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RESILIENT ECONOMY

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Unemployment falls but 'decent work' still scarce

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CEC stole citizens' voice, he will go to jail: Rahul

Large crowd marches with INDIA bloc leaders protesting against 'vote theft'; Cong. leader outlines post-Modi vision rooted in harmony; Akhilesh calls Ramlila Maidan the 'Haldighati of democracy'

Sobhana K. Nair
NEW DELHI

Accusing Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Gyanesh Kumar of committing "treason" by stealing the voice of citizens", the Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, Rahul Gandhi, on Sunday said the poll official would be removed from office. He would "go to jail", Mr. Gandhi said.

The Congress leader was speaking at a rally by the Indian National Developmental, Inclusive Alliance (INDIA) at Ramlila Maidan here, which saw participation from across the country with crowds marching with drums and waving flags spilling beyond the ground's boundaries. Many trailed Mr. Gandhi and other Opposition leaders as they drove to the venue in an open-top vehicle. "The scale of today's uprising has never before been seen in Delhi," Congress general secretary (organisation) K.C. Venugopal said in a post on X without quantifying the number of participants.

Mr. Gandhi's 18-minute-long speech combined aggressive posturing towards the Union government with a preview of what he described as a post-Narendra Modi vision of India that would replace the politics of hatred with the politics of harmony.

Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav described Ramlila Maidan as the "Haldighati of democracy" and said the presence of the massive crowd indicated that "change was in the offing".



United front: INDIA bloc leaders at Ramlila Maidan in Delhi on Sunday during a rally against alleged electoral irregularities. SHASHI SHEKHAR KASHYAP

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SAVING INFILTRATORS: BJP » PAGE 11

A.P. braces for second cyclone within a week

Nellore Sravani
VIJAYAWADA

Barely a week after being battered by "very severe" Cyclone Arnab, Andhra Pradesh is bracing for Cyclone Murasu, expected to make landfall on Tuesday, with five districts put on red alert.

The weather system over the Bay of Bengal intensified into a cyclonic storm and was centred at around 350 km east of Chennai on Sunday night.

As per the India Meteorological Department (IMD), the storm, which is likely to bring heavy rainfall to several Tamil Nadu districts as well, is expected to move west-northwestward and intensify into a severe cyclonic storm by Monday morning.

Between Monday night and early hours of Tuesday, it is likely to cross into Andhra Pradesh with wind speeds gusting up to 120 km per hour between Nellore and Narsapur.



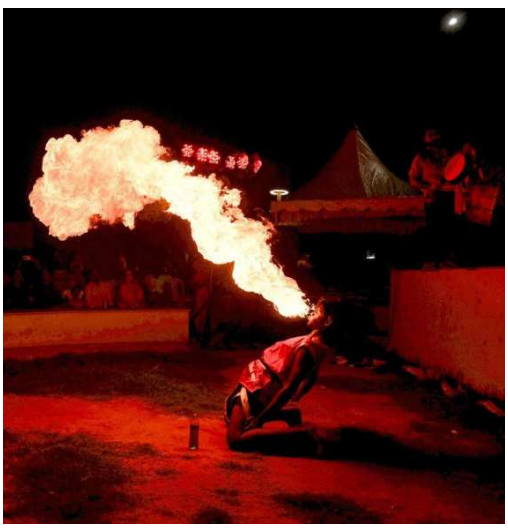
The storm is likely to bring heavy rain to Tamil Nadu and Odisha as well. B. VELANKANNI RAJ

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu, who cancelled his visit to Delhi, held a review meeting on Sunday and directed officials to step up preparedness to tackle the possible impact of the storm.

Odisha, which reported multiple landslides during Cyclone Arnab, is also bracing for the impact of Murasu, with authorities saying southern districts were likely to receive heavy rainfall.

CONTINUED ON » PAGE 10

Stage on fire



A performer breathes out a plume of flames during a performance in Chennai on Sunday to mark 'Tamil Nadu Day'. J. JOHAN SATHYADAS

IN BRIEF

Entry curbs in city: 714 vehicles sent back, 38 seized

NEW DELHI

A total of 714 non-destined vehicles were turned away and 38 overage vehicles were impounded in Delhi on Sunday as the ban on the entry of non-BS-VI vehicles registered outside the city came into effect. The enforcement led to long traffic jams along the Delhi-Gurugram border checkpoints. » Page 2

Navy to launch ₹80,000-crore warship project

NEW DELHI

The government has given a major push to the Indian Navy's next-generation destroyer programme amid the growing maritime security challenges posed by China and Pakistan, both of which are strengthening their own underwater warfare capabilities. » Page 10

Commercial LPG now costlier by ₹10 after third consecutive hike; jet fuel price up ₹1.37 a litre

Saptaparno Ghosh
NEW DELHI

In the run-up to the festive season, oil-marketing companies increased prices of the commercial variant of liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) cylinders by about ₹10 a cylinder on Sunday.

Further, the prices of the 5-kg free-trade LPG (FTL) refill - primarily catering to migrant workers - were raised by nearly ₹2.5 a cylinder. However, the price of the domestic variant remains unchanged.

The price of aviation turbine fuel for domestic carriers was also increased by ₹1.37 a litre to ₹138.5. This was the fourth such hike in jet fuel prices since they were last slashed in July.

Steepest hike in Kolkata

After the latest hike, in Delhi, the 19-kg commercial cylinder now costs ₹2,820 (increase of ₹10) and the 5-kg FTL costs ₹782 a refill. In Mumbai, prices of the 19-kg cylinder were hiked by ₹10.5 to ₹2,775.

Kolkata has seen the steepest revision – the cylinder is costlier by ₹17 and priced at ₹2,971. In Chennai, prices increased by ₹11.5 a cylinder to ₹2,994.5.

Though Sunday's standalone hike is marginal, it is the third consecutive hike since July and August, when prices of the 19-kg cylinder were cumulatively reduced by ₹380 per cylinder. Prices of the commercial variant have cumulatively increased by about ₹85 across three tranches since then.

Prior to the reduction in July and August, prices had cumulatively increased by ₹1,345 for each cylinder across four tranches after March 7.

The hike comes amid a rise in projected under-recoveries for LPG in November and December.

State-owned oil-marketing companies predicted under-recoveries to range between ₹309 and ₹328 per cylinder in November and rise further to as much as ₹370 in December.

Separately, they said the softening of benchmark Saudi CP prices helped minimise the under-recoveries in the September-end quarter.

Domestic LPG accounts for about 87% of the bottled hydrocarbon gas sold in the country with the commercial segment accounting for about 9.3%.

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CM announces plan to turn 3.3-km Netaji Subhash Marg stretch into heritage corridor

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI



The corridor from Delhi Gate to Kashmere Gate will be divided into three sections for redevelopment, said CM Rekha Gupta. FILE PHOTO

The Delhi government will redevelop the 3.3-km Netaji Subhash Marg stretch, which connects Delhi Gate to Kashmere Gate, to turn it into an organised, attractive and safe corridor, Chief Minister Rekha Gupta said on Sunday, according to a statement issued by her office.

"The government aims to develop the stretch not merely as a transport route, but also as a vibrant link between Delhi's history, heritage, architecture, culture, and modern urban life. The idea is to develop the available green spaces along the route more effectively and make this historic part of the city more attractive," the statement from the Chief Minister's Office (CMO) quoted Ms. Gupta as saying.

Revamp plan

According to details shared by the CMO, the Indraprastha Virasat Punarvikas Nigam will carry out the redevelopment in three sections, based on the available road width.

"The first section will extend from Kashmere Gate to General Post Office (GPO) Chowk. This is the busiest part of the corridor, with a road width ranging from 12 to 24 metres," said the CM.

She added that the second section will cover the stretch from GPO Chowk to Brij Mohan Chowk, which is nearly 45 metres wide on average. The third section will extend from Brij Mohan Chowk to Delhi Gate intersection, with a width ranging from 16.8 to 26 metres.

The area around Delhi Gate is proposed to receive special attention under the plan, with a Heritage Interpretation Park envisaged at the site. The park will feature a statue, an attractive pavilion, green spaces, pedestrian access, and parking facilities.

"Its design will give prominence to greenery, ornamental plants, trees, and architectural elements reflecting the area's heritage," Ms. Gupta said.

A key feature of the project, she added, is the integrated development of areas and heritage sites along Netaji Subhash Marg such as Red Fort, Jama Masjid, St. James' Church, the Kashmere Gate area, Chandni Chowk, Subhash Park, Hindi Park, Agrasen Park, and Sunehri Masjid. The CM said public toilets will also be constructed on both sides of the road.

Foundation Day

Ms. Gupta also wished city residents on the occasion of Delhi's Foundation Day.

"Our vision is to ensure that development does not come at the cost of Delhi's historic soul and cultural identity. Instead, modern facilities should add to the pride and dignity of its heritage," she said.

Day 1 of entry curbs: 714 vehicles turned back, 38 impounded

Agencies check 7,000 vehicles for emission norms as 3-month ban on non-BS-VI vehicles registered outside city kicks in; snarls at border areas

Shrimansi Kaushik
NEW DELHI



Delhi Police personnel checking a vehicle at the Delhi-U.P. border in Ghazipur on Sunday as anti-pollution measures come into force. PTI

The Delhi government's time-bound measures to curb winter air pollution came into force on Sunday, with non-Delhi-registered vehicles not meeting BS-VI emission norms being denied entry at the borders. The enforcement led to long traffic jams along Delhi-Gurugram routes.

The entry of non-BS-VI vehicles registered outside Delhi has been barred till January 31. Only BS-VI-compliant vehicles with valid PUC certificates, CNG vehicles and e-vehicles will be allowed into the city during this period while trucks will be diverted via expressways.

10 challans issued

Joint Commissioner of Police (Traffic) Sanjay Tyagi said, "From 12 a.m. to 8 p.m., 7,279 vehicles were checked. Of these, 714 non-destined vehicles were turned away. At least 10 were issued challans for non-compliance with restrictions and 38 end-of-life vehicles were impounded."

According to Traffic Police data, of the vehicles checked, 6,285 were checked in north Delhi, including the border areas of Singhu and Auchandi. A total of 445 vehicles at checkpoints along these areas were turned away.

Major restrictions

All major borders saw heavy deployment and checkposts to keep non-compliant vehicles out. Despite it being a Sunday, traffic snarls were reported at multiple entry/exit points as vehicular movement slowed to a crawl.

"I have a BS-IV bike and because of the restrictions, I cannot take rides from Delhi," said Hamad, a gig worker. "I have had to change routes because of that and ply only around the borders, in Noida and Faridabad," he added.

For those entering Delhi through the Sirhaul and Kapashera borders, the restrictions led to traffic jams from 10 a.m.

"Besides commuters, we are also asking non-destined vehicles to use peripheral expressways and outer Delhi roads. A lot of goods-carrying trucks were diverted," said an officer at the Sirhaul checkpoint.

The enforcement drive was carried out by multiple agencies. "We have been told to ensure that no vehicle without proper compliance is allowed to enter the city. Most vehicles are new. Only some have been noted to be older vehicles and they are being asked to go back," said Assistant Sub-Inspector Diwan Singh from the Transport Department, who was deployed at the Delhi-Noida border at Kalindi Kunj.

"We have intercepted nearly 50-60 vehicles since morning and sent those back," said a constable at Kalindi Kunj.



Chief Minister Rekha Gupta, along with other senior BJP leaders and Ministers protesting against the 1984 anti-Sikh riots, on Sunday. ANI

BJP takes out rally over anti-Sikh riots, seeks Cong. apology

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Hours before the INDIA bloc's 'Vote Bachao, Desh Bachao' rally at Ramlila Maidan, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) on Sunday held a protest march from Hari Nagar bus depot to the Tilak Nagar metro station demanding an apology from the Congress for the 1984 anti-Sikh riots.

The march, which began in a Sikh-dominated area, was attended by Union Minister Hardeep Singh Puri, Chief Minister Rekha Gupta, Delhi Environment Minister Manjinder Singh Sirsa, Delhi BJP president Harsh Malhotra and representatives of several Sikh organisations.

Mr. Puri said neither the Sikh community nor the nation had fully come to terms with what it had witnessed in 1984. He said the Congress had not appropriately apologised to the victims. "The tragedy of 42 years ago must continue to be remembered. It is the individual and collective responsibility of all of us to ensure that this incident is never forgotten," Mr. Puri said.

'Murder of democracy'

The Chief Minister said those who "carry copies of the Constitution and speak about democracy" need to answer whether what happened in November 1984 was not a "murder of democracy", and whether "the Gandhi family could escape responsibility for what happened to the Sikhs that year".

Ms. Gupta said the march was "an effort to give voice to the pain of thousands of families who lost their loved ones in 1984 and to their demand for justice". "The Sikh brothers and sisters participating in the march are seeking answers from the Congress and its allies about when the injustice inflicted upon them would be addressed," she added.

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DEATH



With profound grief, we announce the demise of
GEETHA RAVISHANKAR
daughter of Kokila and N. Thanu on October 31st at the age of 75. Her love and fighting spirit will forever remain in our hearts.
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husband Ravi; daughter Nirmala; son-in-law Jason; grandson Ishan; family and friends.
Funeral:
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RISE	00:41	SET 14:03
WEDNESDAY, NOV. 04		
RISE	06:35	SET 17:34
RISE	01:44	SET 14:35

Delhi Weather	max	min
Delhi City	29	18
Safdarjang	29	18
Palam	27	16

Delhi Palam Today
31°C Morning will be slight cool with shallow fog and mist. Day will be slight warm. Night also will be cool. Dry weather to occur

Delhi Palam Tomorrow
32°C The weather will be dry. Day will be little warm. Night will be cool. Pollution level will start increasing.

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Notice regarding Extension of Round-3 Online Counselling

In continuation to Advt. No. BCECEB(PGDAC)-2026/06 & 2026/07 dated 23.10.2026, it is informed to all eligible & interested NEET(MDS)-2026 qualified candidates and all concerned that in view of the Technical reason and Candidate's interest, the counselling programme for Online Registration & Submission of Application-cum-Choice filling / Consent for PGDAC-2026 is hereby extended as follows;

Extended Important Dates for PGDAC-2026 Round-3 Counselling :

i. Last date of online Registration ..... : 04.11.2026 (10:00 pm)
ii. Last date of submission of Application-cum-Choice Filling with payment through (Debit Card / Credit Card / Net Banking / UPI) / Editing of Application Form data / Editing of Choices ..... : 04.11.2026 (11.59 pm)
iii. Consent for Round-3 with Payment (if any) through (Debit Card / Credit Card / Net Banking/ UPI/ Editing of Application Form data/ Choice Filling/ Editing of Choices from such candidates who have already duly submitted the Application Form earlier ..... : 04.11.2026 (11.59 pm)
iv. Publication of Rank Card ..... : 10.11.2026
v. Last date of Choice Filling / Editing of Choices & Locking ..... : 10.11.2026 (11.59 pm)
vi. Round-3 Provisional Seat Allotment Result publication ..... : 12.11.2026
vii. Downloading of Provisional seat Allotment order ..... : 12.11.2026 to 14.11.2026
viii. Documents Verification and Admission ..... : 13.11.2026 to 14.11.2026
2. Rest of the terms / conditions for Round-3 Counselling mentioned in Adv. No. BCECEB(PGDAC)-2026/06 Dated 23.10.2026 & 2026/04 Dated 02.10.2026 will remain the same.

