEM) **STD. KW-4**

(Through **GOK** KPP Portal **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** only)
The Executive Engineer, Padmanabhanagara Division, Bengaluru South City Corporation, Bengaluru on behalf of the Comissioner, Bengaluru South City Corporation invites tenders from eligible contractors registered in Greater Bengaluru Authority (Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike) or equivalent registration with CPWD/KPWD/ Railways / MES or any State Government Organizations for the constructions of work detailed in the table below.

Sl No.	Name of the work
1.	Improvements to junctions and Comprehensive development to selected connecting ward roads in Ward No-1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 in Padmanabhanagara Division, Bengaluru South City Corporation. (Comprising of 4 Works in G.O. No: UDD 429 MNY 2026, BSCC Annexure-5 Sl. No. 36 to 39) PACKAGE No. GOK-ADDL-PN-03. **Approximate Amount put to tender ₹.929.95 Lakhs, EMD ₹. 15.00 lakhs (Rs.5.00 Lakh through online payment & Rs.10.00 Lakh through BG)**

Calendar of Events : (1) Tender must be submitted online through KPP Portal on or before **10-12-2026** upto **4:00** pm. (2) Last date of submission queries on **03-12-2026** within **3.00** pm (3) Date & time for Pre Bid Meeting on **03-12-2026** at **4.00** pm (4) Last Date & Time for receipt of tenders is **10-12-2026** upto **4:00** pm. (5) Date & Time for Opening Technical bid on **11-12-2026** at **4.05** pm (6) Date & Time for Opening Financial bid on : After the Approval of Technical bid

Sd/- Executive Engineer
Padmanabhanagara Division, BSCC

Italian workers, students stage general strike over wages and public services

Reuters
ROME

Tens of thousands of workers and students took to the streets across Italy on Friday as the country's largest trade union, CGIL, staged a general strike, demanding higher wages and greater investment in public services.

The demonstrations coincided with a broader wave of youth mobilisation across Europe. Student protests were also planned in Germany, France, Britain, Austria, Belgium and Spain over rising living costs and military spending.



Thousands take to the street in Turin, northern Italy, during a general strike against the government's budget Bill on Friday. AP

"Today is also a very important day because young people are taking to the streets not just in Italy but across Europe," CGIL leader Maurizio Landini said.

"Across Europe and among ordinary people, the demand for change is growing," he added.

Other Italian unions, including the grassroots Cobas movement, also called separate strike action, while student demonstrations were planned nationwide amid simmering discontent over the policies of Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni's government.

The CGIL strike was scheduled to last the entire working day and involved workers in both the private and public sectors, including schools and healthcare.

Air and rail transport services were excluded from the general strike, while its impact on local public transport was limited by minimum-service requirements.

Mr. Landini said more than one million people had taken part in demonstrations across 100 cities.

BRIC NABI
BRIC-NATIONAL AGRI-FOOD AND BIOMANUFACTURING INSTITUTE
(Formerly National Agri-Food Biotechnology Institute & Center of Innovative & Applied Bioprocessing)
(Deptt. of Biotechnology, Ministry of Science & Technology, Govt. Of India)
Knowledge City, Sector-81, Mohali

RECRUITMENT NOTICE

BRIC-National Agri-Food and Biomanufacturing Institute (formerly National Agri-Food Biotechnology Institute & Center of Innovative and Applied Bioprocessing) is an autonomous Institute under the Department of Biotechnology, Government of India. This futuristic innovation institute of its own kind in the country has a mission of advancing knowledge, leads and emerging technologies/processes relevant to Agri-food & Biomanufacturing sector towards applications and products.

BRIC-NABI invites applications from Indian Citizens for filling up the administrative & technical positions on Direct Recruitment basis, as mentioned below: -

Administrative & Technical Positions
[Advt. No. NABI/ADMIN/1/(001)/2026-04/Rectt.]

Sr. No	Name of the Post	No. of Post & Category	Age Limit	Level as per 7th CPC
1.	**System Analyst**	01 (UR)	35 years	Level-10 (₹ 56,100 – ₹ 1,77,500)
2.	**Management Assistant**	01 (UR)	30 years	Level-6 (₹ 35,400 - ₹ 1,12,400)

*Age relaxation shall be as per the Government of India (GOI) norms.
The detailed advertisement and procedure for submitting the online application are available at BRIC-NABI website www.nabi.res.in.
Any corrigendum or amendment to the advertisement will be published only on the institute's website. Before applying, candidates may refer to the BRIC-NABI website and apply accordingly.

(Manager Administration)

GETTY IMAGES



Desert storm: perfect week caps Mirra's star-making year

The 19-year-old Andreeva demolished the field at the WTA Finals in Indian Wells. The dominant performance against the world's best, ending a season in which she won her first Major title, suggests she is growing into a player who can shape the future of women's tennis

Reuters
Sports Bureau

When Mirra Andreeva arrived in Indian Wells for her maiden appearance at the prestigious, season-ending WTA Finals, she had a bee in her bonnet.

The 19-year-old had broken through at the Majors with her Roland-Garros triumph, notched up 50 wins during the season and entered the top-3, but a stray comment buzzed around her head.

Proving a point

"A person said that I won Roland-Garros without one single top-10 win," Andreeva told *wtatennis.com*. "I was actually thinking about it, and that was true. Heading into the tournament, I was trying to prove to myself that I can win against top-10 players. Usually, no other comments really get into my head, but this one did, so it was important for me to prove that I can do it."

Before her first match at the Finals, Andreeva was 1-5 against top-10 players in 2026, her only win coming against Iga Swiatek in Stuttgart. Under sunny skies in the California desert, the teen prodigy set about turning the record around – and the tournament, featuring only the world's best players, offered the perfect opportunity to go big-name hunting. As she said, "It is like the first match is a semifinal of a bigger tournament, like a 500 or a 1000 [tournament]."

> Before it was super bad. I was very dramatic [after losing]. It would take me a good two, three days. I wouldn't talk to anybody
> **MIRRA ANDREEVA**

Andreeva blew through the field, winning five matches in a row to become the youngest player to win the Finals since a 17-year-old Maria Sharapova in 2004. She added her name to another list, too, as only the third player to lift the coveted trophy without dropping a set on her first attempt. The others to have done so: Chris Evert (1972) and Serena Williams (2001).

The dominant performance was the perfect end to what appears to be a defining, star-making season. It was also further evidence that she is growing into a player who increasingly looks equipped to shape the sport's future. "Before the tournament started I was afraid that I wouldn't win a match in the group," she said. "Now you see how it turned out."

Andreeva's poise in the desert marked a contrast with her emotional exit from Indian Wells in March, when she lost her title defence to Katerina Siniakova. Frustrated by the defeat, Andreeva launched into a profanity-laced tirade toward spectators and was booed as she left the court.

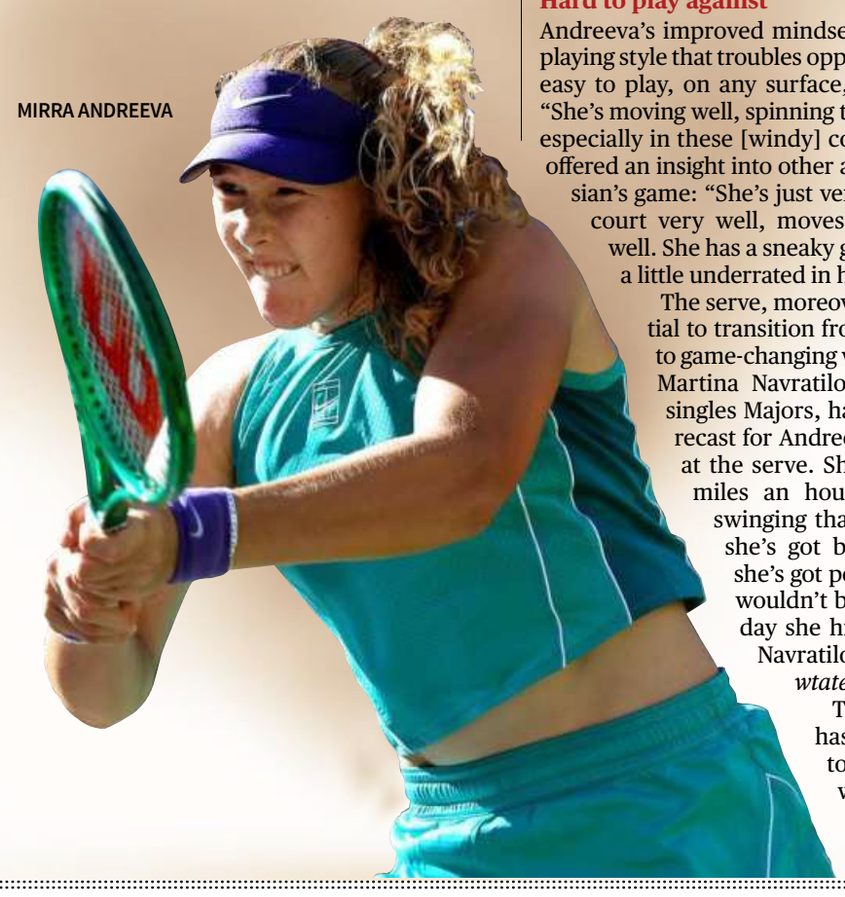
Dealing with losses

The French Open champion said her response to losses has changed significantly over the course of the season. "Before it was super bad. I was very dramatic," she said. "It would take me a good two, three days. I wouldn't talk to anybody. I would just sit in the room locked up, not wanting to practise." Now, she said, disappointment generally lasts a day at most before the demands of the tour force her attention back to training or the next match.