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Sub-Inspector, constable arrested over rape inside Jharkhand police station

Press Trust of India
SERAIKELA (JHARKHAND)

A Sub-Inspector and a constable were arrested on Sunday in connection with the alleged rape of a woman inside a police station in Jharkhand, taking the total number of arrests in the case to three, officials said on Sunday.

Following the incident on October 29 night, a constable was arrested on Saturday, while five police personnel, including the officer-in-charge of the Gamharia police station, were suspended for dereliction of duty.

A special investigation team (SIT) was formed the day after the incident on the orders of Seraikela-Kharswan Superintendent of Police (SP) Manoj Swargiary to probe the incident.

Based on the SIT report submitted on Saturday and on the SP's directive, suspended Sub-Inspector Manoj Sahu and constable Santosh Rai were arrested on Sunday, according to an official statement.

> A police station is a place of justice and safety for women, not one of fear and exploitation
> **PURNIMA DAS SAHU**
> BJP MLA from Jamshedpur East

In her complaint, the survivor had told the police that she had an altercation with her husband on Thursday evening and left their home, fearing that she would be beaten up. The woman then went to a neighbour's house and contacted the police using her mobile phone. A PCR van arrived at the house and brought her to the police station that night, police stated in a statement.

The officers on duty provided her with a room in the police station to rest. While she was in the room, the prime accused, a wireless operator at the police station, raped her, the statement added.

BJP seeks NCW action

Meanwhile, the Opposition BJP on Sunday wrote to the National Commission for Women (NCW) urging the panel to take cognisance of the incident.

In the letter to the NCW, Jamshedpur East legislator Purnima Das Sahu said CCTV footage from the Gamharia police station needs to be preserved and the survivor should be provided with a legal adviser.

BJP workers, led by the party's State vice-president Geeta Koda, held a protest rally in Gamharia and demanded capital punishment for the arrested police personnel.

"A police station is a place of justice and safety for women, and not one of fear and exploitation. If a protector turns predator, it is a serious concern for society and the police administration," Ms. Sahu stated in the letter.

Azam Khan sent to 14-day judicial custody in money laundering case

Mayank Kumar
LUCKNOW

Samajwadi Party leader Azam Khan was remanded in 14-day judicial custody by a special Prevention of Money Laundering Act court in Ghaziabad on Sunday. The Enforcement Directorate (ED) had initiated an investigation based on 26 FIRs registered by the U.P. police in July 2019 against Mr. Khan on allegations that agricultural land of farmers of Singankhera village in Rampur was forcibly occupied for Mohammad Ali Jauhar University.

It is alleged that farmers were coerced through assault, unlawful confinement and threats into executing sale deeds. "The ED found that funds and materials meant for public works were diverted to the university, government works were executed on its campus, and funds from contractors allotted government contracts were routed back to the Jauhar Trust as donations," read a statement from the agency.

JU V-C orders probe into molestation complaint against staffer

Senjuti Sengupta
KOLKATA

A first-year student of Jadavpur University's (JU) Arts Faculty was allegedly molested by a non-teaching staffer on campus on Friday afternoon, prompting Vice-Chancellor Chiranjib Bhattacharjee to order a probe on Saturday.

According to a complaint submitted by the survivor's friends to the V-C on her behalf, the incident took place at 3.20 p.m. when they were sitting at the staircase on the seventh floor of Technology Bhavan. The complaint stated that the accused staffer allegedly shouted at them and asked them to go downstairs. Following this, her two friends immediately rushed downstairs.

The accused then allegedly asked the survivor to accompany him to a classroom to explain why he does not allow anyone to sit there. He took her to the sixth floor where there were no lights. He showed her some locked rooms and told her that laptops had been stolen from there. The complaint stated that the survivor told him that she would not sit there in future. When she turned around to leave, he pulled her by her hand and touched her inappropriately. In self-defence, she pushed him back, left the spot, and narrated the incident to her friends.

In the letter submitted to the Vice-Chancellor, 17 students who signed it also alleged that the accused had shown objectionable behaviour towards many students in the past.

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INBRIEF



Chainsaw attack case accused critical in police firing in A.P.

The Andhra Pradesh police opened fire on M. Hemanth, the suspected accused in the chainsaw attack on Class X student Gopika, at the Atmakur forest on Sunday night, leaving him seriously injured. When the police traced him and asked him to surrender, he allegedly threw stones and attempted to attack an officer with a knife. The police reportedly fired two rounds in the air as a warning. As he continued to resist, they opened fire, hitting him in both legs. IT Minister Nara Lokesh visited Gopika at the Manipal Hospital in Bengaluru on Sunday. He also met her parents.

IIT-B student death: candlelight march held to demand justice

Several student organisations, social groups, and residents gathered in Mumbai's Bandra East on Sunday evening to hold a candlelight march to demand justice for Sahil Wakode, a student of IIT Bombay who allegedly died by suicide recently. The march began from Kushinara Buddhavihar and culminated at Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Garden, opposite the Collector's Office. Participants also expressed solidarity with Wakode's parents, who have been staging a hunger strike at Azad Maidan demanding justice for their son.

(Those in distress can contact Tele MANAS at 14416 to seek help)

Bihar Oppn. attacks BJP day after 2 Independent MLCs 'join' ruling party

Tejashwi seeks disqualification of Bansidhar Brajwasi, Rahul Raj; row comes a day after BJP issued statement welcoming the two to the party; hour later, it said the MLCs had 'extended support' to it

Amit Bhelari
PATNA

A day after two recently elected Independent Members of the Bihar Legislative Council – Bansidhar Brajwasi and Rahul Raj – "joined" the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), the Opposition on Sunday demanded that both be disqualified under the anti-defection law.

In the results declared last week, Mr. Brajwasi defeated Janata Dal (United)'s Abhishek Jha from the Tirhut Graduates' seat while Rahul Raj defeated JD(U)'s Anand Pushkar from the Saran Teachers' seat.

Around 8 p.m. on Saturday, the BJP issued a release welcoming the two legislators to the party.

Subsequently, in a media interaction, Mr. Brajwasi said, "I have joined the BJP after Chief Minister Samrat Choudhary*ji* gave me an assurance that teachers' concerns would be resolved if we work together." However, nearly an hour later, the BJP issued another press note stating that the "newly elected Legislative Council members Bansidhar Brajwasi and Rahul Raj have extended their support" to it.

Soon after, the Tirhut Graduates' MLC put out a video on Facebook, where he said, "I have not joined BJP. I have just offered support. I don't know why people are making a hue and cry about it." There was no comment from Mr. Raj.



RJD MP Manoj Kumar Jha said the party will urge the Acting Chairman of the Legislative Council to take action against the two MLCs. ANI

On Sunday, Leader of the Opposition in the Assembly and Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) working president Tejashwi Yadav accused the MLCs of violating the anti-defection law and hit out at the BJP for "making a mockery of the Constitution".

RJD MP Manoj Kumar Jha said under the Constitution's Tenth Schedule, those elected as Independents are liable to be disqualified upon joining any party. He added that the RJD will meet Acting Chairman of the Legislative Council Ram Bachan Rai over the issue. "If he fails to take an immediate and impartial decision, we'll raise the matter before the court of law, as well as the court of people," Mr. Jha said.

Cong. takes potshots

The Congress took potshots at the BJP, accusing it of "backstabbing its coalition partner JD(U)". "The BJP has been calling the INDIA bloc a divided house. But how it conspired to ensure the defeat of its own ally is now for all to see," said Congress spokesperson Asit Nath Tiwari.

Prashant Kishor-led Jan Suraaj Party, which also bagged a seat in the MLC polls, termed the episode a "cruel and vulgar joke".

Of the eight seats that went to the polls, ruling National Democratic Alliance partners BJP and JD (U) contested four each. While the BJP won two, the JD(U) bagged one. Two seats were won by the RJD.

Final electoral rolls after SIR riddled with errors in Bengaluru

Rishita Khanna
BENGALURU

From names appearing as "XXX" or "??????K" to missing relatives' names and entries containing single letters, e-mail IDs or even "...", entries in the final electoral rolls for Bengaluru are riddled with errors.

The Hindu found discrepancies in at least 1,000 entries here alone.

In some polling parts, voters listed one after another have had their names and their relatives' names replaced by jumbled letters.

Garbled names

In Dasarahalli Assembly constituency (part No. 324), which has 425 electors, a large number of consecutive entries carry garbled names.

Serial number 327, for example, listed the elector's name as "µçµÌèÌ" and the relative's name as "ÎèµÊèÈ". This combination was seen across all mentioned serial numbers.

Errors were also found in the names of relatives. The column was left blank or contained only a single letter in several entries in the final rolls. Others listed "NA", "None", while some had the relationship itself – such as "Husband", "Wife" or "Mother" - entered in place of the relative's name. In Dasarahalli (polling part No. 7), an elector named Kavitha had her name split between English and Kannada even in the English version of the roll, while the relative's name was listed as "Husband Husband".

The Hindu contacted AEROs and BLO supervisors, who said they were unaware of the cases and would look into them. A polling official, however, attributed the problem to an error during transliteration. The official said some fonts used special codes to display Kannada letters.



Bengaluru's final electoral rolls showing voters' replaced by characters, symbols, and incorrect entries.

Citizenship for 2.5 lakh Matuas under CAA by Dec. 31: Bengal CM

The Hindu Bureau
KOLKATA

West Bengal Chief Minister Suvendu Adhikari on Sunday said the State government has set a target of granting citizenship certificates to 2.5 lakh Matuas in the State under the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) by December 31.

Mr. Adhikari, who visited the religious headquarters of Matuas at Thakurnagar, said only 25,000 people have received citizenship under CAA so far.



CM Suvendu Adhikari

The BJP had promised citizenship to Matuas under the CAA during the Assembly poll. The party went on to win a majority of seats in Matua-dominated constituencies in North 24 Parganas and Nadia districts. The community, comprising Hindu Namasudras, has roots in Bangladesh. The CM said the State government will take the initiative to expedite applications and include the names of those who receive citizenship in the voter list in January 2027.

Community's support

Mr. Adhikari added that West Bengal would have turned into Bangladesh had the BJP not come to power. He also thanked the Matuas for their support.

A.P. civic polls largely peaceful; Jagan demands repoll in Pulivendula seat

V. Raghavendra
VIJAYAWADA

Elections to 13 municipal corporations and 79 municipalities and nagar panchayats in Andhra Pradesh ended at 5 p.m. on Sunday without major law and order problems, barring incidents of stone-pelting by cadres of the TDP and the YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) and the torching of vehicles in Pulivendula.

The overall polling percentage across the urban local bodies stood at 48.03 at 3 p.m., according to information furnished by the State Election Commission, compared to 63.30 in the 2021 elections.



In queue: Voters waiting at a polling booth in Rajarajeswari Peta, Vijayawada, on Sunday. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Among the 13 municipal corporations that went to polls, Machilipatnam recorded the highest polling percentage at 55.10, while Greater Visakhapatnam had the lowest at 39.72.

Ex-CM stages protest

YSRCP president and former Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy staged a protest in Pulivendula over alleged electoral malpractices. He demanded a repoll, alleging that authorities had "turned a blind eye" to violations. He left without casting his vote.

Submit doctors' credentials, HC tells Delhi govt.

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court has given the National Medical Commission and the Delhi government two weeks to submit a joint inquiry report on the medical qualifications of two doctors accused of mishandling a child during treatment.

Justice Neena Bansal Krishna passed the order on October 30 while hearing a contempt petition filed by the child's mother.

SPOTLIGHT

AMU wants women on campus, not at ballot box

About 4,000 students at the university's Women's College have been denied voting rights in the students' union polls, raising concerns over gender discrimination and unequal representation

A. M. Jigeesh



Students riding motorcycles through the university campus during a rally in support of candidates contesting the Aligarh Muslim University Students' Union (AMUSU) elections. SHASHI SHEKHAR KASHYAP

Under the burnt-orange glow of the autumn sun, Aligarh Muslim University's (AMU) sprawling green lawns become a backdrop to conversations around the upcoming student elections gathering steam at the weathered brick façade of the Department of History.

Donning a black *sherwani* – a knee-length coat featuring a front button closure prescribed as the dress code for male candidates – Saquib Ali Khan, an M. Tech student and the vice-presidential candidate, asks the girls sitting in the lawn to vote for him.

While campaigning, he highlights the importance of Aligarh Muslim University Students' Union (AMUSU) polls being held on November 5 after a gap of eight years when he is interrupted by two girls – Zunaira Habib Alvi from Aligarh and Rahat Ul Aien from Kashmir. "What about our votes?" they say.

Active campaigners for restoring the voting rights of girl students, both Zunaira and Rahat are students of at AMU Women's College. Rahat is a final-year political science graduate (honours), while Zunaira is awaiting her BA Honours result. Established in 1906 as a girls' school, the women's college became an undergraduate institution in 1937 and is a constituent college of AMU. Located about two kilometres from the main campus, it is home to nearly 4,000 women students who have been denied the right to vote in AMUSU elections.

Zunaira and Rahat want to know where Saquib stands on the university authorities' decision.

Saquib, seemingly unaware of the issue, is briefed by his friends and supporters who join him at the lawns. He assures the girls that he will pressure the administration to allow students from the women's college contest the next AMUSU elections.

The AMU authorities have not given an official reason for the eight-year delay. The university has about 24,500 students, including those on its main campus, the AMU Women's College and three off-campus centres in Malappuram in Kerala, Kishanganj in Bihar and Murshidabad in West Bengal.

'Inherent patriarchy'

According to Zunaira and Rahat, the boys and the girls appear for the same examinations to secure admission in AMU. "But the boys study in departments and the girls are shifted to the women's college even if the courses are the same," they say.

They allege that the faculty, study material and other infrastructure are not the same for boys and girls even if the courses are same. "I am from Aligarh. I was born and raised here. My father was a faculty here and so I recognise that this system of inherent patriarchy has existed for a long time here," Zunaira says, adding that the denial of voting rights to girls is an extension of this "inherent patriarchy".

The history of AMUSU dates back to 1884, when the Siddons Union Club was inaugurated at the Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental (MAO) College in Aligarh.

In 1920, following the passage of the Aligarh Muslim University Act, the college was elevated to university status and became AMU. The Siddons Union Club subsequently evolved into the Muslim University Union, marking the beginning of its institutional association with the university. Over the years, the union expanded beyond its original debating function to become a platform for student representation, political engagement and public discourse.

However, the girls at AMU note that in 106 years no woman has been elected as AMUSU's president, vice-president or secretary.

The union has, however, had women as its cabinet members in the past. Zahra Naqvi was the first woman to be elected as its cabinet member in 1953-54. Though paying union fees, the students in the AMU office campuses in three States too do not have voting rights and elected students' representatives to represent them.

It was only during the academic sessions 2010-11 and 2011-12 that the students at AMU Women's College voted in the AMUSU elections. The move came after the implementation of the Lyngdoh Committee report, which favoured direct election in universities with a single campus.

Later, the university authorities justified the restrictions on voting and contesting, citing reasons like "geographical distance" and a separate union at the AMU Women's College.

In 2012, AMU set up a five-member committee headed by M. Shakeel Ahmed, a professor with the Department of Law, to look into the implementation of the Lyngdoh report and favoured going back to the system where the students of Women's College had no right to either vote or contest AMUSU elections.

AMU Students Union (conduct of election) (amendment) Regulations of 2019 makes it specific that the AMU and the Women's College will have two different unions and two different elections.

Memorandum to V-C

The issue of fair representation of women in student governance – academic and residential circumstances – came up after the implementation of the Four-Year Undergraduate Programme (FYUP) of the National Education Policy (NEP) in 2020. The fourth-year students reside on the campus, not in the women's college hostel; yet, they are unable to vote in the AMUSU elections.

"We request that the students at women's college be granted voting rights in AMUSU elections, in addition to their existing right to vote in Women's College Students Union (WCSU) elections. The result would be dual voting rights: one vote for the WCSU and one for AMUSU. Women's College students are members of the AMU community and are affected by the decisions and policies of AMUSU. They should therefore have a voice in choosing the body that represents the student community as a whole," reads a mass memorandum submitted by a group called The Concerned Female Students of AMU, on October 12 and October 16, 2026, to AMU's Vice-Chancellor Naima Khatoon.

Prof. Khatoon, who served as the principal of the women's college from 2014 to 2024, is the first woman Vice-Chancellor of AMU. University's girl students say that the Vice-Chancellor told them that she does not have the power to change the rules; only the Executive and Academic Councils of AMU and AMUSU could take a decision on amending the 2019 guidelines, thereby allowing all students to vote in upcoming elections.

The decision not to raise the age limit beyond 22, under the AMU Students' Union (conduct of election) (amendment) Regulations, 2019, also affected fourth-year students. "Also, if 4,000 students are not allowed to vote in AMUSU elections, it is natural that no woman will become an office-bearer, as on the main campus the number of women is very less," says Kaminah Beigh, a final-year student of psychology (honours).

'Decision in a hurry'

The Hindu reached out to AMU's Vice Chancellor, Registrar, and the Chief Election Officer (CEO), but did not receive any comments on the issue.

The CEO of the Women's College, Nazia Hasan, who is a Professor in the Department of History, AMU Women's College, says the decision to hold the elections was taken in a hurry.

"There are anomalies in the 2019 guidelines, particularly since the FYUP implementation. The age limit has not been reviewed, and we have lost some good candidates due to this. Students are unhappy with the present arrangement and only the executive council and academic council of the AMU can take a decision on the issue of voting rights of students at Women's College. I hope the new union will address this. But cancelling the election is no solution as it is being held after long struggles of students," Prof. Hasan says.

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EDUCATIONPLUS

The two faces of academia

Why higher education institutes need to find a balance between teaching and research



GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

A. Joseph Dorairaj

One of the major challenges faced by higher education institutions (HEIs) globally is whether to focus on teaching or research. There are three core issues: Should colleges and universities try to do justice to teaching and conducting research, and is such a compromise feasible? Second, is engaging in research, especially high-end research, more prestigious than classroom teaching, which is usually talked about in terms of 'load'? Third, do brilliant teachers automatically turn into exceptional researchers and, conversely, are outstanding researchers excellent teachers as well?

Three types

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 talks about three types of institutions: Research-intensive universities, teaching-intensive universities, and autonomous degree-granting colleges. While all three should undertake teaching and pursue research, the quantum of teaching and how research is pursued and promoted differ widely across the spectrum of institutions.

Affiliated and constituent colleges, especially those that offer only UG programmes, have modest aspirations. The faculty's heavy workload, the lack of research infrastructure and ecosystem, and their commitment to shouldering multiple academic and administrative roles leave very little scope to conduct research. Autonomous colleges are better in terms of research; though the faculty have a heavy teaching load, they still undertake research, as projects, publications, and research guidance are mandatory for their upward mobility. Universities, on the contrary, have to conduct quality research, as it is their mandate to push the frontiers of knowledge and come up with new insights and theories.

Wilhelm von Humboldt (1767-1835), who established the University of Berlin in 1810 and is considered the founding spirit of the modern European university, envisaged universities as the ideal platform for advancing research. In fact, western HEIs, starting with The Johns Hopkins University in the U.S., are modelled on Humboldt's paradigm of research-intensive universities. This does not imply that universities should shun teaching altogether. But in most western universities, teaching undergraduates is left largely to adjuncts and teaching assistants. In India too, in many universities, UG teaching has become the burden of doctoral students and the young faculty who are still finding their feet in the higher education stream. Senior professors should come forward to ignite young minds, identify and mentor bright minds, especially in terms of research.

Research and ranking

It is a fact that, in India and in the West, conducting research is considered more prestigious and profitable compared to teaching, especially UG teaching. Whether it is recruitment, self-appraisal, or institutional assessment, or accreditation and ranking done by the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) or the National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF), research is a key component and crucial for boosting the institution's grade and ranking. Globally, THE World University Rankings, QS World University Rankings, and the Academic Ranking of World Universities place significant emphasis on research alongside teaching.

While talking about the research-teaching nexus, excellence in one domain does not necessarily guarantee excellence in the other. Brilliant teachers are not always outstanding researchers and, conversely, highly competent researchers are not always smart teachers. Richard Feynman is a pre-eminent example of being an exceptional researcher as well as a teacher. Venki Ramakrishnan is another extraordinary scientist and brilliant communicator. But these are exceptions.

The frontiers of knowledge have to be constantly redefined and reconfigured, for the world is facing unprecedented challenges. New concepts, theories, and paradigms have to be generated and disseminated to address upcoming challenges. The trade-off between teaching and research in academia will persist, but the stakes increasingly favour research.

Views expressed are personal.

The writer is Emeritus Professor, Gandhigram Rural Institute, Gandhigram, Tamil Nadu

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Slow recovery

ISRO needs more human and material resources to fulfil its mandate

With the successful launch of the GSLV-F18 mission and the NVS-03 satellite's healthy status, the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) is on course to heave a sigh of relief. Its last 18 months have been constrained by the consequences of two launch failures involving PSLV rockets, which share some of their design aspects with GSLV, to the extent that the F18 mission was only the second successful launch of 2026. If the NVS-03 satellite is successfully manoeuvred into its final intended orbital slot and commissioned, ISRO will also have pulled off a rescue mission for the 'Navigation with Indian Constellation' (NavIC) programme, which has been at least one functional satellite short for the last six months and thus unable to meet its primary purpose of providing standalone positioning services over the Indian subcontinent. The three second-generation NVS satellites thus far are distinguished by having at least one indigenously made atomic clock onboard, in line with the recommendations of the Parliamentary Standing Committee (PSC) on Science and Technology and India's investments in quantum timekeeping, and away from the imported clocks onboard the first-generation IRNSS satellites.

The PSC had also flagged procurement bottlenecks across ISRO's programmes, including difficulties with obtaining specialised components and ensuring vendor readiness on the timelines that NavIC needs. The ISRO Space Applications Centre's 'request for proposals' in 2025 also specified a large lead time of nearly two years between a contract's start and the first two flight models. The Electronics Component Manufacturing Scheme and the programme to modernise the Semiconductor Laboratory can be tweaked to serve these needs, with the Electronics Ministry also setting aside dedicated funds for developing specialised components and their qualification tests in a five- to seven-year programme. In tandem, the government must allocate around ₹17,000 crore in the 2027-28 Union Budget for the Department of Space, against ₹13,705.6 crore in 2026-27, with the hike focusing on manufacturing launch vehicles, replacing satellites, and recruitment. Besides, NavIC also requires a dedicated operator, so that ISRO can be left to focus on its core mandate, and India needs a national space law addressing private participation in this enterprise, and liability. Two successful orbital missions in five-sixths of a year is unbecoming of a national space programme with imminent plans of human spaceflight, a space station, and reusable launch vehicle capabilities. Without significant measures, ISRO will lurch from one mission to the next as and when its inadequate workforce is able to make do with its inadequate allocation.

Dwindling support

India and the world must stand up against the bullying of Cuba by the U.S.

Nearly every year since 1992, the United Nations General Assembly has passed a resolution calling on the U.S. to end its decades-old economic embargo on Cuba. As a result, the outcome at the UNGA resolution titled the 'Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba' passed on October 30, was expected. Surprisingly, the support for the resolution this year was dramatically lower than previous years. For the preceding decade, more than 180 countries of the 193-member UNGA had expressed their support for ending the embargo, but the numbers dropped to 165 in favour in 2025; this year's tally dropped sharply lower, with 130 in favour, 25 abstaining and 17 countries voting against the resolution. The trend clearly points to efforts by the Trump administration to use its pressure on countries to change their votes, and many appear to have succumbed to those threats. Among those were several Latin American countries, that have more recently grown closer to the U.S., particularly after the operation in Venezuela in January 2026, where U.S. marines abducted President Maduro and brought him to the U.S. for a trial. Countries in the region such as Costa Rica, Ecuador, Argentina, and Colombia that have downgraded ties with Havana, switched votes on the resolution. In addition, U.S. diplomats argued that Havana-Moscow ties emboldened Russia's war in Ukraine, which led to several western countries switching their vote. Diplomats from Ukraine and Poland, for example, referred to Cuba's ties with Russia while explaining their vote, and Germany and Italy switched for the first time in many years to abstaining on the resolution. While it is clear that the bulk of the Group of 77 and non-aligned states including India maintained their support on the resolution for Cuba, the vote by the others demonstrates a disquieting turn.

Amidst these turns, New Delhi must be credited for standing firm on the issue, opposing the embargo, and calling for "dialogue and diplomacy" in its statement. The vote came a month after the BRICS New Delhi declaration expressed "deep concern" over the tightening of unilateral blockade measures on Cuba, and the "worrying humanitarian impact" on the Cuban people. It is important that India continue to stand up to such unilateral measures and amplify the voice of smaller countries, particularly those in the Global South.

Even as unemployment falls, lack of 'decent work' in India

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India's unemployment rate fell from 6.1% in 2017-18 to 3.2% in 2023-24. At the same time, female workforce participation increased for the first time in decades as has been widely reported in government documents. In light of these positive developments, it is the right time to ask what kind of jobs have been generated in India recently, and what working conditions accompany them.

This is important because employment alone does not inherently ensure dignity, security, or a stable livelihood. A worker engaged in garment sewing without a formal contract, a gig worker without insurance coverage, or a construction labourer without paid leave may technically be considered employed, but they remain outside the promise of decent work. The International Labour Organization (ILO) defines 'decent work' as employment that offers equitable income, workplace rights, social security and dignity. This principle is integrated into Sustainable Development Goal 8 (SDG-8), which advocates "decent work for all". Measured this way, India's labour market persistently exhibits high levels of informality, insecure employment, and increasing inequalities.

Measuring decent work

Using two rounds of the Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS), 2017-18 and 2023-24, the quality of employment in India has been analysed. By constructing a multidimensional Decent Work Index (DWI) based on three subdimensions – employment status, employment opportunity, and social security – across five major industries (agriculture, manufacturing, construction, wholesale and retail, and transport), it was observed that India has made progress in improving work conditions over time. The overall DWI increased from 0.247 in 2017-18 to 0.302 in 2023-24. While this indicates some improvement in job quality, the overall level remains alarmingly low. More importantly, progress has been uneven across sectors, regions, gender and caste groups.

Manufacturing in the secondary sector and transport in the tertiary sector showed the highest improvement in decent work conditions during this period. The manufacturing sector's DWI increased from 0.324 to 0.411 due to a gradual rise in formalisation and digitalisation. The transport sector also experienced significant progress (from 0.285 to 0.35), largely due to the expansion of urban logistics and app-based platform work. However, these improvements also reveal an important concern. Even in sectors where employment conditions have improved, access to social security remains limited. A large number of workers still do not have written contracts, paid leave, provident fund benefits or insurance coverage. Though employment opportunities are increasing, labour protections and job security are not improving at the same pace. Agriculture, which continues to employ the largest share of India's workforce, remains the lowest-quality employment generating sector. The agricultural sector's DWI marginally increased from 0.211 to 0.267 during the study period; most agricultural workers continue to be self-employed or unpaid family workers without stable income or labour protections. The issue is not merely low productivity; rather it is the rise of informal jobs. Construction and retail sectors tell a similar story. Workers remain dependent on casual employment, subcontracting chains and insecure labour arrangements. Welfare schemes exist on paper but implementation gaps continue to exclude millions of workers.

Poor-quality employment generation has consequences for economic growth. Workers without social security spend less, save less and remain vulnerable to economic shocks

Nearly 90% of India's workforce remains informally employed, a share that has risen since 2019, according to the India Employment Report 2024 (ILO-IHD). It has expanded into supply chains, app-based work in the gig and platform economy, logistics, home-based production, and in even organised industries through contractualisation and outsourcing.

The challenge becomes even more serious when viewed in the context of social inequality. The analysis by the authors shows that decent work outcomes improve significantly with education, formal enterprise employment and skill training. However, informalisation of jobs reduces decent work creation in India over time. Especially concerning is the growing intersection of caste and gender disadvantage: women from Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Classes experienced a decline in decent-work outcomes between 2017-18 and 2023-24, even as outcomes for men improved. The labour market penalty for being both female and socially marginalised has intensified after the COVID-19 pandemic. This shows that inequality in India's labour market is not just economic, it is also structurally rooted in caste and gender hierarchies.

Regional disparities further expose the uneven nature of labour market progress. States such as Goa, Keralam, Tamil Nadu, and Haryana perform substantially better in terms of decent-work creation; in contrast, Bihar, Jharkhand, and Uttar Pradesh continue to lag behind.

The findings point to a serious policy concern: while India has been able to create more jobs, it is still struggling to ensure that these jobs provide decent working conditions and security.