Andreeva said March's Indian Wells setback came while she was trying to incorporate changes made in practice into her match play, which produced inconsistency and frustration. She said continued work on court, along with sessions with psychologists, helped her make progress.

The progress was severely tested last week in Indian Wells. In her first group-stage match, Andreeva motored past Elina Svitolina despite overcoming pre-match tightness. "I was so tight, I felt I was moving like a turtle," she said. "I felt like I couldn't really hit the ball so I'm just very happy to get through the match and control my emotions."

Andreeva appeared to be feeling the nerves in the early going of her second match against Aryna Sabalenka, as well. But she came back spectacularly after falling behind 4-1 in the opening set to win 11 games in a row to seal the round-robin victory. Her final group match was made tricky by the opponent – her friend, Diana Shnaider – and the chaotic windy conditions, but she kept her focus to set up one of the more interesting semifinals in recent editions.


MIRRA ANDREEVA

> Look at the serve. She was hitting 120 mph, not swinging that hard. She's tall, she's got big shoulders and perfect technique. I wouldn't be surprised if one day she hits 130
> **MARTINA NAVRATILOVA**

Andreeva's last-four opponent, Jessica Pegula, had been caught on a practice court microphone referring to the teenager as a "diva" who "needs to be humbled." Pegula quickly apologised and said Andreeva had taken the controversy in stride – "She was totally fine, and she was like 'I'm a diva... like she embraces it, and so it was kind of funny" – but as Pegula added, addressing the anticipation surrounding the contest, "The storyline writes itself".

Andreeva's heavy groundstrokes, strong serving, stronger will and tireless defence were too much for Pegula in their first career meeting. "I think I can be very proud of myself," Andreeva told *Tennis Channel*. "I'm very happy with how I'm playing. I'm very happy also with how I deal with the pressure. I knew this match had a lot on the line."

The final, a rematch against Svitolina, had even more on the line. In an almost two-hour tussle that featured nine breaks of serve across 21 games, with both players working the angles in battling from the baseline, Andreeva prevailed. A stream of positive self-talk helped her overcome her nerves and stay composed in the biggest moments, she said.

Andreeva had picked up a routine in practice, responding to errors by telling herself she would make the next shot, then congratulating herself when she did. She decided to use it in the final as a method to manage the pressure. "I felt like it was easier to deal with nerves. Why not keep the same mindset for the match? I was just basically trying to use a lot of positive words to try to encourage myself. When I'm in that kind of mindset, it's just so much easier to play."

The 19-year-old said the approach prevented her from dwelling on missed opportunities or mistakes during a contest marked by long, physical rallies. "That's also why maybe I didn't get as nervous in the important moments," she said.

Hard to play against

Andreeva's improved mindset has enhanced a playing style that troubles opponents. "She's not easy to play, on any surface," said Sabalenka. "She's moving well, spinning the ball quite high, especially in these [windy] conditions." Pegula offered an insight into other aspects of the Russian's game: "She's just very smart. Sees the court very well, moves well, anticipates well. She has a sneaky good serve... that's a little underrated in her game."

The serve, moreover, has the potential to transition from "sneaky good" to game-changing weapon. The great Martina Navratilova, winner of 18 singles Majors, had an ominous forecast for Andreeva's rivals. "Look at the serve. She was hitting 120 miles an hour, and she's not swinging that hard. She's tall, she's got big shoulders and she's got perfect technique. I wouldn't be surprised if one day she hits 130, honestly," Navratilova told *wtatennis.com*.

The Finals triumph has lifted Andreeva to No. 2 in the world. Her sights are set higher.

STACKING UP



ATP Men's Top 15

#	Player	Age	Points	Events
1	Alexander Zverev	29	9,320	19
2	Jannik Sinner	25	7,950	16
3	Carlos Alcaraz	23	6,100	17
4	Ben Shelton	24	5,170	21
5	Daniil Medvedev	30	3,820	24
6	Flavio Cobolli	24	3,680	25
7	Arthur Fils	22	3,625	20
8	Frances Tiafoe	28	3,390	23
9	Taylor Fritz	29	3,300	23
10	Rafael Jodar	20	3,234	21
11	Alex de Minaur	27	3,170	23
12	Novak Djokovic	39	2,940	15
13	Tommy Paul	29	2,925	23
14	Jiri Lehecka	25	2,540	22
15	Jakub Mensik	21	2,500	21

Top Indians ▶


Sumit Nagal
Rank 253 ▲ 11 spots


Karan Singh
Rank 354 ▲ 1 spot

WTA Women's Top 15

#	Player	Age	Points	Events
1	Elena Rybakina	27	8,099	21
2	Mirra Andreeva	19	7,806	21
3	Aryna Sabalenka	28	6,685	21
4	Coco Gauff	22	6,163	21
5	Jessica Pegula	32	6,160	21
6	Elina Svitolina	32	5,921	21
7	Linda Noskova	21	4,743	21
8	Karolina Muchova	30	4,665	20
9	Iga Swiatek	25	4,188	19
10	Marta Kostyuk	24	3,910	20
11	Diana Shnaider	22	3,238	23
12	Maja Chwalinska	25	3,016	23
13	Iva Jovic	18	2,941	22
14	Elise Mertens	30	2,540	23
15	Alexandra Eala	21	2,392	29

Top Indians ▶


Vaishnavi Adkar
Rank 306 ▲ 2 spots


Vaidehee Chaudhari
Rank 388 ▲ 5 spots



F1 Drivers' standings

#	Driver	Team	Points	Wins
1	A.K. Antonelli	Mercedes	390	9
2	M. Verstappen	Red Bull	279	3
3	G. Russell	Mercedes	262	3
4	L. Hamilton	Ferrari	261	1
5	C. Leclerc	Ferrari	249	1
6	L. Norris	McLaren	246	3
7	O. Piastri	McLaren	152	0
8	I. Hadjar	Red Bull	122	0
9	L. Lawson	RB	89	0
10	P. Gasly	Alpine	42	0
11	A. Lindblad	RB	38	0
12	F. Colapinto	Alpine	27	0
13	O. Bearman	Haas	23	0
14	G. Bortoleto	Audi	14	0
15	N. Hulkenberg	Audi	14	0
16	E. Ocon	Haas	7	0
17	F. Alonso	Aston Martin	7	0
18	C. Sainz	Williams	7	0
19	A. Albon	Williams	5	0
20	Y. Tsunoda	RB	1	0
21	R. Hirakawa	Haas	1	0
22	L. Stroll	Aston Martin	0	0
23	V. Bottas	Cadillac	0	0


A.K. Antonelli


M. Verstappen

F1 Constructors' standings

Pos	Team	Points	Wins
1	Mercedes	652	12
2	Ferrari	510	2
3	Red Bull	415	3
4	McLaren	398	3
5	RB	114	0
6	Alpine	69	0
7	Haas	31	0
8	Audi	28	0
9	Williams	12	0
10	Aston Martin	7	0
11	Cadillac	0	0



Badminton Men's ranking

#	Player	Points	Events
1	Christo Popov	89,932	19
2	Kunlavut Vitidsarn	89,835	18
3	Anders Antonsen	85,525	18
4	Victor Lai	84,245	18
5	Chou Tien Chen	82,230	26
6	Alex Lanier	81,565	14
7	Shi Yu Qi	79,525	13
8	Jonatan Christie	78,631	17
9	Kodai Naraoka	75,590	20
10	Alwi Farhan	74,069	18
11	Lakshya Sen	68,503	19
12	Loh Kean Yew	68,300	15
13	Toma Junior Popov	66,047	20
14	Lin Chun-Yi	62,884	18
15	Koki Watanabe	62,700	20