Poor-quality employment generation has consequences for economic growth. Workers without social security spend less, save less and remain vulnerable to economic shocks. Moreover, informality depresses productivity, weakens tax capacity, and increases inequality. India cannot measure labour market success only through reduction in unemployment rates and income growth. A country aspiring to become Viksit Bharat by 2047 cannot rely indefinitely on insecure, low-paid and unprotected labour. Economic growth without decent work can create a workforce that may have jobs, but still lives with insecurity, instability and a lack of protection. India has to shift from a 'job-counting approach' to a 'job-quality approach'.

The way forward

The findings point toward where policy should focus. First, social protection must extend to all workers – gig and platform workers, self-employed, farmers, and informal workers – through systems that are portable and accessible regardless of employment status. Platforms such as e-Shram are a good start, but registering alone does not guarantee protection; workers need real protection, not just a database entry.

Second, formalisation policies should focus on labour conditions, not just business registration. Enterprises receiving tax incentives or subsidies should be linked to mandatory worker protections such as written contracts, paid leave, and social security contributions.

Third, labour policies need to be more intersectional. Given that women from marginalised caste groups are the group whose outcomes worsened rather than improved, targeted measures – childcare facilities, safe transportation, skill training and safeguards against workplace discrimination – should not be an afterthought. Finally, labour reforms should be designed around the needs of workers first, rather than being framed primarily as a means of easing the cost of doing business.

The four Labour Codes were introduced in 2025 with the promise of simplifying labour regulation and expanding protections. However, implementation remains partial and inconsistent. Critics argue that while compliance has been eased for businesses, worker protections may have diminished with rising contractualisation.

The real test of development is not whether workers have some kind of work; it is whether that work provides dignity and security. Until then, India's employment success story will remain incomplete – no nation can call itself developed while its workforce remains insecure.

U.S. mid-term elections: how officials are facing the heat



Anil Raman
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Americans vote tomorrow, November 3, to elect the Congress for the last two years of Donald Trump's presidency. While Indian voters are used to a single counting day, with most results in by evening, a U.S. count can run for days, and in a close race for weeks. This year the worry is whether the outcome will be accepted at all. In 2020, doubts arose after the count, and Mr. Trump still has not accepted that defeat. This time, they are being raised before voting, with Mr. Trump stating that he will accept the result only "if the elections are honest".

The U.S. does have a federal Election Assistance Commission (EAC), but its responsibility is limited to certifying voting machines and training election staff. The 50 States have thousands of county officials who man the booths, count the votes and declare results; India's electronic voting machines can total crores of votes in a few hours. In the U.S., many votes come by post, and each envelope must be opened and its signature checked before the ballot is counted. Moreover, there is variance in the procedure followed by different States. California will accept a postal ballot up to a week after polling day if it was posted in time. Twenty-six States order an automatic recount when the margin is very narrow.

In several States, ballots cast in person on the polling day are reported first, and these tend to favour Republicans. Postal ballots, which have leaned Democratic, come in later and can wipe out an early lead. In 2020, Mr. Trump treated such a shift as proof of fraud.

Pre-emptive manoeuvring

The slow count matters more this year because of what precedes it. In July, the administration removed the last commissioners of the EAC, leaving it without any senior leadership. Two days earlier, the U.S. Department of Justice warned officials in all 50 States that they could be prosecuted over their voter lists. Before that, in Fulton county, Georgia, which is the county at the heart of Mr. Trump's challenge to the 2020 result, the Justice Department demanded the names and contact details of everyone who had worked at the polls. A federal judge denied this demand and termed its scope "staggering".

While recounts and lawsuits are expected in any close race, the worry is about officials setting aside a legal and correct count, especially in seats which witness close contests

October has seen more such instances. The same department is now sending monitors to all 50 States, reportedly about 1,000 of them. This includes to six Democratic-leaning counties in Georgia. For the first time since 2002, Washington has not invited observers from the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe. On October 29, a senior Justice Department official sent a diktat to every State, reminding officials that failure to preserve election records is a crime carrying up to a year in prison. Justin Levitt, a former department official, said the letter "certainly looks like it's meant to intimidate rather than to inform".

On October 28, a federal judge in California rejected the Justice Department's attempt to set aside about 20,000 ballots, writing, "these threats must stop." Two days later, a judge in another case ordered the Department to stop threatening election officials with prosecution.

The most critical period begins after the polls end. In the U.S., county boards and then State officials must certify the count. For most of the country's history, this was a formality. Since 2020, it has become a battleground because a refusal or delay in certifying can hold up a result while lawyers and politicians fight over it. States certify results during November and December, and the newly elected Congress takes its seats only on January 3, 2027.

On October 22, Deputy Attorney General Todd Blanche was asked whether the Justice Department might intervene in certification. He said it had no plan to "improperly interfere", thereby declining to rule it out. A week later, the Department displayed this stance. In an amended lawsuit, it sought to block the certification of Alaska's Senate result if Republican incumbent Dan Sullivan loses narrowly. The complaint rests on a claim that Democrats recruited a spoiler, a retired teacher also named Dan Sullivan – an allegation that the campaign of Democratic challenger, Mary Peltola, denies. Such a move would raise serious constitutional questions, since elections are run by the States.

While recounts and lawsuits are expected in any close race, the worry is about officials setting aside a legal and correct count, especially in seats which witness close contests.

Why the system may prevail

Overturning a U.S. election result, however, would need multiple officials in many counties to compromise. In 2020, the staff held and did not succumb to pressure. County officials across the country stood by their totals, and Republican officials in key States certified results that went against Mr. Trump. This year, courts, including judges he appointed, have already refused several of his administration's demands. Whether officials hold firm again, under heavier pressure, will be what the next two months show.

India has a different election system that depends on public trust in the integrity of a single Election Commission. This may bring speed and uniformity but it rests heavily on the credibility of the three commissioners and their selection. This year's special revision of electoral rolls, which critics say left out many eligible voters, shows how quickly that trust can be strained. In both democracies, the argument has shifted from the ballot box to the voter list and the referee. India would do well to watch how U.S. referees hold up in the weeks after November 3.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Political theatre

History demonstrates that symbolic trials are highly effective when deployed precisely (Page 1, November 1, 'INDIA bloc adopts 'motion to impeach' CEC'). The Russel Tribunal, established in late 1966 culminated in meticulous public hearings that shattered Washington's monopoly on the narrative around the Vietnam War. Similarly, the Permanent Peoples' Tribunal on the Philippines stripped Marcos regime of international legitimacy when domestic courts were entirely compromised. These precedents prove that mock sessions are not dead ends; they pave the way for sustained accountability in the court of public opinion.

M. Jameel Ahmed
Mysore

Unwarranted attack

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's criticism of the Opposition as an "*Avrodh Paksh*" raises questions about democratic accountability. The Opposition may use symbolic protests, but questioning the government and demanding answers are its constitutional duties. Allegations of electoral irregularities deserve transparent examination rather than political counterattacks. After more than a decade in power, Mr. Modi should demonstrate confidence in democratic institutions instead of portraying critics as obstructive. Democracy thrives on debate, dissent and accountability, not political branding. Mr. Modi must remember that criticism of the government is not criticism of India.

T. Kailash Ditya
Hyderabad

Erratic Gambhir

After scoring a vital 45 of just 19 balls in the third T20 against the Kiwis, Vaibhav Suryavanshi was surprisingly dropped for both the fourth and fifth T20s, raising serious questions about India's selection policy. When a youngster demonstrates exceptional talent and the ability to outclass experienced players through sheer skill, he deserves confidence and continuity. Gautam Gambhir must recognise that Suryavanshi is no longer just a boy but a cricketer capable of shouldering responsibility. Young players need opportunities, encouragement and trust, not uncertainty after every performance.

A.P. Thiruvadi
Chennai

To read more letters online, scan the QR code.
Letters emailed to letters@thehindu.co.in must carry the full postal address and the full name or the name with initials.

An energy revolution in the making



Pralhad Joshi
is Union Minister for New and Renewable Energy, Government of India & President of ISA Assembly

More than 21 lakh of the 65 lakh homes with PM Surya Ghar rooftop solar have received a zero electricity bill. Life for young Indians, once marked by monthly bills and regular power cuts, has seen a sea change. Now, they ask how an inverter works, what a battery costs, and whether AI can run decentralised solar. Such questions are creating engineers, entrepreneurs, skilled technicians, and informed citizens. India is raising its first generation of power producers and innovators, and I believe they will shape our energy economy for Viksit Bharat by 2047.

This rests on a decade of initiatives led by Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi. In the last 12 years, India has achieved both speed and scale, with installed solar capacity up by around 6007%, from 2.8 GW in 2014 to 171 GW today. Solar power that cost around ₹8 a unit in 2014-15 now sells for as low as ₹2.15, thanks to an ecosystem, including PM-KUSUM scheme, built on the vision to achieve 500 GW of installed power capacity from non-fossil fuel sources by 2030. India stands as the only G20 country to have met its 2030 target of 50% non-fossil capacity five years early. This first chapter has proved that solar works for Indian households.

Now, the second will take agri-photovoltaics to farmers under PM-KUSUM 2.0, pair storage with solar, prioritise State-level green corridors, deepen rooftop solar penetration, and digitise our networks for more renewables. Our 500 GW commitment needs $220 billion investment - $150 billion domestic and $70 billion as FDI. Capital, manufacturing, storage, and people will decide how well we do it, along with Global South partners.

Solar power that cost close to ₹10 a unit in 2014 now sells for as low as ₹2.15, thanks to an ecosystem built on the vision to achieve 500 GW of installed power capacity from non-fossil fuel sources by 2030

Capital comes first. The first milestone of one lakh PM Surya Ghar solar installations took months; now, we achieve the number every six days. Under PM-KUSUM, our 'annadata' has become our 'urjadata' too, with over 30 lakh standalone solar pumps installed. The private sector will lead the build-out, with our States as partners, by building parks such as Khavda, the world's largest hybrid renewable energy park. Next, rooftops and pumps must become a bankable asset class with a clear pipeline for Indian and foreign pension funds and institutional investors.

Manufacturing is next. The PLI scheme brought high-efficiency module-making home. The capacity of solar module now exceeds 225 GW and around 45 GW of cells. Investment must now go into cells, wafers, and polysilicon. The National Green Hydrogen Mission is building an electrolyser industry for 5 million tonnes a year by 2030.

Storage comes third. The Central Electricity Authority sees a need for 236 GWh of batteries by 2031-32, and the Cabinet-approved third phase of the Green Energy Corridor will support 50 GWh with ₹50,000 crore and new transmission.

The last but most important is people. Rooftop solar creates significantly more jobs than ground-mounted projects. It requires local teams for surveying, designing, installing, connecting and servicing the systems – taking green jobs beyond major cities to places closer home for lakhs of youth. It also employs a high share of women. Our 500 GW target and the Green Hydrogen Mission could also support lakhs of full-time-equivalent jobs by 2030.

Under India's 2023 G20 Presidency, the African Union joined the G20 permanently, and leaders agreed to work towards tripling renewables capacity by 2030. This September, as BRICS Chair, we saw the New Delhi Declaration adopted unanimously, backing a BRICS Solar PV Cooperation Roadmap and principles for smart grids and storage.

The International Solar Alliance, launched by India and France in Paris in 2015, turns that agenda into delivery. The first 1,000 GW of global solar power took 25 years; the next came in two. With 130 signatory and member countries, ISA is helping build skills through a Global Capability Centre, an AI-driven ISA Academy, and centres of excellence in 17 countries, with capital from the $200-million Africa Solar Facility, managed with Africa50.

The Bharat Renewable Energy Summit & Expo 2026 at Bharat Mandapam on November 2-5, to be inaugurated by the Hon'ble Prime Minister, will host, for the first time, the Ninth ISA Assembly and the Fourth International Conference on Green Hydrogen together. With the participating countries and institutions, we will discuss what solar can do for them and how they can achieve reliable power, energy security without imported fuel, and food security through solar irrigation, all in the spirit of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam.

Reading and reality



Mini Krishnan
is co-ordinating editor, Tamil Nadu Textbook & Educational Services Corporation

Seventy-two years ago when the National Academy of Letters, the Sahitya Akademi, was established to serve as the central institution of literary dialogue, and promotion of Indian writing, Pandit Nehru, who served as its first President, said that he would not allow the Prime Minister to interfere in the functioning of the Literary Akademi of India.

Tagore said that literature is the surplus of civilization, but what if most of the citizens of this country are illiterate? Does this mean that their stories do not count? They do count, of course, but what training are we giving our students about living for those who never get an education? Why are students trained right through school to focus solely on the material sciences and subjects thus growing up in environments where they are either repeatedly told that languages and the people who fashioned them do not count or where it is implied that you do not need to exert either mind or imagination to make language skills a part of you? So what happens then is that that side of a child's consciousness dies very slowly. I mention this because one of the aims of writing, and publishing books, journals, newspapers is about consciousness raising. How do we decide what could realistically meet the demands of schools and colleges and be taught in a classroom?

With culture studies influencing literature courses, the language and literature fraternities could form the door of awareness raising, holding hands to design a curriculum for India that could integrate through education. Teachers everywhere are perfectly aware that we stand divided by language, religion, class, and caste. Cutting right across all these divisions is gender. What is it to be a woman in India? Not someone who has the freedom to do the work she enjoys doing or marry whom she may but someone who is still in the grip of medieval mindsets built largely by the women in her own family.

With culture studies influencing literature courses, the language and literature fraternities could form the door of awareness raising,

Literature courses could be the hinge that lets life from both sides flow in opposite directions.

While discussing untouchability in a civics or modern history class, why not read texts by Dalit writers in a Literature course to the benefit and better understanding of both Dalit and non-Dalit teachers and students? *"With lava from my belly I will script a new geography"* said Chittaranjan Das, the Odia poet. *"Can you deny that new sunrise?"* asked Sharankumar Limbale, and Telugu Tenati Suri said, *"Here comes God/ Riding his wooden horse/ Ask him about wages fellows/ Tell him we don't have enough to eat"*. Sukeerta Rani (Tamil) says, *"who smell faintly of meat and my house where bones hang ... are all at the furthest point of our town."* A generation ago writing by Dalits was considered unfit to print. Today, many – particularly students – are reading them with a sense of shock and finding out that the world's biggest informal arrangement of slavery had been, for centuries, not only well and alive in India but also taken for granted as being in the fitness of things.

In 2009, a textbook for Calicut University carried the poem quoted below. Apparently the students liked the poem but the teachers did not.

Come, let us divide up the moon
We have divided up the earth
We have divided up the sky
We have divided up the gods
We have divided up the priests
We have divided up the mosques
We have divided up the Shivalayas
Most of the work is done
Now let us divide up the moon.

This is Karan Singh's translation of a poem in Dogri by Padma Sachdev. In the same book were selected verses from Namdeo Dhasal's *The Tree of Violence*; but in the next round of prescriptions, this book was replaced by one in which the mandated excerpt on injustice and discrimination was from *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. That was slavery from a comfortable distance. One wonders what any student learnt from it.