Top Indians ▶


Lakshya Sen
Rank 11


Ayush Shetty
Rank 22

Badminton Women's ranking

#	Player	Points	Events
1	An Se Young	1,22,287	16
2	Akane Yamaguchi	1,03,726	18
3	Wang Zhi Yi	1,01,489	17
4	Chen Yu Fei	87,351	14
5	P.V. Sindhu	74,421	17
6	Ratchanok Intanon	73,386	19
7	Tomoka Miyazaki	71,826	22
8	Pornpawee Chochuwong	70,277	20
9	Putri Kusuma Wardani	69,903	17
10	Nozomi Okuhara	68,560	18
11	Han Yue	64,698	12
12	Line Christophersen	57,940	21
13	Kim Ga Eun	57,791	14
14	Hina Akechi	54,680	22
15	Sim Yu Jin	54,544	13

Top Indians ▶


P.V. Sindhu
Rank 5


Tanvi Sharma
Rank 21



Test Batting

#	Player	Rating	Career best
1	Harry Brook	861	898
2	Joe Root	816	932
3	Travis Head	799	884
4	Temba Bavuma	793	818
5	Steve Smith	790	947
6	Rachin Ravindra	740	740
7	Rishabh Pant	713	801
8	Rahmat Shah	712	735
9	Daryl Mitchell	710	804
10	Shubman Gill	709	807

Test Bowling

#	Player	Rating	Career best
1	Mitchell Starc	881	881
2	Marco Jansen	875	876
3	Matt Henry	861	870
4	Ollie Robinson	856	856
5	Jasprit Bumrah	853	908
6	Scott Boland	821	829
7	Simon Harmer	817	817
8	Kagiso Rabada	801	902
9	Pat Cummins	789	914
10	Josh Hazlewood	785	864

ODI Batting

#	Player	Rating	Career best
1	Shubman Gill	806	855
2	Daryl Mitchell	778	840
3	Virat Kohli	757	908
4	Ibrahim Zadran	752	756
5	Rohit Sharma	732	879
6	Shai Hope	710	782
7	Ben Duckett	699	733
8	Babar Azam	661	894
9	Joe Root	652	810
10	Kusal Mendis	649	675

ODI Bowling

#	Player	Rating	Career best
1	Rashid Khan	760	775
2	Keshav Maharaj	660	737
3	Abrar Ahmed	642	675
4	Shaheen Afridi	621	691
5	Mitchell Santner	610	656
5	A. Omarzai	610	610
7	Jofra Archer	601	682
8	Mehidy Hasan	597	722
9	Taskin Ahmed	595	595
9	Maheesh Theekshana	595	680

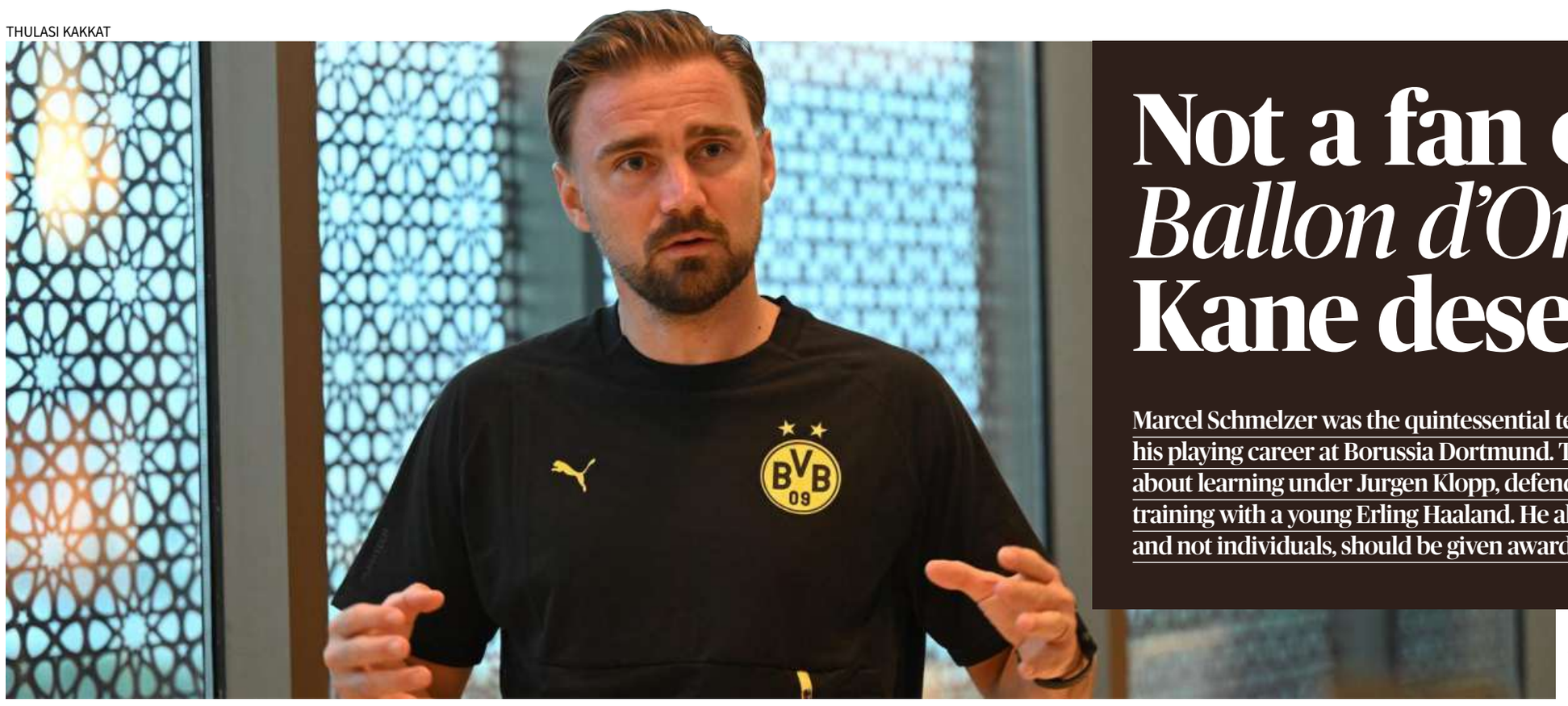
T20I Batting

#	Player	Rating	Career best
1	Abhishek Sharma	889	931
2	Sahibzada Farhan	883	883
3	Ishan Kishan	862	916
4	Harry Brook	793	793
5	Jos Buttler	789	794
5	Dewald Brevis	789	806
7	Shreyas Iyer	777	829
8	Phil Salt	775	881
9	Shai Hope	759	766
10	Pathum Nissanka	720	796

T20I Bowling

#	Player	Rating	Career best
1	Rashid Khan	731	828
2	Adam Zampa	700	746
3	Adil Rashid	695	747
3	Abrar Ahmed	695	757
5	Mitchell Santner	676	735
6	Nathan Ellis	675	678
7	Jamie Overton	674	674
8	Nasum Ahmed	661	661
9	Mahedi Hasan	654	654
10	Liam Dawson	648	652

THULASI KAKKAT



Not a fan of the *Ballon d'Or*, but Kane deserves it

Marcel Schmelzer was the quintessential team man, spending the entirety of his playing career at Borussia Dortmund. The former German full-back talks about learning under Jurgen Klopp, defending against Arjen Robben and training with a young Erling Haaland. He also explains why he believes teams, and not individuals, should be given awards

INTERVIEW

Marcel Schmelzer

P.K. Ajith Kumar

Marcel Schmelzer played only 16 games for Germany, but for over a decade he was one of the most difficult defenders to get past in the Bundesliga. A product of Borussia Dortmund's youth academy, he played for the club all his life. He retired from the game four years ago and was a part of the coaching staff at Dortmund. Excerpts from an exclusive interview Schmelzer, who was recently in Kochi to train young players and coaches, gave *The Hindu*:

This is your first visit to India. The Bundesliga is popular here. Did you have some idea of football in India before coming here?

We have a lot of fans here, I know. To be honest, the first time I heard about Indian football was when they bought so many good players at the end of their career, like Alessandro Del Piero. That was some 10-15 years ago?

Yes, in 2014, for the ISL.

And a former teammate of mine was also in India – Manuel Friedrich. He was living here for sure, but I am not sure whom he played for...

> Many of us grew up with [Jurgen Klopp], like he was our dad. He is a great human being, and has a great sense of humour. I improved as a player and as a human under him

He played for Mumbai City. How did you find the Indian kids at the camp?

A few players showed some good movements, were calm with the ball and gave good passes.