At least three generations have believed that History, Sociology, Literature, and the like are not for the tremendously talented but for those who couldn't get past the gates to something 'better'. With xenophobia sweeping the world, students of Literature might yet save the day. Therefore there is a need for invisible bridges that writers and translators build to introduce Indian students through stories written in different languages, to each other, so that they might, empathetically, break barriers generations before them never did.

Are we not the stories we tell ourselves?

Trump and Republicans in for a drubbing in mid-terms

A forecasting model suggests the Democrats could win 230 of the 435 seats in the House and 18 of the 35 seats being contested in the Senate

DATA POINT

Sambavi Parthasarathy Srinivasan Ramani

On Tuesday, Americans vote in mid-term elections, halfway through Donald Trump's second term. Since January 2025, Republicans have controlled both chambers of Congress, though by thin margins. In the House of Representatives, they hold 218 of the 435 seats against 214 for the Democrats, with one independent and two vacancies. In the Senate, the Republicans hold 53 seats to the Democrats' 45, with two independents caucusing with the Democrats. Polls suggest the Republicans are on the verge of losing both.

House members serve two-year terms, so all 435 seats are up for election. Senators serve staggered six-year terms, with a third renewed every two years. This year, 35 Senate seats are going to polls.

Polling averages put Mr. Trump's approval rating at a low 37%, with nearly 60% disapproving, a net deficit of over 20 points **(Chart 1)**. He began his term with more Americans approving than disapproving but this flipped in March 2025 and the gap between disapproval and approval has widened steadily since.

Mr. Trump's handling of the economy is largely responsible for the Republicans' gloom. By announcing, suspending and reimposing tariffs on a whim, his administration has kept businesses and consumers guessing. The strikes on Iran and Tehran's retaliatory disruption of shipping through the Strait of Hormuz have sent fuel prices soaring. The average price of regular gasoline (petrol), which was under $3 a gallon at the start of 2026, has stayed above $4 for much of the year, the highest since 2022 **(Chart 2)**. It is not a surprise that 84% of registered voters say the economy is "very important" to their vote, ahead of the future of democracy (73%), healthcare (68%), education (62%) and immigration (59%) **(Chart 3)**.

This has put the Republicans on the back foot. ElectIt, a forecasting model developed by Gary King of Harvard University with Danny Ebanks and Jonathan Katz, combines a statistical model built on every congressional election since 1946 with district and State-level polls, giving more weight to recent ones. Its ratings are stark. In the House, 185 seats are rated safe for the Democrats (a better than 99% chance of winning), 35 likely Democratic and 10 leaning Democratic: 230 in all, well above the 218 needed for a majority. Eleven seats are toss-ups. The Republicans are favoured in 194: 24 leaning, 79 likely and 91 safe. **(Chart 4)**

The Senate contest is closer, but here too, the Democrats lead. Of the 35 seats in play, the Democrats are favoured in 18 (six safe, nine likely and three leaning), two are toss-ups, and the Republicans are favoured in 15 (two leaning, six likely and seven safe). Since only 13 of the seats being contested are held by Democrats, this implies a gain of five. Added to the 34 Democratic-aligned Senators not up for re-election, that would give them 52 seats, a majority even without the toss-ups. As of November 1, the model gave the Democrats a 94% chance of winning the House and a 75% chance of taking the Senate.

This is not surprising as the President's party usually suffers in mid-terms. Since 1978, it has gained House seats in a mid-term only twice, in 1998 and 2002. That said, polls in the Trump era have repeatedly underestimated Republican support (in 2020, by about four points on the margin), though the error was largest when Mr. Trump was on the ballot. Mid-term polling in 2018 and 2022 was far closer to the mark. The Democrats' lead of about 51% to 42% on the generic ballot is wide enough to absorb a 2020-sized error. **(Chart 5)** The Republican hold on Congress is most likely ending.

Red retreat?

The data were sourced from the Pew Research Centre, the ElectIt database by Harvard University, the U.S. Energy Information Administration, and Nate Silver's Silver Bulletin. Generic ballot in Chart 5 refers to polls where voters were asked the party they were likely to vote instead of specific local candidates



CHART 1: Donald Trump's approval rating has plummeted during his second term as President

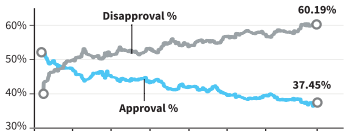


CHART 2: Average gasoline prices remained $4 for much of 2026, the highest since 2022

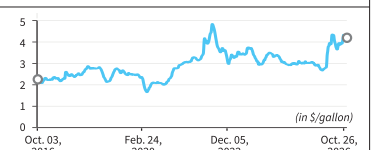


CHART 3: Issues rated as important to their vote in 2026 by 50% or more of registered voters

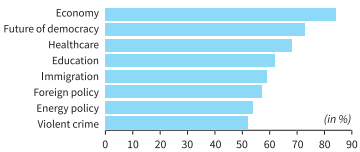


CHART 5: Democrats lead in the generic ballot by about nine percentage points

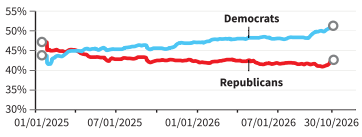
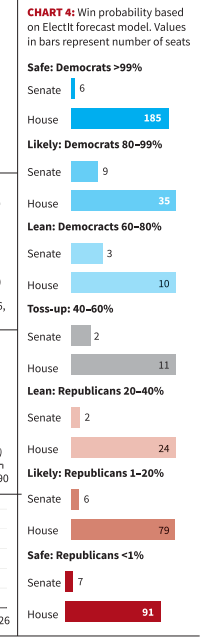


CHART 4: Win probability based on ElectIt forecast model. Values in bars represent number of seats



FROM THE ARCHIVES

The Hindu

FIFTY YEARS AGO NOVEMBER 2, 1976

"Image of Police Depends on S.I.s."

MADRAS, Nov. 1.: The Governor, Mr. Mohanlal Sukhadia, to-day told the Police that success or failure in their performance ultimately depended on the sincerity of purpose and character of the individual police officer.

He said the challenge of crime and disorder of ever-increasing volume and complexity could be met only if the Police force was highly trained.

Inaugurating the first course of training for Sub-Inspector cadets at the Police Training College, Ashok Nagar, the Governor said there was a constant feeling that a gap existed between public expectation and police performance. The aim of training should be to narrow down the gap and improve Police performance to a degree that generated widespread public satisfaction. Training, apart from being functional at all levels, should improve professional competence and build up the character of the trainees, he said.

The image of the Police department depended upon the efficient and honest functioning of the Sub-Inspectors who came in contact with the people. Their proper behaviour was of utmost importance.

He hoped that the instructors would be able to instil the right attitude and necessary dedication in the trainees and help them serve the people with a new spirit of zeal and determination. Mr. P. K. Dave, Adviser to Governor, presiding, stressed the need to ensure protection to the weaker sections against exploitation and denial of rights and liberties.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO NOVEMBER 2, 1926

Jam Factory's Fate

The Jam Factory, over which the Government spent an enormous sum of money, has been for a long time under padlock and finally it has been decided by the Government to send away a part of the costly machinery to the Government Dairy Farm at Hosur in Salem District. A part of it will be placed at the disposal of Sir Frederick Nicholson, who is expected here from Europe in March next, to carry on further research work of the best and the easiest methods of utilising the fruits for jams. There are approximately 7,000 lbs. of jams in the factory which will be sold before the buildings are handed over to the Sub-Collector for his office and Court.

Text&Context

THE HINDU

NEWS IN NUMBERS

Rise of India's power consumption in October

21.88 in per cent. India's power consumption grew 21.88% year-on-year to 159.76 billion units (BU) in October, fuelled by increased commercial and industrial demand amid ongoing festival season and use of cooling appliances across the country. PTI

Year-on-year rise in production recorded by Coal India

19.3 in per cent. Coal India Ltd (CIL) on Sunday said its coal production rose 19.3% year-on-year to 67.2 million tonnes (MT) in October. CIL had produced 56.4 MT in the same month last year, according to provisional data filed with the stock exchanges. PTI

Number of triathletes who participated in Ironman 70.3 Goa

2,000 Over 2,000 triathletes from 30 countries plunged into the sea off Miramar beach here on Sunday as CM Pramod Sawant flagged off Ironman 70.3 Goa. The race has emerged as an international sporting attraction for Goa. PTI

Volunteers who helped build 108 stupas in Bhutan

40,000 Tens of thousands of volunteers took part on Sunday to build 108 Buddhist stupas in Bhutan, marking the Himalayan kingdom's ambitious plans for a "mindfulness" city aimed at driving economic growth. AFP

Petitioners to whom citizenship is to be provided to by Bengal

2.5 in lakh. West Bengal Chief Minister Suvendu Adhikari on Sunday asserted that the government would expedite hearing and provide citizenship under the CAA to 2.5 lakh petitioners in the State by December 31. PTI

COMPILED BY THE HINDU DATA TEAM

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The unending purge in Xi's China

China's Fifth Plenum confirmed the expulsion of 33 Central Committee members, including 16 Generals, signalling that Xi Jinping's anti-corruption purge is far from over; the purge has raised questions about PLA leadership and combat readiness, while Xi's succession plans remain unclear ahead of 2027 Party Congress

EXPLAINER

Ananth Krishnan

The story so far:

A four-day meeting of China's ruling Communist Party, which concluded in Beijing on October 29, ended with one key message – there is likely to be no end in sight to the ongoing anti-corruption purges that have roiled vast swathes of China's political and military establishments. The CPC's Fifth Plenum, an annual meeting that is one of the party's last major gatherings before its once-in-five-year congress convenes next autumn, confirmed that as many as 33 members of the Party's Central Committee, including 16 Generals of the People's Liberation Army (PLA), had been expelled from the party. Only 279 members of the Central Committee of the full 376 appointed to the body at the 20th Party Congress in 2022 were present at the meeting in Beijing.



Members of the Politburo Standing Committee during the Fifth Plenary session on October 29. AP

What were the outcomes of the plenum?

A communique issued after the meeting said the party adopted a resolution on "Certain Major Issues concerning Persevering with Full and Rigorous Party Self-Governance", adding that it was "unanimously agreed that the Central Committee with Xi Jinping at its core demonstrated tremendous political courage and a strong sense of responsibility in confronting the grave situation marked by weak, hollow, and watered-down Party leadership, lax, superficial, and ineffective self-supervision and self-governance, as well as some startling problems within the Party."

The body had "introduced the most stringent measures and dedicated continuous efforts to tackle all these prominent issues", a result of which "the problem of lax and weak self-supervision and self-governance has been addressed at the root, unhealthy tendencies that had long gone unchecked have been curbed, deep-seated problems that had plagued the Party for years have been remedied, and serious dangers hidden within the Party, the state, and the military have been removed." At the same time, the communique signalled that the crackdown that has already removed hundreds of top officials had not abated, saying that it was needed to "persevere with full and rigorous Party self-governance from the strategic perspective of consolidating the Party's long-term governing position and realising the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation." "We must build firm confidence, maintain resolve, and adopt higher standards and more concrete measures to carry forward the valuable experience of full and rigorous Party self-governance in the new era, handle and resolve the prominent problems in Party building, and consolidate and develop the sound political situation formed through Party self-supervision and self-governance," it added.

What are the implications for the party's future and the succession question?

The plenum announced that the party would hold its 21st Party Congress in the second half of 2027, likely to be in October or November. The meeting will mark 15 years of Mr. Xi's rule, and likely mark the start of an unprecedented fourth five-year term. Still unclear is the question of who is likely to eventually succeed Mr. Xi, who will be 79 at the end of an expected fourth term. The "dilemma" he faces, observed Neil Thomas, Senior Fellow on Chinese Politics, Centre for China Analysis at the Asia Society Policy Institute (ASPI), in an analysis on the plenum, is that "concentrating authority in himself makes it harder to cultivate someone capable of inheriting it."

If anti-corruption was one message, the other was that Mr. Xi remains fully in charge. Briefing the media after the plenum, Tang Fangyu, head of the party's Policy Research Office, was at pains to point out that Mr. Xi, as "chief of the document drafting group, personally planned, guided throughout the process, and set the overall vision." The plenum announced a long list of officials who had been removed from the Party and the military. Among them were two Politburo members, Ma Xingrui and Zhang Youxia. The latter was also Vice Chairman of the Central Military Commission. Also removed were Liu Jianchao, former head of the CPC's International Department and a senior diplomat, and Jin Zhuanglong, former Minister of Industry.

What does it mean for China's economy?

The biggest concern for the Chinese public remains the state of the economy. The continuing real estate slowdown has left sentiment depressed with massive spillover effects, given the concentration of most people's savings in the real estate sector. There are serious concerns on jobs, with disruption from AI further dampening hiring.

There is also a view in China that the strict corruption crackdown has slowed projects, leading to a paralysis in decision-making. The party appeared to respond to that sentiment, with a state media report following the plenum posing the question "if comprehensive strict governance of the Party is hindering economic and social development, or is it safeguarding and promoting economic and social development?" Mr. Xi, the report said, told the plenum that "if comprehensive strict governance of the Party has any impact on economic and social development, then that impact is positive rather than negative."

The post-plenum communique called on officials "to move faster to foster a new pattern of development, make full and proper use of macro policies, tap deeper into the potential of domestic demand, further deepen reform and opening up, and pursue sustained and high-quality economic growth driven by innovation." Officials will have to work on those tasks under the continuing gaze of anti-corruption officials who clearly remain as active as ever.

What light has the plenum shed on China's military?

Nowhere has the extent of the corruption crackdown been as evident as in the top leadership of the military. As the ASPI analysis of the plenum noted, of 44 uniformed officers elected as full Central Committee members in 2022, only two remain. Among those is General Zhang Shengmin, who led anti-corruption investigations in the military and is now the only other serving member of the Central Military Commission (CMC), the top body headed by Mr. Xi. All other Generals on the body have remarkably been purged.

"Xi's civilian purges are record-breaking, but the scale of his evisceration of the PLA top brass is in a category of its own," the analysis noted. "It raises serious questions about organisational leadership and combat readiness, even as China continues to unveil formidable new military hardware."

The plenum announced that two Lieutenant Generals Zhong Shaojun and Fang Yongxiang were expelled from the Central Committee. Both served as directors of the CMC's General Office, a key nodal body through which Mr. Xi, as CMC Chairman, commands the military. If the crackdown first removed Generals who were seen as having links to former leaders, it has since moved on to officers who have served with Mr. Xi for many years and those promoted by him, who are also facing the axe.

THE GIST

- Xi Jinping has defended the anti-corruption drive as necessary to strengthen Party discipline and remove deep-seated problems within the political and military establishments
- China's economic slowdown, real estate crisis and weak job market have added to public concerns, while the crackdown is also seen as slowing projects and decision-making
- The purge has extended to officers who served with and were promoted by Xi, suggesting that even long-standing ties to the President offer no protection from the crackdown

What does the Binance hack mean for investors?