Looking back at your own career, you have played all your football for Dortmund...

I think that is because I have always felt at home. I have been happy. As a kid, I used to be a Dortmund fan. My dream came true when I signed my first contract with Borussia Dortmund. Then I got to play in the first team, win championships and I have had amazing teammates, amazing coaches. For a few seasons, I had some of the best coaches in the world. So it was a brilliant time. But for sure, there were always options to go to another country.

> Even when Haaland arrived, he was already a small monster. And now he is a big monster

So did you at some point consider moving to the Premier League or LaLiga?

No, because when the offers came we had the biggest success as a team and personally for myself, too. When we won the championship, [reached] the Champions League final, all of us had offers from Premier League and LaLiga. But, as I said, it was not an option for me because I had the best coach in the world. I had great teammates, a great team.

Which do you think was the best team you were part of?

It is hard to answer. Maybe between 2011 and 2013. But if you look at the best individual players of my time, there were so many, like Erling Haaland, Robert Lewandowski, Ousmane Dembele, Jadon Sancho...

How was it playing alongside a young Haaland?

Even when he arrived, he was already a small monster. And now he is a big monster. He wanted to improve every day. And he gave everything for that – nutrition, sleep, training, recovery.

He was special even then. And he was 100% professional. He was a very good role model, even in his young age.

You have also worked with some of the best managers in world football, like Jurgen Klopp.

For me, he is the best coach in the world. So luckily we have him now for Germany as a national coach. I am very happy about that.

You worked with him for a long time at Dortmund.

Yes, for seven years. That was my longest association. I had 14 years at Dortmund and half of that time was with him.

What makes Klopp special?

First of all, he is a great human being, has a great character and great sense of humour. And as a coach, he always tries to push you to the limit. So every day, it is 100%. So if your limit is 100%, go to your limit and you put your limit even higher. And he was like that every day, every season.

You feel you became a better player after working with him?

GETTY IMAGES



Absolutely. I have improved as a player, and as a human as well. Many of us grew up with him, like he was our dad. Because we saw him every day, from morning to afternoon. And most of us were 20 or 21 years old. For us youngsters, he was our second dad. He had a very good relationship with each of us. Even if you did not make a mistake, but you didn't train 100% and with passion, you would get in trouble with him. And to be in trouble with him is not a joke. It is not a nice thing.

Your experiences with former national coach Joachim Low weren't that pleasant, were they? During the World Cup qualifiers in 2012, he said he played you only because he had no other options left at left-back.

At that time, for sure I was disappointed, I was angry. To be honest, I think Low was never a fan of mine, or of my type of player. The comment he made was very demoralising. And it was one day before we had a game and I was playing. He later apologised.

But I was frustrated, I was angry, I was disappointed, I was everything. That is why my season after this was one of the worst I had in my career. Then Klopp called me to his office and said I had to forget everything. 'It won't help you if you keep it with you,' he said. It was a great talk. My game went up again.

Arjen Robben has said you were his most formidable opponent in Germany.

And he was my biggest opponent. It was always a hard fight against him. Watching on television people may think it is easy to defend against him because he always chooses the left side, but he would not. If you close the left side, for sure he would go on the right side. And even on the right side, he can hurt you.

Your thoughts on Harry Kane winning the *Ballon d'Or*. He is playing in Germany, though for your arch rival, Bayern Munich.

He deserves it. It is not usual if you enter a new league as a foreign player and score so many goals.

Kane has scored 102 goals from 103 appearances in the Bundesliga.

That is very impressive. There are not many strikers who have done something like that. Ciro Immobile scored so many goals in Italy, but when he came to Germany, he was struggling. He went back to Italy and was scoring many goals again. But I am not a fan of this *Ballon d'Or*, though. I believe football is a team game. It is important to give the award for the best team and not for one player.

GAME THEORY

Finals bosses: best closers in men's tennis

With the 2026 ATP Finals, starring the world's top singles players and doubles teams, currently in progress in Turin, we list the most frequent winners in the prestigious season-ending tournament. John McEnroe, with 10 titles combined (3 singles, 7 doubles), is the most successful player at the event; Novak Djokovic has claimed the most singles crowns.


JOHN MCENROE


NOVAK DJOKOVIC


ROGER FEDERER


IVAN LENDL

MOST SINGLES TITLES

Player	Titles	Editions
Novak Djokovic	7	2008, 12–15, 22–23
Roger Federer	6	2003–04, 06–07, 10–11
Ivan Lendl	5	1981–82, 85–87
Pete Sampras	5	1991, 94, 96–97, 99
Ilie Nastase	4	1971–73, 75
John McEnroe	3	1978, 83–84
Boris Becker	3	1988, 92, 95
Bjorn Borg	2	1979–80
Lleyton Hewitt	2	2001–02
Alexander Zverev	2	2018, 21
Jannik Sinner	2	2024–25

MOST DOUBLES TITLES

Player	Titles	Editions
John McEnroe	7	1978–84
Peter Fleming	7	1978–84
Mike Bryan	5	2003–04, 09, 14, 18
Daniel Nestor	4	2007–08, 10–11
Bob Bryan	4	2003–04, 09, 14
Anders Jarryd	3	1985–86, 91
Rick Leach	3	1988, 97, 2001


PETE SAMPRAS


PETER FLEMING

SOURCE: ATP TOUR

PICTURE THIS



GETTY IMAGES

Slice of ice

A skater performs at the gala exhibition during the ISU Figure Skating Grand Prix Cup of China at the Shenzhen Universiade Centre Gymnasium.

The Grand Prix is a series of senior international figure skating competitions organised by the International Skating Union. Medals are awarded in men's singles, women's singles, pair skating, and ice dance. The first Cup of China was held in 2003 in Beijing.

Exhibition galas — where top skaters from each discipline perform non-competitive programmes — form a significant part of figure skating, which is as much show business as sport. Indeed, exhibition galas often figure prominently in major competitions.

The term 'figure skating' comes from a segment of the competition, known as 'compulsory figures', in which skaters trace out figures, such as the figure 8, on the ice. This segment was a mandatory component of the singles discipline before being dropped in the 1990s.

The sport of figure skating demands great skill: skaters routinely pull off a dizzying variety of pins, jumps, turns, lifts, throw jumps and spirals.

LONG WAIT ENDS

Jaiswal, Rahul achieve a rare feat for Indian openers in Tests in NZ



CREIMAS/BCCI

Yashasvi Jaiswal and K.L. Rahul put on India's first century stand for the opening wicket in Tests in New Zealand since Nayan Mongia and Navjot Singh Sidhu's 102-run partnership at Hamilton in 1994. Jaiswal and Rahul's 130-run association at Wellington was also the fourth century partnership by an Indian opening pair in Kiwi land.

TOP CLASS

Rahul first Indian opener to hit a Test fifty in all SENA countries



CREIMAS/BCCI

K.L. Rahul has become the first Indian opener to hit a Test fifty in all SENA (South Africa, England, New Zealand, Australia) countries. He achieved the feat on the second day of the Wellington Test. Saeed Anwar, Sanath Jayasuriya, Marvan Atapattu, Imran Farhat and Dimuth Karunaratne are the other Asian openers in the list.

FAVOURED FORMAT

There is a lot of value for shots in red-ball cricket, feels Phillips



CREIMAS/BCCI

Strangely, red-ball cricket is probably my more favoured format. As an attacking player, red-ball cricket sometimes allows you to play free shots and get a lot of value for those. There has been a lot more trust in my defence over the last couple of years — New Zealand all-rounder Glenn Phillips on adapting to Tests.

CAKEWALK

Tilak, Kushagra slam centuries as India-A begins campaign in style



X@BCCI

Skipper Tilak Varma and Kumar Kushagra struck blistering centuries as India-A thrashed Nepal by 306 runs in their opening match of the Asia Cup Rising Stars in Doha on Friday. **The scores:** India-A 332/9 in 50 overs (Tilak 107, Kushagra 117) bt Nepal 26 in 11.3 overs (Harshit 4/16, Prince 5/6). **Toss:** Nepal; **PoM:** Kushagra.

Jaiswal and Rahul launch Team India's strong response after Kiwis make 368

The openers put on 130 in quick time; Nicholls hits an unbeaten 175 while Phillips scores his second Test ton; Bumrah and Akash account for seven

INDIA IN NZ

Amol Karhadkar
WELLINGTON

India's long wait for a breakthrough on the field finally gave way to a welcome change of fortunes with the bat. After New Zealand had stretched its first innings score to 368, Yashasvi Jaiswal and K.L. Rahul responded with an authoritative opening stand to put the visitor back in the contest on the second day of the first Test at Basin Reserve here on Friday.

The duo added 130 runs, with Jaiswal setting the tone for a late-session assault. India, which had spent four-and-a-half sessions in the field after allowing New Zealand to recover from 70 for five on the opening day, finished at 159 for one, having finally found a way to counter the host's momentum.

Jaiswal, tentative initially, broke the shackles after tea. Matt Henry was greeted with two crisp straight drives through mid-off before Jacob Duffy bore the brunt of the 24-year-old's aggression. Duffy conceded 30 runs, including six boundaries, off the 21 balls he bowled to Jaiswal.



On the attack: Jaiswal flayed the New Zealand bowlers in the final session. CREIMAS/BCCI

The left-hander mixed calculated risks with an array of strokes, finding the gaps with straight drives, upper-cuts and flicks whenever the ball strayed on to his pads. A straight drive off Duffy was the highlight of his innings and helped him bring up his fifty.

Rahul, meanwhile, was content to play close to his body and let Jaiswal take the initiative. Having survived a testing spell before tea, the vice-captain grew in confidence as the partnership flourished and got to his half-century before the close of play (52 batting, 116b, 5x4).



Sweeping success: Nicholls proved a tough nut to crack. AP

Rub of the green

It was not without its share of fortune. Rahul survived a couple of close leg-before appeals against Henry and Kyle Jamieson, with New Zealand choosing not to review a tight decision when Henry struck him in line with the stumps in the penultimate over before tea.

Jaiswal, too, had his slice of luck, with an edge off Jamieson being dropped by Glenn Phillips at gully.

Jaiswal's march towards an eighth Test hundred, however, was cut short when Henry induced a nick with a wobble-seam delivery. Tom Blundell, standing up to the wickets, pouched the edge to end an entertaining knock (85, 89b, 16x4).

Earlier, Henry Nicholls continued to frustrate India and finished unbeaten on 175 (335b, 21x4), helping the Black Caps add 125 runs to their overnight score before being bowled out for 368.

Phillips completed his second Test century early in the morning, driving Prasidh Krishna through the covers for three.

But Akash Deep found just enough movement to breach his defence and hit the top of off, ending Phillips' innings (118, 216b, 14x4).

Prasidh trapped Nathan Smith in front, while Jamieson fell to Akash's well-directed short ball. Jasprit Bumrah claimed his fourth wicket by dismissing Henry before Nicholls farmed strike effectively with last-man Duffy, adding 20 runs, including a 14-run over off Bumrah, before Anshul Kamboj ended the innings.

SCOREBOARD

NEW ZEALAND — 1ST INNINGS
Tom Latham b Bumrah 0 *(2b)*, Devon Conway c Pant b Kamboj 4 *(13b)*, Henry Nicholls (not out) 175 *(335b, 21x4)*, Rachin Ravindra c Pant b Akash Deep 15 *(50b, 2x4)*, Daryl Mitchell c Jaiswal b Bumrah 1 *(8b)*, Tom Blundell c Gill b Bumrah 5 *(22b)*, Glenn Phillips b Akash Deep 118 *(216b, 14x4)*, Nathan Smith lbw b Prasidh 14 *(44b, 2x4)*, Kyle Jamieson c Rahul b Akash Deep 11 *(21b, 1x4)*, Matt Henry lbw b Bumrah 1 *(9b)*, Jacob Duffy c Pant b Kamboj 4 *(12b)*; Extras (lb-9, nb-6, w-5): 20; Total (in 121 overs): 368.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-2 (Latham, 0.3 overs), 2-12 (Conway, 3.2), 3-51 (Rachin, 19.1), 4-52 (Mitchell, 20.6), 5-70 (Blundell, 28.2), 6-286 (Phillips, 93.6), 7-318 (Smith, 109.1), 8-343 (Jamieson, 115.1), 9-348 (Henry, 116.5).

INDIA BOWLING
Bumrah 29-8-92-4, Kamboj 23-5-69-2, Akash Deep 23-7-53-3, Prasidh 26-2-100-1, Washington 20-2-45-0.

INDIA — 1ST INNINGS
Yashasvi Jaiswal c Blundell b Henry 85 *(89b, 16x4)*, K.L. Rahul (batting) 52 *(116b, 5x4)*, Devdutt Padikkal (batting) 16 *(35b, 3x4)*; Extras (nb-6): 6; Total (for one wkt. in 39 overs): 159.

FALL OF WICKET
1-130 (Jaiswal, 27.5).

NEW ZEALAND BOWLING
Henry 12-3-43-1, Jamieson 11-5-15-0, Duffy 10-0-72-0, Smith 6-0-29-0.

Akash's guile and Phillips' downfall

Amol Karhadkar
WELLINGTON



Akash. CREIMAS/BCCI

It had been 16 months since Akash Deep last played a Test, having spent much of that time recovering from a lower stress back fracture.

While he struck on the opening day of the Wellington Test, getting Rachin Ravindra caught behind, it was the delivery that breached Glenn Phillips' defence and hit the top of off-stump on Friday which offered a glimpse of what India had missed.

The dismissal was not merely about pace or movement. Akash had cleverly manipulated the crease to create an angle that unsettled Phillips, who had just completed a century and looked set to take New Zealand further away from India's reach.

"The ball wasn't moving much. I wasn't getting any help off the wicket, so I was making the batter play using angles. I wanted him to play, so I went wide, made him play and then I bowled one from close to the stumps to play with the batter's mind," Akash explained. "To put the ball from an angle, he came forward to play."

The execution was as impressive as the idea. Having drawn Phillips forward with deliveries from wider on the crease, Akash changed his angle and attacked the stumps.

For Akash, though, the wicket was also a personal milestone after a prolonged rehabilitation. Returning to international cricket following a serious back injury is rarely straightforward for a fast bowler, but he credited the support of head coach Gautam Gambhir for helping him through the difficult period. "It is very difficult to get injured and make a comeback. It is very challenging, but it made me feel good that our coach used to follow-up with me all constantly and ask me how my rehab was going on, what was going on, and how I had to get stronger," he said.

Phillips' dismissal was a reminder that Akash had returned with more than just fitness. He had his craft, intact, too.

Zverev's victory puts Shelton in semifinals

ATP FINALS

Agence France-Presse
TURIN

Ben Shelton advanced to the semifinals of the ATP Finals on Thursday after Arthur Fils lost the first set of his match against World No. 1 Alexander Zverev.

Earlier, Shelton beat Rafael Jodar, which meant Fils had to defeat Zverev in straight sets to snatch second place in the John McEnroe group.

Fils went a set behind in 35 minutes, with Zverev taking the lead, and was eliminated after losing 4-6, 6-7(6). Shelton joins Zverev and Carlos Alcaraz in the last-four stage. Zverev seemed to be struggling with an ankle injury late in the match, having torn ligaments in the joint at the French Open in 2022.

In the Ivan Lendl group on Friday, Alcaraz made light of any potential hamstring issues he may be facing as he eased to a 6-4, 6-1 victory over Flavio Cobolli. The third seed had an MRI scan on the thigh on Thursday but showed little sign that the heavy strapping on his left leg was hampering him.

"The challenge is not on the court now, it is outside the court," the 23-year-old Spaniard said. "I will do everything to be in better shape physically".



Fine form: Zverev finished the group stage with a 100% record. AFP

From Steinitz to Gukesh: an elite club of kings

COUNTDOWN

P.K. Ajith Kumar

It has been a long time, really. The first World chess championship was played in 1886.

Few sporting events could boast of a longer history. Yes, the Ashes was already four then. Wimbledon was nine.

After Spencer Gore defeated William Marshall in straight sets to win the title at Wimbledon in 1877, there have been 66 other different champions in the men's singles. Jannik Sinner, you may recall, became No. 67 four months ago.

The club of the World chess champions is a bit more exclusive. As the event turns 140, there have only been 18 members in that club – when you consider only the undisputed champions. (And even if you want to add the disputed ones, the number would go up only by four).

D. Gukesh, and India, will be hoping that the club would have no further addition, at least for the time being. Javokhir Sindarov, however, can be forgiven if he has enough chances to be crowned the new king on the board of 64 squares. The opening move of the World championship match will be played in Geneva on November 24.



Gukesh.
FILE PHOTO: B. VELANKANNI RAJ

Two years ago, Gukesh had become, at 18, the youngest World champion in history when he dethroned Ding Liren in Singapore. Sindarov is only six months older.

The first-ever World champion was a little older, though. Wilhelm Steinitz was 49 when he won the title beating Johannes Zukertort in a match played across three American cities. Steinitz emerged the champion, winning 10 games to Zukertort's five. The rule was that the first player to win 10 games would be anointed king of the mind sport. Draws didn't matter then.