Who was responsible for the Binance hack, and what do investigators know about the attackers?

Sahana Venugopal

The story so far:

One of the world's top cryptocurrency exchange platforms, Binance, was hit by a cyberattack on October 29 that led to the loss of assets valued at over $6 billion.

How did the Binance hack take place?

On October 30, after independent crypto trackers posted warnings, Binance announced that it was aware of reports of a "potential security issue," but assured users that their funds were safe.

Binance then moved to pause deposits and withdrawals, promising they would resume after the security checks were complete – ideally within 48 hours. Deposits were later enabled again.

Hours later, Binance shared that the "security incident" led to estimated losses totalling around $6.3 billion. Adding that it worked with industry partners and other blockchain companies in order to freeze the stolen assets, Binance announced that around $3 billion had been frozen on-chain. Stablecoin companies Circle and Tether, which issue a more stable cryptocurrency pegged to the value of the U.S. dollar, said they froze assets linked to the hack.

Tether's CEO reported that Tether froze more than 1.567 billion USDT, while Circle's CEO announced that the company had frozen more than 800 million USDC. However, these statements have alienated some customers who believe in a 100% decentralised crypto system, where corporate leaders do not get involved in recovering other companies' lost funds. Some crypto advocates, though, classified this as proof of the industry coming together to mitigate cybercrimes.

According to Binance's initial investigation, the hack "may involve a compromised DevOps engineer's laptop," through which the attacker was able to access a service container and submit unauthorised withdrawal transactions.

Binance co-CEO Richard Teng defended the company's security protocols on social media. Mr. Teng stressed that the hack was a complex one, and that the attacker did not use a sole engineer's permissions or exploit a "one-click" action. Binance later disclosed "additional points of breach."

Binance said it found no evidence of any wallet private keys being leaked, and committed to sharing a detailed technical post-mortem once the facts were verified.

Binance committed to covering the stolen funds through its Secure Asset Fund for Users (SAFU) and the corporate treasury. While $5 billion of the funds were already held in the exact token assets that were impacted, per the company, it is buying the remaining amount in token assets through market channels and OTC channels.

Who is behind the Binance hack?

The Binance hackers and their motives have not yet been confirmed. However, multiple crypto hackers have the backing of hostile states, with North Korean hackers often targeting crypto exchanges as a way to get around economic sanctions. The 2024 multi-million-dollar WazirX exchange hack, for example, was attributed to the North Korean Lazarus Group. Binance did not initially name a perpetrator or accuse any individuals. However, blockchain analytics platform Chainalysis said it observed funds, which were stolen by North Korea in another exploit, commingling with funds stolen from Binance. "We have a high degree of confidence that DPRK is responsible for the $6.4 billion hack of Binance," posted Chainalysis on X, attributing the attack to the TraderTraitor cybercrime group which has links to the Lazarus Group.

However, according to Chainalysis, the pattern of laundering the stolen assets suggested that the attackers were using automation to cover their tracks and loop funds through repeated addresses.

What does this mean for the sector?

Crypto hacks generally trigger widespread panic and anger; many traders know they are investing in a largely unregulated market and have few legal protections during a crisis. This time, social media users reacted with anger over learning that a compromised employee laptop was part of the security lapse. The Binance hack rattled the crypto markets, with the Bitcoin, Ethereum's Ether, and Binance-linked BNB cryptocurrencies seeing noticeable but not drastic price drops.

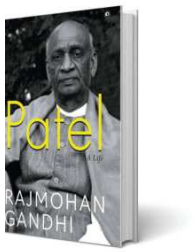
While Binance promised to weather the storm, it has already faced legal heat across jurisdictions. Take the U.S. Treasury, which in 2023 announced historic settlements with the exchange over its failure to stop and report suspicious transactions with terrorists, ransomware attackers, money launderers, criminals, and users in Iran, North Korea, Syria, and the Crimea region of Ukraine.

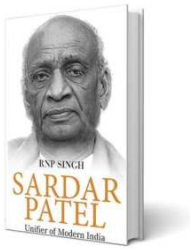
Now, the fact that the world's largest crypto exchange was exploited for billions of dollars will undoubtedly complicate Binance's already contentious operations.

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Students offer prayers to a portrait of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. PTI







Sardar Patel and the many facets of his political legacy

From playing a major role in integrating princely states into the Indian Union to advocating Hindu-Muslim coexistence, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel's legacy is more complex than his popular Iron Man image suggests

Ziya Us Salam

Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, whose 151st birth anniversary falls on October 31, 2026, was many things to many people. For some, he was the robust foil to Jawaharlal Nehru's gentleness and urbane eloquence. For others, he was a son of the soil who deserved to be Prime Minister but sacrificed his ambition for the larger good of the nation. For some, he was a "unifier" who played a major role in integrating 500 princely states into the Indian Union, making a cohesive modern India possible. For others, he was a right-wing proponent in a centrist party.

Still highly relevant

The answers are no longer blowing in the wind. They come in fits and starts, in nuggets and specks, in Rajmohan Gandhi's *Patel, A Life*, a reprint of the book originally published by Navajivan in 1991. In the preface to the new edition, published by Aleph, Gandhi writes, "We are in another age now...Patel, who had been dead for more than 40 years when this book first appeared, has now been gone for seventy-five years. He is still highly relevant. However, our times are radically different from what they were when Vallabhbhai Patel...lived in his history-making times. At times today, politicians, journalists, and makers of videos and films drag the characters of Patel – and Gandhi and Nehru – into our current controversies."

What Gandhi leaves unsaid is the political appropriation of Patel by the ruling dispensation, which shares an ideological affinity with the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) – ironically, the organisation Patel banned following the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi.

Gandhi's text is illuminating and his research throws much new light on the first Home Minister of India. While giving plenty of space to tracing the rise of Patel from a middle-class background in Gujarat, Gandhi also examines the making of his Iron Man image. Biographer R.N.P. Singh, for instance, compares Patel to Bismarck in *Sardar Patel: Unifier of Modern India*. Gandhi, however, essentially portrays Patel as a great humanist.

Countering the communal discourse

As he writes of the calamitous days of Partition, "No human heart could react with equal anguish to every cruelty of 1947 – neither Patel's nor Jawaharlal's nor Azad's. Vallabbhai's was a Hindu heart. He was, unquestionably, roused more by reports of fifty Hindu or Sikh deaths than by another fifty Muslim deaths. But his hand was just. Patel agonized over Hindu and Sikh suffering but punished Hindu and Sikh offenders."

Early in the book, at the end of the preface to the new edition, Gandhi counters the communal discourse often associated with Patel, writing, "What should we make of continual attempts today to misuse or exploit Patel for political purposes? It is hurtful to encounter bids to use the Sardar to promote a politics of Hindu supremacy and Muslim subordination."

Relationship with Gandhi

Patel was a hero not merely because he had an independent view of India's age-old pluralism, or that he used his powers of persuasion and intimidation to make the princely states fall in line. He was a hero because he put the word of the Father of the Nation ahead of all else; even ahead of his own desire to lead the newly independent nation. As Gandhi writes, "Vallabhbhai could have retired in a blaze of glory and escaped the need to concede Nehru's primacy. Yet at their last meeting the Mahatma had enjoined him to stay at Nehru's side, and the national interest too seemed to ask for it. The Constitution was being framed. Mergers of states were incomplete. India needed to see Patel and Nehru together....Rejecting the temptation to quit and grumble, Vallabhbhai chose to remain in second place and work."

The doughty fighter that Patel was, he followed Gandhi's advice out of respect for him. As he said in Benares in November 1948, "I was Gandhi's obedient soldier. I followed him because our convictions tallied."

Unsurprisingly, when Gandhi fell to Nathuram Godse's bullets, Patel not only termed it "an everlasting blot", but also moaned that "we can never forget or forgive ourselves that it was one of our own misguided young men who did it." Here, by "one of us", he probably meant the RSS, an organisation whose discipline greatly impressed Patel. Yet he banned the RSS following the Mahatma's assassination and lifted the ban when the organisation agreed to respect the tricolour as the national flag ahead of the Bhagwa dhwaj, the saffron flag, and devote itself to cultural activities.

The idea of shared living

As today, there were votaries of a Hindu Rashtra back then, too. Patel would have none of it, dismissing the idea as "that mad idea", as Gandhi recounts in the book. This is also repeatedly referred to in P.N. Chopra's 15-volume series on Patel. Called *The Collected Works of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel*, published by Konark, the series is like an encyclopedia on the life and times of the Sardar.

While giving ample space to his views on capitalism, and why it was needed to generate wealth in a poverty-stricken nation, the series also talks of what shared living meant to Patel. In volume 15, Chopra says, "Sardar Patel exhorted Hindus and Muslims to live together. In a speech at Hyderabad, he asked the Hindus to forget the past and the Muslims not to harbour any bitterness towards their brethren....Whatever happens in Pakistan has its reactions here and it is this action and reaction which had to be checked....Let us live as decent men – either Christians, Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs or Parsees. No religion prospers which is based on intolerance."

This plurality was dear to his heart. As he expressed in a speech, barely 18 months after Independence, "The first requisite for building a strong, free India is unity and peace." In the speech, which finds space in a Penguin publication titled *Selected Speeches and Writings of Vallabhbhai Patel*, he goes on to state, "For unity we must forget differences of caste or creed and remember that we are all Indians; and all equal." In the same speech, Patel criticised the RSS for demanding a Hindu Rajya. "There are as many Muslims in this country as in the part that has been partitioned away. We are not going to drive them away. It would be an evil day if we started that game...," he said.

Incidentally, he was also critical of the "Hinduism is in danger" mantra of the RSS. As Chopra's book says, "They do not realise that Hinduism is in danger because Hindus have not followed Hinduism. They take wrong means....It is equally dangerous to form a party or to lay down a programme on a religious basis. The days of religious bigotry are gone. Now that the country has got freedom, for anybody to say that any religion is in danger is a very dangerous precedent to set up."

With his clarity of thought and width of vision, Patel, as Singh writes, "left his mark not only on the map of India but also on the minds of her people".

THE DAILY QUIZ

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

National Unity Day (Rashtriya Ekta Diwas) is celebrated every year on October 31. A quiz on the facts about the day

N. Kesavan

QUESTION 1
Why is National Unity Day celebrated every year in India?

QUESTION 2
When was Rashtriya Ekta Diwas introduced by the government?

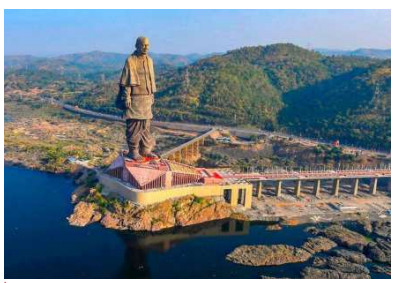
QUESTION 3
What was the core objective of the day?

QUESTION 4
Name one of the key events conducted on National Unity Day?

QUESTION 5
When was Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel's 150th birth anniversary celebrated?

QUESTION 6
How many years did Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel serve as the Home Minister?

QUESTION 7
What is the height of the Statue of Unity (in metres), one of the world's tallest statues, overlooking Sardar Sarovar Dam in Gujarat?



Visual Question:
Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated this Statue of Unity in which year? PTI

Questions and Answers to the previous day's daily quiz: 1. Banshees are Reaper-indoctrinated versions of which species? **Ans: Asari**
2. Which composer, known for *Requiem for a Dream*, led ME3's score? **Ans: Clint Mansell**
3. What is Garrus Vakarian's favourite activity? a. Staring into the unknown b. Calibrations c. Dancing **Ans: Calibrations**
4. Name the biological weapon developed to control the Krogan population. **Ans: Genophage**
5. Fill in the blank. Quarians wear environmental suits because of a _____. **Ans: Weak immune system**
6. Who is the primary human antagonist Shepard confronts near the ending? Name the actor who voiced the character. **Ans: The Illusive Man; Martin Sheen**
7. Fill in the blank. The _____is a gigantic, worm-like creature believed to be inspired by Frank Herbert's Dune. **Ans: Thresher Maw**
Visual: Identify this enormous space station that serves as a central hub for galactic politics. **Ans: Citadel**
Early Birds: Arjun Debnath | Erfanally Oosmany | Dodo Jayaditya | Pulkit Sathe | Arun Kumar Singh



KNOW YOUR ENGLISH

The aisle lice rushed to exit the plane

Some couples opt for an 'airport divorce' to enjoy their own time

S. Upendran

"Is there a single word that means 'to get off the plane'?"

"The word that is frequently used is 'deplane'. Nowadays, it takes a long time to deplane."

"That's so true! Our flight to Goa was only forty minutes. It took us nearly 25 minutes to deplane."

"With the way passengers behave, it's not surprising that deplaning takes as long as the flight itself."

"You have people getting up even before the plane has come to a stop. I tell you, we Indians are terrible."

"People all over the world are doing it."

"Really? I didn't know that! Is there a word to refer to such people?"

"Yes, there is! Such people are frequently described as 'aisle lice'."

"Aisle lice! That sounds terrible."

"It's not meant to sound like a compliment. These individuals are seen to be as irritating as the parasites that get into our hair and trouble us."

"I see. How is the word used in a sentence?"

"I don't like travelling with my boss. He's an aisle lice, and very often, pushes people out of his way!"

"I'm usually the last one to deplane. I don't want to get into an argument with the aisle lice."

"That's a smart thing to do. Here's another example. The flight attendant requested several aisle lice to sit down."

"I'm sure her request fell on deaf ears."

"Probably did. We also have the term 'gate lice' to refer to people who crowd the gate at the time of boarding."

"We had quite a few gate lice when we went to Darjeeling."

"I completely forgot about your trip. Did your parents like Darjeeling?"

"They loved it. The only problem they had was at the airport. They constantly argued while they were there."

"They usually enjoy being with each..."

"Not at the airport, though. They both wanted to do different things. My father wanted to sit in one place and listen to music. My mother, on the other hand, wanted to do a bit of window shopping."

"That's an easily solvable problem. From now on, they should opt for an airport divorce. They should..."

"A divorce? Are you crazy?"

"Not a permanent divorce, but an airport divorce."

"What's an airport divorce?"

"It's a temporary break from your partner while you're at the airport. The two of you go your separate ways once you've checked in and cleared security. You spend time the way you want to."

"And I suppose you meet up just before boarding."

"Yes! Here's an example. According to my mother, if you wish to maintain peace and quiet during the flight, then you need to opt for airport divorce."

"My friends Gayathri and Shekar have been practicing airport divorce over the past two years."

"A tension-free vacation begins with an airport divorce."

"Otherwise, the divorce may be of the permanent kind!"

upendrankye@gmail.com

Word of the day

Quotidian:
found in the ordinary course of events

Synonyms: usual, commonplace, familiar, frequent

Usage: *He wanted a break from his quotidian duties.*

Pronunciation: newsth.live/quotidian

International Phonetic Alphabet: /kwɑʊtɪdɪən/

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

From Page One

CEC stole citizens' voice, will go to jail, says Rahul

"Those who came to power through U.P. will be ousted from there. And "U.P. *wallahs* (people)", who are good at welcoming, are better at giving send-offs," Akhilesh Yadav said at the protest rally.

Rashtriya Janata Dal leader Tejashwi Yadav, evoking Hindu mythology, said that while Ramlila Maidan was traditionally used to stage the Ramayana, today the Opposition had organised a "Mahabharata for those who steal votes".

Former West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee described the SIR exercise as "special intensive relief" for the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and said her State has been a victim of it.

Responding to Union Home Minister Amit Shah's recent remarks that Prime Minister Modi is "not going anywhere", Mr. Gandhi said that neither the Prime Minister nor the Union Home Minister would be allowed to "go anywhere" even if they wanted to.

He said "vote theft" had been happening in the country for years, claiming several Assembly elections, including those in Madhya Pradesh, Haryana, Chhattisgarh, and Maharashtra, were stolen through the "addition" and "deletion" of voters. The Congress leader alleged that the 2024 mandate for the Modi government was "illegal".

After the 2024 Lok Sabha election, Mr. Gandhi said 130 million voters were removed, which amounted to 15% of the total electorate, or one in every seven voters. He pointed out that the difference in vote share between the BJP-led coalition and the INDIA bloc in the 2024 elections was three percentage points.

"This is not an ordinary theft; it is not someone stealing something small from a shop... This is a theft of every citizen's voice and expression. In legal parlance, this is called a 'rarest of rare' case; this is called treason," Mr. Gandhi said, alleging that Mr. Modi and Mr. Shah would not have become Prime Minister and Home Minister without Gyanesh Kumar.

Using the metaphor of "*Shiv ji ki baraat*", where all kinds of creatures are allowed to participate, Mr. Gandhi said India has to be inclusive, where a farmer enjoys the fruits of his labour and where a student studying for 18 hours gets employment. Naming industrialist Gautam Adani, Mr. Gandhi said the Opposition will not allow all resources to be owned by a single person. "The first step to bring the nation back on track is to remove Gyanesh Kumar," he said.

The rally was attended by senior Opposition leaders, including Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge, Congress Parliamentary Party Chairperson Sonia Gandhi, National Conference patriarch Farooq Abdullah, PDP leader Mehbooba Mufti, CPI(M) general secretary M.A. Baby, CPI general secretary D. Raja, CPI(ML)L general secretary Dipankar Bhattacharya, Shiv Sena (UBT)'s Sanjay Raut, and NCP (SP)'s Supriya Sule.

A.P. braces for second cyclone within a week

Cyclone Murasu comes at a time when Andhra Pradesh is just beginning to recover from the impact of Cyclone Arnab which killed five people and submerged crops in more than 3.5 lakh hectares of land. It also damaged about 2,425 km of roads and brought down some 15,000 electric poles. The Andhra Pradesh government puts its losses at ₹4,600 crore, and officials now have little time to prepare for the next storm.

As many as 1,688 medical teams and 116 relief camps have been prepared in Andhra Pradesh districts likely to be affected by the latest cyclone, the Chief Minister's office said in a post on X.

The Health Department has also made available 13,165 emergency beds, essential medicines, and 43,672 anti-snake venom injections.

The Chief Minister on Sunday instructed authorities to mobilise adequate manpower and equipment in advance to ensure prompt restoration of essential services. He also directed officials to issue updates on the cyclone situation every four hours and asked telecom service providers to take precautionary measures to maintain uninterrupted mobile connectivity during the storm.

While it was the northern part of Andhra Pradesh that bore the brunt last week, this time, the central and southern coastal parts of the State are likely to be affected, according to the Andhra Pradesh State Disaster Management Authority (APSDMA). Officials identified 20 mandals that could experience extremely heavy rainfall, including nine mandals in Eluru district, five each in Krishna and NTR districts, and one in Bapatla district.

The IMD has put five districts in the State – SPSR Nellore, Prakasam, Guntur, Bapatla, and Krishna – on red alert for November 2. A warning has been issued to coastal districts between West Godavari and SPSR Nellore, as 100-110 kmph winds, gusting to 120 kmph, may prevail from Monday evening. When Cyclone Arnab crossed the coast near Narsapur in West Godavari district on October 28, winds gusted up to 150 kmph.

In Tamil Nadu, for the 24-hour period from 8.30 a.m. on Monday, heavy to very heavy rain is likely at isolated places over Chennai and Tiruvallur districts. The rain could be accompanied by thunderstorms and lightning, with gusty wind speeds reaching 40-50 kmph at some places.

In Odisha, the State government has identified 150 landslide-prone locations in Gajapati district alone ahead of Cyclonic Storm Murasu.

The Tamil word "Murasu" is one India's submissions to the rotating list of names for cyclones in the region and means war drums.

(With inputs from Deepa Ramakrishnan in Chennai and Satyasundar Barik in Bhubaneswar)

Restoring combat strength among priorities: IAF chief

Air Chief Marshal Ashutosh Dixit lays stress on vigilance and operational readiness, self-reliance, strategy, and unity of effort across the tri-services; highlights importance of Air Force personnel

Saurabh Trivedi
NEW DELHI

Newly appointed Air Chief Marshal Ashutosh Dixit on Sunday outlined his priorities under the acronym "VAYU", focusing on vigilance and readiness, *aatmanirbharta* (self-reliance), innovation and unity of effort.

On Saturday, he assumed charge as the 29th Chief of the Air Staff, succeeding Air Chief Marshal A.P. Singh, who retired after 43 years of service in the Indian Air Force.

Air Chief Marshal Dixit received a ceremonial guard of honour at the parade ground of the Air Force Station before formally assuming command of the force.

Emphasising the need for operational preparedness amid an evolving security environment, he said the character of warfare is being reshaped by emerging technologies and systems, including drones, long-range precision weapons, space, cyber, artificial intelligence, and the electromagnetic spectrum.

"The Air Force, while transforming into the force that India will need in the next decade, must always be ready to fight and win," he said.


Air Chief Marshal Ashutosh Dixit during the guard of honour ceremony at the Air Force Station in New Delhi on Sunday. ANI

'VAYU' framework

Under the "VAYU" framework, "V" stands for vigilance and readiness. The Air chief stressed that every squadron, radar, air defence unit and Air Warrior must be prepared to respond at a moment's notice. Restoring the IAF's combat strength to its sanctioned level would also be among his foremost priorities.

"A" stands for *aatmanirbharta* (self-reliance), with indigenous Tejas Mk1A and Mk2, Advanced Medium Combat Aircraft (AMCA), Indian sensors and weapons systems identified as key priorities. He said the force would focus on fighting with Indian solutions and ensuring adequate numbers to meet operational requirements.

"Y" represents *Yukti* (strategy) or ingenuity, with an emphasis on innovation in doctrine, procedures and technology, including networked and AI-enabled command and control systems, layered counter-drone defence, responsive maintenance, force protection and the use of near-space as an operational domain.

"U" stands for unity of effort, underscoring the importance of joint planning and operations with the Army, Navy and national agencies. He said air power delivers the greatest impact when integrated from the initial planning stage.

IAF's motto

Highlighting the importance of personnel, Air Chief Marshal Dixit said the training, professional excellence, morale, safety, welfare and dignity of Air Warriors, Agniveervayu, civilian employees, veterans, Veer Naris and their families would receive his personal attention.

Referring to Operation Sindoor, he acknowledged the leadership of his predecessor, Air Chief Marshal A.P. Singh, under whom the IAF had demonstrated what precise and decisive air power could achieve. He also thanked him for handing over a force in a high state of operational readiness.

Reassuring the country of the IAF's preparedness, he said the force remains vigilant, ready and resolute, and will continue to transform itself to deliver whenever the nation calls. "*Nabha Sparsham Deeptam*," (touch the sky with glory) he said, reiterating the IAF's motto.

GST mop-up surges 23% to ₹2.31 lakh cr. on festive demand

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

Goods and Services Tax collections jumped 23% year-on-year to the second-highest level of over ₹2.31 lakh crore in October as festive buying boosted domestic demand, according to government data released on Sunday.

October is the second consecutive month when monthly gross GST crossed ₹2 lakh crore, and second only to the record of about ₹2.43 lakh crore mop-up in April. Also, the 22.9% year-on-year growth clocked during the month is the fastest recorded pace of gross mop-up in the current fiscal year. Gross GST collections from domestic sales rose 16% to over ₹1.59 lakh crore, and revenues from imports climbed 42% to ₹72,246 crore.

The ₹2.31 lakh crore collection includes Central GST mop-up of 42,935 crore, State GST of ₹51,340 crore and Integrated GST of over ₹1.37 lakh crore, data showed. GST refunds increased 6.5% year-on-year to ₹27,934 crore in October. After adjusting for refunds, net GST collections rose 26% to over ₹2.03 lakh crore in October.

In April-October, gross GST collection grew 13.2% to over ₹14.77 lakh crore.


October is the second straight month when monthly gross GST crossed ₹2 lakh crore.

Net collections rose 13% to over ₹12.69 lakh crore.

Manoj Mishra, Grant Thornton Bharat, Partner and Tax Controversy Management Leader, said October collections capture the festive-season demand cycle, which typically brings higher consumer spending, retail activity and movement of goods across sectors.

"The focus now should be on sustaining domestic revenue growth and ensuring that the benefits of GST 2.0 translate into stronger compliance, smoother input tax credit flows and faster refunds for businesses," Mr. Mishra said.

EY India Tax Partner, Saurabh Agarwal, said the GST collections reflect the continued resilience of the Indian economy despite global headwinds.

Navy to launch ₹80,000-cr. warship project

Saurabh Trivedi
NEW DELHI

The government has given a major push to the Indian Navy's next-generation destroyer programme amid the growing maritime security challenges posed by China and Pakistan, both of which are strengthening their own underwater warfare capabilities.

The Defence Acquisition Council (DAC), chaired by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, had recently accorded in-principle approval to futuristic warships under Project 18A.

The delivery of the warships is expected to begin five to 10 years after the contract is signed, given the complexity and scale of the programme.

A senior Defence Ministry official confirmed the development. The proposed programme, estimated to cost around ₹80,000 crore, aims to develop a new generation of stealth-guided missile destroyers equipped with advanced weapons, sensors, and technologies, the official said.

The warships are expected to have nearly 75% indigenous content, with both defence public sector undertakings (DPSUs) and private sector companies eligible to participate in the competitive bidding process, the official added.

The programme assumes significance as China continues to expand its naval presence in the Indian Ocean Region and enhance its submarine fleet, while Pakistan is also strengthening its underwater warfare capabilities with the induction of advanced submarines.

The evolving security environment has underscored the need for India to strengthen its surface combat fleet and maintain a credible maritime deterrence across the Indian Ocean Region.


The next-generation destroyers are expected to substantially enhance multi-domain combat capabilities. REUTERS

Futuristic capabilities

Several existing destroyers of the Indian Navy are due for decommissioning in coming years, making the induction of advanced frontline surface combatants essential to maintaining the fleet's operational strength, the official added.

The futuristic destroyers, to be designed by the Navy's Warship Design Bureau, are expected to feature significantly more advanced systems than the Visakhapatnam-class destroyers.

These warships are likely to have enhanced firepower, sophisticated surveillance sensors, improved air defence systems, and advanced anti-submarine warfare capabilities, providing the Navy with greater operational flexibility against emerging maritime threats.

The Indian Navy currently operates around 12 or 13 relatively new guided-missile destroyers, which form the backbone of its surface combat fleet and provide capabilities across air defence, anti-surface warfare, and anti-submarine operations.

These include the Visakhapatnam-class, Kolkata-class, and Delhi-class destroyers.

The existing warships are equipped with an array of advanced weapon systems, including BrahMos supersonic cruise missiles, surface-to-air missiles, naval guns, close-in weapon systems, and anti-submarine warfare equipment.

The next-generation destroyers are expected to substantially enhance India's firepower, surveillance, and multi-domain combat capabilities.

Chandigarh will be India's first drug-free city, says Shah

The Hindu Bureau
CHANDIGARH

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Sunday said the Centre has resolved to build a drug-free India and Chandigarh will be the first city to be rid of drugs.

"Now that we have resolved to build a drug-free India, Chandigarh will be the first city in the country to become drug-free. Following the implementation of the new criminal laws, Chandigarh Police have increased the conviction rate in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances [NDPS] cases, securing the conviction of 93% of accused," he said.

"Since August 4, 2024, 8,206 FIRs have been registered in Chandigarh," Mr. Shah added.

Helicopter operators threaten to halt Char Dham services over 2-pilot rule

Ishita Mishra
NEW DELHI

Char Dham helicopter operators on Sunday threatened to suspend services from Monday after the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) and the Uttarakhand Civil Aviation Development Authority (UCADA) made it mandatory for every charter sortie to have two pilots on board, warning that the requirement would make operations financially unviable.

The two-pilot mandate for Char Dham helicopter operations was introduced following the October 30 helicopter crash in Uttarakhand's Joshimath that claimed six lives, including that of the pilot.

In a collective representation to the aviation regulators, helicopter operators sought an urgent review of the directive, arguing that its introduction without consultation would make operations unsustainable.

The operators said the two-pilot requirement would significantly increase crew, accommodation and logistical expenses. They proposed suspending Char Dham charter operations from Monday until authorities review the directive and arrive at a mutually workable solution.


Tragedy in hills: An aerial view of the site in Joshimath where a private helicopter crashed on October 30. PTI

Safety concerns

A helicopter operator, on the condition of anonymity, questioned the weather-related angle in the October 30 crash, claiming videos of the incident showed clear visibility. The operator added that the helicopter's sudden fall could point to two possibilities: a medical emergency involving the pilot or a foreign object striking the aircraft. Another operator alleged that complaints about drones and paragliding activity near temple routes had repeatedly been raised with UCADA, but went unheeded. "Even on the day of the Joshimath crash, a NOTAM (Notice to Airmen) was issued by the Army, which has a substantial presence in Joshimath," the operator said.

UCADA CEO Prateek Jain said the possibility of a drone hitting the helicopter had already been included in the investigation. He added that efforts were being made to identify the source of one of the videos of the crash in which another object was seen flying near the helicopter.

Two MLAs, including ex-Minister, quit AAP ahead of Punjab polls

The Hindu Bureau
CHANDIGARH

Ahead of the Assembly election in Punjab in 2027, two legislators, one of whom was a former Minister of the ruling Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), resigned from the party's primary membership on Sunday.