Now they do, and a player has to score 7.5 points in the 14-game match. If it is 7-7, tiebreak games of shorter durations would be employed.

Steinitz was champion until 1894. He won his match against Mikhail Chigorin (1889 and 1892) and Isidor Gunsberg (1891). Steinitz may have been the first official World champion, but there were brilliant players before him, too. Like Paul Morphy, the original prodigy of chess.

The world continues to be in awe of the American who quit competitive chess at 21. Some of the games he played – like the famous Opera House Game in Paris in 1858, when he took on two men – continue to fascinate chess buffs.

Giri, Firouzja on level terms

TOTAL CHESS

Jayantho Sengupta
BUDAPEST

Anish Giri and Alireza Firouzja were level at 2-2 after four blitz games on the final day of the Total Chess World Championship Tour Pilot here on Friday, with two rapid encounters and one Fast Classic game still to be played.

Giri won the opener with white after both players missed opportunities in time trouble. The advantage changed hands repeatedly before the Dutchman secured a winning position and took the lead.

Firouzja replied with white, exploiting Giri's inaccuracies on moves 17 and 18 to build an advantage. He maintained control and promoted a pawn to a queen on move 42 to level the scores.

The Frenchman then won with black after Giri erred on move 45 with only seconds remaining. Firouzja reached a winning rook- ending, with two extra pawns, to move ahead 2-1.

Giri recovered with black in the fourth game. Firouzja had held the better position, but a mistake on move 24 allowed Giri to take over and launch a decisive attack against the white king.

Clutch play: Firouzja cashed in on Giri's inaccurate moves to find a way back into the contest. FLICKR/FIDE

Giri had won Thursday's opening session 11-9. He took two blitz games and drew the other two to lead 3-1 before Firouzja won the first rapid encounter with White to move ahead 5-3.

The Dutchman immediately responded with a rapid victory of his own with white, regaining the lead at 7-5. A draw with black in Fast Classic added four points to each player's total and secured the session for Giri.

Giri reached the final unbeaten against Maxime Vachier-Lagrave, while Firouzja needed Armageddon to overcome Fabiano Caruana in the other semifinal.

Under the knockout format, the scores reset for Friday's second session, so Thursday's two-point margin did not carry over. The final is decided by sessions won rather than combined points.

Each session comprises four blitz games, two rapid encounters and one Fast Classic game. Wins are worth one, four and eight points, respectively, with draws yielding half.

Giri needs a win or draw in Friday's session to clinch the title. Firouzja has to win the day to force Armageddon, where black has draw odds.

(The writer is in Budapest at the invitation of Total Chess).

INBRIEF



Karnataka edges Railways, bags senior women's T20 title

Karnataka edged out Railways by three runs in the final to emerge as the senior women's T20 trophy champion at the Narendra Modi Stadium Ground 'B' at Ahmedabad on Friday. Chasing 150, Railways needed 18 runs to win off the last over. Karnataka's experienced left-arm spinner Rajeshwari Gayakwad was hit for a six and four by southpaw Tanuja Kanwer, but with five needed off the final delivery, Tanuja could manage only a single.

The scores: Karnataka 149/8 in 20 overs (Shubha Satheesh 48) bt Railways 146/8 in 20 overs (Arushi Goel 41).

Pakistan registers eight-wkt. win over Lanka, bags series

Pakistan romped to an eight-wicket win over Sri Lanka in the second Test in Rawalpindi on Friday, its first series victory in two years in the longest format. After the visitors were bowled out for 316 in the second innings, Pakistan raced to victory in 13 overs within the first session on the fourth day. The host bagged the series 1-0.

The scores: Sri Lanka 98 & 316 in 95 overs (Sooryabandara 38, Dhananjaya 37, Kusal 53, Sonal 54, Milan 66, Abbas 3/55, Jamal 3/67) lost to Pakistan 325 & 90/2 in 13 overs (Awais 32 n.o. Jamal 34 n.o.). **PoM & PoS:** Abbas.

Advani and Anupama move into the semifinals

Three-time champion and favourite Pankaj Advani overcame fellow Indian Digvijay Kadian 4-2 to enter the men's semifinals of the IBSF World snooker championships at the Yeshwant Club in Indore on Friday. Advani set up a last-four showdown with Ali Gharahgozlou of Iran. Reigning women's champion Anupama Ramachandran made it to the semifinals with a 3-1 win over Keerthana Pandian.

The results (quarterfinals): Men: Langyi Ryan Li (HKC) bt Brijesh Damani 4-2; Tam Yun Fung (HKC) bt Amir Sarkhosh (Irn) 4-3; Pankaj Advani bt Digvijay Kadian 4-2; Ali Gharahgozlou (Irn) bt Dhavajj Haria 4-1. **Women:** Anupama Ramachandran bt Keerthana Pandian 3-1; Shiu Wing Man (Hkg) bt Amee Kamani 3-1; Tessa Davidson (Eng) bt Carmille Buhat (Phi) 3-0; So Man Yan (Hkg) bt Yee Ting Cheung (Hkg) 3-0.

Money Bags wins the feature event

BENGALURU: Prasanna Kumar trained Money Bags (Trevor up) won the Bangalore Turf Club Trophy (1,200m), the feature event of the races held here on Friday (Nov 20). The winner is owned by Capt Jamshed J. Appoo, Mr. K. Manoj Kumar, Mr. K. Kaliyaperumal & Mr. J. Ramesh.
Trainer Prasanna Kumar, Jockey Suraj and Trevor won three races each respectively on the day.
THE RESULTS:
1. PHAR LAP PLATE (DIV. II), 1,100M: ROUTING RUN (Suraj) 1, Mandalay (Antony) 2, Cyrus The Great (Salman Khan) 3 and First Choice (R. Ajinkya) 4. Not run: Nimbus Speed. 1, 4-1/2 and 5-1/2. 1m 06.31s. Rs. 14 (w), 10, 10 and 10 (p), SHP: 25, THP: 32, FP: 44, Q: 28, Trinella: 33/14, Exacta: 92/61. Favourite: Routing Run.
Owners: Mr. Daulat Chhabria, M/s. Rapar Galloping Stars LLP rep. by Mr. Rajendran, Mr. Rajesh Narredu, Mr. Ashok Ranpise & Mr. Akshay Dattatray Ranpise. Trainer: Rajesh Narredu.
2. IRPU FALLS PLATE (1,200M): EBOTSE (Aleemuddin) 1, Interceptor (A. Asbar) 2, Black Rainforest (Vishal S) 3 and Makoto (Lave Kumar) 4. Snk, 3/4 and 3-3/4. 1m 13.53s. Rs. 82 (w), 18, 10 and 17 (p), SHP: 32, THP: 56, FP: 289, Q: 125, Trinella: 1,522/1,386, Exacta: 5,798/1,932. Favourite: Interceptor.
Owners: The Rajagiri Rubber & Produce Company Limited rep. by Mr & Mrs. Dilip Thomas'. Trainer: Arjun Mangalorkar.
3. PHAR LAP PLATE (DIV. I), 1,100M: KNOTTY SPIRIT (Aleemuddin) 1, Kolar Gold (A. Asbar) 2, Arminiius (Srinath) 3 and Monstera (Antony) 4. Lnk, 2-3/4 and 1/2. 1m 06.55s. Rs. 15 (w), 10, 17 and 12 (p), SHP: 54, THP: 30, FP: 116, Q: 81, Trinella: 333/104, Exacta: 480/165. Favourite: Knotty Spirit.
Owners: Mr. K. Kamesh, Mr. K. Manoj Kumar, Mr. K. Balamukunda Das, Dr. N. Swaroop Kumar, Mr. Ashok Ranpise, Mr. Srikanth Badruka, Mr. Roopesh S, Mr. Darshan Uppini & Mr. Pranav Ashok Ranpise. Trainer: Prasanna Kumar.
4. SHIVANASAMUDRA FALLS PLATE (DIV. II), 1,300M: ZOBEL (Trevor) 1, Forever Royal (Salman Khan) 2, Darrington (Arvind K) 3 and The One And Only (Akshay K) 4. Not run: Kiss N Tell. 3, 2 and Shd. 1m 20.29s. Rs. 60 (w), 19, 20 and 12 (p), SHP: 44, THP: 41, FP: 1,686, Q: 658, Trinella: 6,710/2,157, Exacta: 23,420 (c/o). Favourite: The One And Only.
Owner: Five Stars Shipping Co Pvt Ltd. Trainer: S. Attaollahi.
5. Y.S SURENDER MEMORIAL TROPHY (1,600M): KNOTTY EMPEROR (Suraj) 1, Quantum (Antony) 2, Pledge (Trevor) 3 and Final Call (Akshay K) 4. Lnk, 1 and 2-3/4. 1m 36.13s. Rs. 12 (w), 15, 11 and 15 (p), SHP: 31, THP: 30, FP: 59, Q: 38, Trinella: 110/59, Exacta: 640/346. Favourite: Knotty Emperor.
Owners: Mr. K. Kamesh, Mr. Ashok Ranpise, Mr. M.N. Nambiar, Mr. D. Sanjeev Basapa, Mr. Gautam Basapa, Mr. Srikanth Badruka, Mr. Dharmesh Mehta, Mr. Rajkumar S, Dr. N. Swaroop Kumar & Mr. K. Balamukunda Das'. Trainer: Prasanna Kumar.
6. BANGALORE TURF CLUB TROPHY (1,200M): MONEY BAGS (Trevor) 1, Crown Drive (A. Asbar) 2, Ricardo (Antony) 3 and Efficacy (Suraj) 4. 1-1/2, 1-1/4 and 1-1/4. 1m 10.24s. Rs. 14 (w), 10, 21 and 17 (p), SHP: 58, THP: 38, FP: 73, Q: 57, Trinella: 375/204, Exacta: 1,270/426. Favourite: Money Bags.
Owners: Capt Jamshed J. Appoo, Mr. K. Manoj Kumar, Mr. K. Kaliyaperumal & Mr. J. Ramesh. Trainer: Prasanna Kumar.
7. SMARTY JONES PLATE (1,200M): IRISH COFFEE (Suraj) 1, Jersey King (Trevor) 2, Crosswater (Aleemuddin) 3 and Felisa (Arvind K) 4. 1/2, 1-1/2 and Shd. 1m 12.16s. Rs. 35 (w), 14, 11 and 47 (p), SHP: 31, THP: 70, FP: 89, Q: 35, Trinella: 831/712, Exacta: 8,322/1,621. Favourite: Jersey King.
Owner: Dr. C.N. Devayya. Trainer: Pradeep Annaiah.
8. SHIVANASAMUDRA FALLS PLATE (DIV. I), 1,300M: ASTRAEUS (Trevor) 1, Srivalli (Akshay K) 2, Cosmic Queen (Md. Talib) 3 and Hyperdrive (Vishal S) 4. 6-1/2, 1-1/4 and 2-1/4. 1m 18.43s. Rs. 15 (w), 12, 16 and 42 (p), SHP: 30, THP: 102, FP: 66, Q: 45, Trinella: 1,158/549, Exacta: 4,774/1,169. Favourite: Astraeus.
Owners: Capt Jamshed J. Appoo, Mr. Rajan Aggarwal, Mr. Ashok Ranpise & Mr. Daulat Chhabria. Trainer: Darius Byramji.
Jackpot: Rs. 662; Runner up: 144; Mini Jackpot: 157; Treble (i): 198; (ii): 110.

Punjab snatches win from the jaws of defeat

Sachin's efforts go in vain as Tamil Nadu suffers a third straight defeat; captain Unadkat performs a hat-trick in Saurashtra's facile victory over Delhi

SMAT

S. Prasanna Venkatesan
INDORE

From 39 to win off 39 balls with seven wickets in hand, Tamil Nadu choked to a five-run defeat against Punjab in their Group-B Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy (SMAT) clash at the Daly College ground here on Friday. After Punjab posted 165 for seven, Tamil Nadu slumped to its third straight loss, finishing on 160 for nine.

Leg-spinner Kartik Chadha (three for 30), who had earlier had Andre Siddarth (28) hole out to long-off, struck twice in three deliveries.

He induced a leading edge from the well-set B. Sachin (70, 42b, 6x4, 4x6), who was caught at cover, before Rithik Easwaran (5) edged one to the 'keeper.

Tamil Nadu appeared to have the chase in its grasp, with power-hitters Shahrukh Khan and R. Rajkumar at the crease and only 38 needed off 36 balls with five wickets in hand.

Punjab, however, managed to get Rajkumar (nine) in the next over. After striking two fours, he charged down the track looking to clear the cover region, only to edge Harpreet Brar to short third man.

After Kartik conceded just six in the 16th over, Sukhdeep Bajwa kept Tamil Nadu on a tight leash, giving away only three runs and dismissing Sai Kishore (two), who played on to his stumps. The equation was down to 21 off 18.

Tamil Nadu managed a brace by Shahrukh and a four by Gurjapneet Singh, apart from six singles, off the next 11 balls. With nine needed off seven, Shahrukh (10) played on while attempting a pull off Sukhdeep. Krish Bhagat then held his nerve, mixing his pace cleverly to defend nine off the final over.

He removed Gurjapneet, who miscued an attempted big hit to backward point, before conceding three singles. With six needed off the last two balls, M. Siddharth failed to make contact on either occasion.

Later, skipper Jaydev Unadkat's hat-trick across two overs (three for 23) helped Saurashtra restrict Delhi to 152 for nine and secure a five-wicket win.





Mixed fortunes: Opener Sachin could not take Tamil Nadu home while Punjab captain Ramandeep's 23-ball 36 lifted his team to a defendable total. FILE PHOTOS: R.V. MOORTHY & VIJAY SONEJI

Perfect record
It was Delhi's first sub-200 total this season, while Saurashtra maintained its unbeaten run with a fourth straight win.

SYED MUSHTAQ ALI TROPHY — FRIDAY'S SCORES

Elite: Group A: At Mumbai: Uttar Pradesh 190/7 in 20 overs (Aryan Juyal 64 n.o.) bt Chandigarh 160/8 in 20 overs (Bhuvneshwar Kumar 3/19). **Uttar Pradesh 4(8), Chandigarh 0(4).** Karnataka 174/9 in 20 overs (Pratyush Kumar 3/29) lost to Jharkhand 178/3 in 19.1 overs (Virat Singh 60 n.o., Anukul Roy 54 n.o.). **Karnataka 0(8), Jharkhand 4(8).** Bengal 196/2 in 20 overs (Abishek Porel 52, Karan Lal 67, Shakir Gandhi 42 n.o.) bt Mizoram 103 in 18.2 overs (Chinmay Sutar 61, Rishabh Chaudhary 4/21, Karan Lal 3/14). **Bengal 4(12), Mizoram 0(0).** Rajasthan 182/5 in 20 overs (Mahipal Lomror 51 n.o.) lost to Baroda 183/5 in 18.5 overs (Rasikh Dar 57 n.o., Jitesh Sharma 47). **Rajasthan 0(12), Baroda 4(12).**
Group B: At Indore: Punjab 165/7 in 20 overs (M. Siddharth 3/20) bt Tamil Nadu 160/9 in 20 overs (B. Sachin 70, Kartik Chadha 3/30). **Punjab 4(12), Tamil Nadu 0(4).** Jammu & Kashmir 190/6 in 20 overs (Abdul Samad 42) bt Bihar 181/8 in 20 overs (Ashish Kumar 46, Altamish Ashraf 50). **Jammu & Kashmir 4(8), Bihar 0(8).** Delhi 152/9 in 20 overs (Yash Dhull 43, Nitish Rana 40, Jaydev Unadkat 3/23) lost to Saurashtra 157/5 in 18 overs (Prerak Mankad 47). **Delhi 0(8), Saurashtra 4(16).** Haryana 246/6 in 20 overs (Yashvardhan Dalal 75, Ankit Kumar 54) bt Railways 180 in 19.3 overs (Ravi Singh 75, Rahul Tewatia 4/30). **Haryana 4(8), Railways 0(0).**
Group C: At Mohali & New Chandigarh: Assam 172/9 in 20 overs (Denish Das 61, Ramakrishna Ghosh 4/41, Vivek Shelar 3/30) lost to Maharashtra 173/5 in 20 overs (Rushikesh Sonawane 54, Ruturaj Gaikwad 44 n.o., Jitumoni Kalita 3/21). **Assam 0(0), Maharashtra 4(8).** Andhra 186/7 in 20 overs (Shaik Rasheed 51, Ricky Bhui 57, Avesh Khan 3/47) bt Madhya Pradesh 116 in 18.1 overs (Satyanarayana Raju 4/14). **Andhra 4(12), Madhya Pradesh 0(12).** Tripura 121/9 in 20 overs (Sridam Paul 41) lost to Kerala 123/5 in 13 overs (Salman Nizar 51 n.o., Sandip Sarkar 3/22). **Tripura 0(0), Kerala 4(8).** Pondicherry 182/9 in 20 overs (S. Parameeshwaran 57, Ankit Sharma 45, Arpit Guleria 5/27) lost to Himachal Pradesh 188/5 in 17.5 overs (Vaibhav Sharma 55, Pukhraj Mann 66). **Pondicherry 0(12), Himachal Pradesh 4(12).**
Group D: At Kolkata: Hyderabad vs. Goa abandoned. **Hyderabad 2(6), Goa 2(2).** Uttarakhand vs. Odisha abandoned. **Uttarakhand 2(10), Odisha 2(2).** Chhattisgarh vs. Gujarat abandoned. **Chhattisgarh 2(10), Gujarat 2(6).** Vidarbha vs. Mumbai abandoned. **Vidarbha 2(14), Mumbai 2(14).**
Plate: At Sovima: Meghalaya 179/3 in 20 overs (Raj Biswa 86) bt Arunachal Pradesh 144/6 in 20 overs (Salil Malhotra 61 n.o.). **Meghalaya 4(12), Arunachal 0(0).** Nagaland 134/7 in 20 overs (Rongsen Jonathan 67 n.o., Rajbahadur Pal 3/23) lost to Services 136/4 in 16.4 overs (Mohit Ahlawat 60 n.o.). **Nagaland 0(8), Services 4(16).** Manipur 142 in 20 overs (Jotin Pheiroijam 44, Palzor Tamang 4/25) lost to Sikkim 120/5 in 17 overs (Kranthi Kumar 46 n.o.). **Sikkim won by nine runs via VJD method. Manipur 0(4), Sikkim 4(8).**



Remarkable return: Velavan was rewarded for his toil with coach Gaultier. FILE PHOTO

Velavan looks to end the year on a high

SQUASH

Neha Surana

At the start of this year, Velavan Senthilkumar wasn't sure where his squash career was heading. Cut to Thursday night in Doha and he was lifting his third PSA Copper-level trophy of 2026.

Trailing top seed Dimitri Steinmann of Switzerland in the QSF 3 final, Velavan fought back to win 3-2. Prior to this triumph, the 28-year-old from Tamil Nadu won two bronze medals at the Aichi-Nagoya Asian Games.

"At the start of the year, it was really hard for me," he told *The Hindu*. "There was a point where I lost my way. It wasn't even about the results, I was not able to perform to my potential."

The road to revival began when Velavan travelled to Prague every six weeks to work with former world No. 1 and French coach Gregory Gaultier, who has been guiding him throughout.

"Technically, I was working on a lot of things, like trying to be a bit more sharp and fluid with my movement... working on good line hitting. I think that's helped a lot," said Velavan.

It is to be noted that he also hones his skills under other coaches, including Cyrus Poncha, former India No. 1 Saurav Ghosal and Harinder Pal Singh.

Not over yet
The year is not over for the World No. 38 yet.

The World Squash Team Championships, in Korea from December 15 to 19, is his next big event, and performing well there is his immediate goal.

"First up is a tournament in Hong Kong (HKFC Milwaukee Open) but I'm not sure if I'm going because I still haven't got my visa. And then, of course, to do well in the team Worlds and hopefully break into the top 20." Velavan has found his way back again. The task now is to keep moving on it.

LIVE TELECAST

Formula One: Las Vegas GP (Qualifying), F1 TV, F1 TV Pro App & FanCode, 9.30 a.m.
Australia vs. England: First T20I, FanCode, 1.45 p.m.
Rising Stars Asia Cup: Sony Sports Ten 5 & LIV, 3.30 p.m.
ATP Finals: FanCode, 4 p.m. onwards
Premier League: SS Select 1, 2 & JioHotstar, 6, 8.30 & 11 p.m.
ISL: Sony Sports Ten 2 & LIV, 7.30 p.m.
New Zealand vs. India: First Test, Day 4, Sony Sports Ten 1 & LIV, 3.30 a.m. (Sunday)

East Bengal rallies to hold SC Delhi

ISL

Amitabha Das Sharma
KOLKATA

Sporting Club Delhi took the lead twice but had to settle for a 2-2 draw against defending champion East Bengal FC in an ISL-13 fixture at the Salt Lake Stadium here on Friday.

Carlos Fortes put Delhi ahead in the 31st minute, converting a penalty after Mohammed Aimen was fouled inside the box.

East Bengal restored parity five minutes before half-time through Edmund Lalrindika, who curled a right-footed effort into the top corner off a Dani Ramirez assist.

East Bengal had threatened earlier, with Ramirez striking the crossbar in the 18th minute.

Delhi made two injury-enforced defensive substitutions in first half, with incessant rain making playing conditions difficult.

Delhi regained the lead in the 67th minute through Ashutosh Mehta. East Bengal goalkeeper Prabhsukhan Gill failed to clear Aimen's corner, which came off the post, allowing Mehta to tap home the rebound.

East Bengal dominated possession but struggled to convert its chances.

The host made three changes in the 76th minute, bringing on Ake Loba, David Lalhlansanga and P.V. Vishnu Puthiya to bolster its attack.

The move paid off in the 83rd minute when Loba finished a well-worked move to draw level.

Despite managing 21 attempts, East Bengal could not find a winner.

The draw took East Bengal's tally to seven points, while Sporting Delhi moved to eight points from six matches.



Rising high: East Bengal's Zwolinski comes up with an acrobatic effort. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

The results: East Bengal 2 (Edmund Lalrindika 40, Ake Loba 83) drew with Sporting Club Delhi 2 (Carlos Fortes 31-pen, Ashutosh Mehta 67).
At Bengaluru: Bengaluru FC 2 (Martinez 57, Williams 85) bt Mumbai City FC 0.

Lakshya, Satwik-Chirag enter semifinals

BADMINTON

Press Trust of India
KOWLOON

Indian shuttler Lakshya Sen stormed into the Hong Kong Open badminton semifinals with a 21-17, 10-21, 21-13 win over former world champion Loh Kean Yew of Singapore here on Friday.

Earlier, Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty marched into the men's doubles semifinals of the Super 500 badminton tournament with a 21-12, 13-21, 21-16 win over China's Hu Ke Yuan and Lin Xiang Yi.

However, Rakshitha Ramraj's dream run in women's singles came to an end with a 19-21, 16-21 defeat to Thailand's fifth seed Pornpawee Chochuwong in the quarterfinals.

"I was having a little soreness in my legs. But I think I did really well today. It's just that she was better, stroke-wise, and the experience she had. I think I've learnt so many things from this tournament. I will carry forward everything for the upcoming tournaments and give my best," Rakshitha said.

The results (quarterfinals): Men: Quarterfinals: Lakshya Sen bt Loh Kean Yew 21-17, 10-21, 21-13. **Doubles:** Satwiksairaj Rankireddy & Chirag Shetty bt Hu Ke Yuan & Lin Xiang Yi 21-12, 13-21, 21-16.
Women: Pornpawee Chochuwong bt Rakshitha Ramraj 21-19, 21-16.
Earlier results: Pre-quarterfinals: Men: Lakshya bt Rasmus Gemke 21-11, 21-18; K. Srikanth bt Yoo Tae Bin 12-21, 21-18, 21-14.

SNAPSHOTS

Dabas' double century powers Delhi's reply against Tamil Nadu
GWALIOR: Delhi skipper Parth Dabas slammed a sensational unbeaten 207 (213b, 29x4, 7x6) and took his side within striking distance of Tamil Nadu's first-innings total of 330 on day two of the Vijay Merchant Trophy under-16 clash here on Friday. At stumps, Delhi was 305 for five, needing just another 26 runs to take the first-innings lead. Earlier, Pranay Sharma's six for 89 helped Delhi bowl out TN for 330.

The scores:

Tamil Nadu 330 in 105.3 overs (B. Akshadh Rao 149, Mohamed Saafir 46, S.P. Dhaswin 47, Pranay Sharma 6/89) vs. Delhi 305/5 in 72 overs (Parth Dabas 207 batting, Yuvish Sangh 40, Saksham Yadav 42).

Two IWL games postponed
KOLKATA: Two IWL matches – Gokulam Kerala vs. Sethu and Kickstart vs. HOPS FC – were washed out due to torrential rain.

Calls for Cummins to step down get louder
SYDNEY: Former Australia left-arm pacer Mitchell Johnson felt it might be difficult for Pat Cummins to remain as captain amidst the 'Sandpapergate' allegations. "I just can't see how his captaincy and personal brand survives this," Johnson wrote in a column for *The West Australian* newspaper. Meanwhile, Jason Gillespie told broadcaster *ABC*: "It's a very awkward situation for Cummins".