Chetan Singh Jouramajra from the Samana Assembly constituency and Harmeet Singh Pathanmajra from Sanour, both in Patiala district, said they were quitting as the party had failed to fulfil its promises made during the 2022 Assembly election.

"In Punjab, people are continuously losing their lives to drug menace," said Mr. Jouramajra, who was a Cabinet Minister and held portfolios including Health, among others.


Harmeet Singh Pathanmajra

Mr. Pathanmajra, meanwhile, is facing rape charges and a police case had been registered against him in Punjab. He was granted regular bail by the Punjab and Haryana High Court.

Meanwhile, the AAP hit out at the Bharatiya Janata Party over its attempts to induct leaders who had quit or were expelled from other parties.

Opposition rally against CEC a 'foolish drama': Nadda

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Union Health Minister J.P. Nadda on Sunday termed the INDIA bloc rally calling for the resignation of Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Gyanesh Kumar a "foolish drama". He accused the Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, Rahul Gandhi, of "rubbing salt into the wounds of Sikhs" by holding the protest on the anniversary of the 1984 anti-Sikh riots.

The protest was part of a conspiracy to surrender democracy to anarchy and disorder, and would prove to be the final "nail in the coffin" of the Congress's "political downfall", Mr. Nadda claimed.

"The day of November 1 is the ugliest and darkest blot on India's democratic history. On this very day, goons patronised by Congress massacred our innocent Sikh brothers. Thousands and lakhs of Sikh families became homeless overnight," he said, referring to the 1984 anti-Sikh riots. "This is a foolish and designed drama of people who have been defeated and repeatedly rejected by the public," he said.

Mr. Gandhi's "model of politics" involved "lying and spreading rumours" in its first stage, creating anarchy and unrest in the second, harming the economy in the third, and destabilising the elected government of the country at the behest of foreign powers in the fourth stage, he claimed.

'Empty chairs'

BJP MP Sambit Patra, in a statement, alleged that 40% of Ramlila Maidan was empty, and that around 5,000 to 7,000 chairs were vacant out of the 28,000 chairs at the venue between 3.30 p.m. and 4 p.m., questioning the Congress's claim of a 10 lakh turnout.

Congress fighting to protect 3 crore infiltrators: BJP chief

BJP takes out '*Loktantra Bachao, Arajakta Hatao*' march to counter the Opposition over its allegations; Nabin says BJP, NDA workers will ensure that infiltrators are driven out of the country

The Hindu Bureau
GURUGRAM

BJP president Nitin Nabin on Sunday accused the Congress of protecting infiltrators, claiming that three crore such people were living in the country.

He alleged that the Opposition was fighting to safeguard its own interests rather than those of Indian citizens.

Addressing a gathering during the BJP's kilometre-long '*Loktantra Bachao, Arajakta Hatao* (Save Democracy, Remove Anarchy)' march in Rohtak, Mr. Nabin said the people of Haryana knew who the infiltrators were and asserted that the BJP and the NDA would ensure that they leave the country. "As long as the BJP and the NDA workers are there, they will ensure that these infiltrators are driven out of the country. Under no circumstances will infiltrators be allowed to enjoy the rights meant for the citizens," he said.



BJP national president Nitin Nabin speaks during the '*Loktantra Bachao, Arajakta Hatao*' march in Rohtak on Sunday. ANI

The march saw participants carrying BJP flags and placards bearing slogans such as "Stop the politics of lies", "A call by democracy for attack on infiltrators", and "Modiji will not go anywhere".

Questions Rahul Gandhi

Targeting the Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, Rahul Gandhi, Mr. Nabin alleged that the former was siding with infiltrators. "You do not have faith in the country's 1.4 billion people. Whom do you trust, then? You trust three crore infiltrators. What exactly are your intentions," he asked.

The march, held on Haryana's Foundation Day, November 1, coincided with the Congress-led Opposition's "Vote *Bachao, Desh Bachao*" rally in Delhi. The BJP march was organised to counter the Opposition's allegations against constitutional institutions and its campaign over electoral rolls.

Mr. Nabin accused the Congress of disrespecting the people's mandate and targeting constitutional institutions because it had failed to secure an electoral mandate. He questioned the party's commitment to internal democracy, alleging that it was controlled by one family and that its leaders followed Mr. Gandhi's wishes.

1984 anti-Sikh violence

Referring to the 1984 anti-Sikh violence on November 1, Mr. Nabin, with an eye on the upcoming Assembly election in neighbouring Punjab, said the Congress should have apologised for the killings instead of staging protests. Invoking former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi's remark that "when a big tree falls, the earth shakes", he said the party should have expressed remorse over the deaths of Sikhs.

Protesters leave trail of graffiti, litter on road to Ramlila Maidan in central Delhi

Lavpreet Kaur
NEW DELHI

Central Delhi's roads and walls bore the marks of protest after the INDIA bloc rally on Sunday evening, with spray-painted slogans – including "Vote *chor, gaddi chor*", "Roll-back SIR", and "Illegal PM" – splashed along Minto Road, amid the flotsam and jetsam of discarded plastic bottles, torn placards, and other waste.

A walk back from Ramlila Maidan along Jawaharlal Nehru Marg and Minto Road revealed stretches littered with dust, torn banners, posters, food wrappers, and empty water bottles. On the central divider, protesters had spray-painted messages such as "Modi must go" and "Ban RSS", among others.

Even as smaller groups continued to raise slogans and protest along the footpaths, waste collectors moved in to gather empty bottles and other recyclable material for resale.

"For us, protests are an opportunity to earn some money because people throw away bottles and other things, which we can collect and sell," said a worker.

Two teenagers, also moving through the crowd with large bags stuffed with empty bottles, said they had combined attending the rally with collecting recyclable waste. "We wanted to join the protest, and my father told us to carry a bag and collect whatever plastic waste we could find. So, we are attending the rally and working at the same time," one of them said with a smile.

At Ramlila Maidan, a 'catwalk' of a different kind awaited protesters, as the rain that lashed Delhi on Thursday and Friday left parts of the ground muddy and slippery. Amid the tricolour tents, rows of chairs and flags, and a decorated stage set up for INDIA bloc leaders to address the gathering, protesters had to negotiate their way carefully across the rain-soaked ground.

'You can break a stick, not a bundle': thousands turn up for INDIA bloc rally in Delhi

Sobhana K. Nair
Lavpreet Kaur
NEW DELHI

Some travelled for nearly 48 hours on sleeper buses following the cancellation of trains. Others booked rail tickets from multiple stations to get around restrictions on bulk reservations. At least one walked in from a hospital ward. All negotiated multiple barriers on the way to Delhi, arriving from far-flung corners of the country in thousands for the INDIA bloc rally on Sunday.

The reasons that brought them to Delhi varied. For many, it was the only way to register their anger over being struck off electoral rolls. For some, it was a maiden visit to the capital. For others, it was a political pilgrimage that they hoped would bring long-anticipated change.

All of them converged on the muddy grounds of Ramlila Maidan, where white plastic chairs sank into the rain-soaked earth and shoes left deep imprints. Crowds spilled beyond the venue, with many still making their way towards the grounds even after the rally ended.

Children's future

"You can break one stick easily, but if you bundle 10 sticks together, they cannot be broken. Today's protest symbolises that bundle of sticks," said Tejender, an IT employee who had arrived with his wife from Gurugram.

He said he was attending the rally "for a better future for our children". His list of grievances ranged from the state of education and healthcare to what he described as "vote *chori*".

Sheikh Abdul Rafiq, who travelled from Adilabad in Telangana, claimed that 15,000 people had come from the State despite what he described as efforts to restrict travel. The special trains were not allowed. Bulk bookings were blocked. In the end, he said, the group decided to spend their own money to book sleeper buses. For him, the journey was worth the effort because he felt political change was just around the corner.



People showing a banner carrying names of deleted voters during the INDIA bloc march in Delhi on Sunday. SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

Flagging injustice

If Mr. Rafiq spoke of change, another Telangana resident, Abdul Kaleem from Suryapet district, said he was there only to flag the "injustice". Nearly 80% of the people in his village had lost their votes during the special intensive revision (SIR) of electoral rolls, he claimed. "I was born here; I studied here; I live here," he said, but to get his name on the electoral rolls, he needed documents concerning his father and grandfather, which his family cannot find.

Zubair, a resident of Mominpura in central Nagpur, Maharashtra, echoed the sentiment. He has been running from pillar to post to get his family members' names included in the electoral rolls, but it seemed futile. Attending protests in the capital may, perhaps, deliver what all the running around back home failed to do, he hoped. "I was here for the October 10 protests too," he said.

With an intravenous cannula still inserted in her left arm, Azka, a Delhi-based cafe owner who had spent the previous week admitted to Guru Teg Bahadur Hospital with typhoid, also arrived for the protest. "I could not attend the earlier protests because I was unwell. Today, I did not want to miss this one. I am here simply to support the people of our country who are fighting against the government's wrongdoings," she said.

For Ram Kumar, a resident of Jharkhand's Giridih, who was visiting Delhi for the first time, the rally was something of a carnival. He had travelled with a group of 60 people and was staying at a local lodge, he said. After spending the day at Ramlila Maidan, he was looking forward to exploring the capital by Metro, a mode of transport he had never used before.

Seeking signs of revival

For Anil Shukla, a Congress functionary from Sitapur in Uttar Pradesh who travelled with about 300 others in buses and arrived just in time for the rally, the campaign against the SIR was not as compelling a reason to attend as the Congress's possible revival in his State. "If we contest 75 seats, we will win 60," he said, scanning the crowd, his smile widening as more people streamed in.

West Bengal govt. notifies jobs for kin of those killed in political violence

Shiv Sahay Singh
KOLKATA

The West Bengal government on Sunday issued a notification providing jobs for family members of those killed in political violence, a day after Chief Minister Suvendu Adhikari announced the decision on Saturday while addressing a gathering in Paschim Medinipur.

"Apply to the District Magistrate. We will give Group D jobs to you," Mr. Adhikari had said, referring to the families that have been at the receiving end of political violence. The notification, signed by West Bengal Chief Secretary Manoj Agarwal on Sunday, stated that one member of the family of each person who had lost their life in political clashes would be provided employment by the State government.

The appointments will be made at the Group D level as a one-time exception, without affecting normal recruitment. The notification provides a cut-off date from 2001 onwards. Families with victims of political violence over the past 25 years can apply for government jobs. The 25 years marks approximately 11 years during which the Left Front government was in power in the State, with the remaining years when the Trinamool Congress was in power.

West Bengal has recorded several instances of political violence, particularly in panchayat elections, over the past few decades. The BJP has alleged that a large number of its supporters were targeted after the 2021 Assembly election.

The scheme has several eligibility criteria, which includes that the family's monthly income should not be more than ₹50,000. The applicant will have to provide details of the incident, along with the FIR, death certificate and relationship with the deceased.

ଓଡିଶା ସରକାର
ଭଜଗୀକ୍ଷା ବିଭାଗ

ଚାରଶ ଶ୍ରେଣୀରେ ଉପାର୍ଜୁ ୫୧୦୦୦ ମେଧାବୀ ଛାତ୍ରଛାତ୍ରୀଙ୍କୁ ଲାଭପ୍ରଦ ବିଭିନ୍ନ ଦିନାନ୍ତେ ଆର୍ଥିକ ସହାୟତା ପ୍ରଦାନ

ଉତ୍କଳିକା ମାଧ୍ୟମିକ ଶିକ୍ଷା ପରିଷଦ (CHSE) ଦ୍ୱାରା ପରିଚାଳିତ Annual Higher Secondary Examination, ୨୦୨୨ ଏବଂ Shri Jagannath Sanskrit Viswavidyalaya, Puri ୨୦୨୨ ଉତ୍କଳିକା ରେ ଉପାର୍ଜୁ ହୋଇଥିବା ଛାତ୍ରଛାତ୍ରୀଙ୍କ ମଧ୍ୟରୁ ପ୍ରୋଜ୍ୟ ବିଦ୍ୟାଳୟ ଛାତ୍ରଛାତ୍ରୀମାନଙ୍କୁ ପ୍ରୋତ୍ସାହନ ମୋତାବକ ଲାଭପ୍ରଦ ବିଭିନ୍ନ ଦିନାନ୍ତେ (Direct Benefit Transfer – DBT) ମାଧ୍ୟମରେ ୪,୩୦,୦୦୦/-ଜାର ଆର୍ଥିକ ସହାୟତା ପ୍ରଦାନ କରାଯିବ।

ଏଥିସହ, ୨୦୨୫ ମସିହାରେ ରେ ଉପାର୍ଜୁ ହୋଇଥିବା ଏବଂ ଆବେଦନ କରିପାରିଥିବା ପ୍ରୋଜ୍ୟ ଛାତ୍ରଛାତ୍ରୀମାନଙ୍କୁ ମଧ୍ୟ ପ୍ରୋତ୍ସାହନ ମାଧ୍ୟମରେ ଆବେଦନ କରିବାର ସୁଯୋଗ ପ୍ରଦାନ କରାଯିବ।

ପ୍ରୋଜ୍ୟ ବିଦ୍ୟାଳୟ ଛାତ୍ରଛାତ୍ରୀମାନଙ୍କର ତାଲିକା ଏବଂ ମାର୍ଗଦର୍ଶିକା ଉତ୍କଳିକା ବିଭାଗର ୱେବସାଇଟ www.dhe.odisha.gov.in ଓ www.scholarship. odisha.gov.in ରେ ଉପଲବ୍ଧ। ଛାତ୍ରଛାତ୍ରୀ ମାନେ ବିଭାଗ ଆଧାର କାର୍ଡ ଓ ଆଧାର ସହିତ ସଂଯୋଗ ହୋଇଥିବା ମୋବାଇଲ ନମ୍ବର ମାଧ୍ୟମରେ www.scholarship. odisha.gov.in ରେ ରେଜିଷ୍ଟ୍ରେସନ କରି ମାର୍ଗଦର୍ଶିକା ଅନୁଯାୟୀ ନିଜର ବିବରଣୀ ଦଃ ୦୨.୧୧.୨୦୨୬ ଟିକା (ଅପରାହ୍ନ ଆଉଟା ଘଣ୍ଟିକା) ଠାରୁ ୧୯.୧୧.୨୦୨୬ (ଅପରାହ୍ନ ୬ଟଣ୍ଟ ଘଣ୍ଟିକା) ମଧ୍ୟରେ ପ୍ରବାର କରିବାକୁ ଅନୁରୋଧ।

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Date of written test and interview : **7th December 2026**
Date of publication of result : **10th December 2026**
Date of provisional registration : **17th December 2026**
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Sd/-
DIRECTOR

AT : Gothapatna, PO : Malipada, Bhubaneswar - 751003, Odisha, India, Web : www.iiit-bh.ac.in

BANGALORE ELECTRICITY SUPPLY COMPANY LIMITED
(Wholly Owned Government of Karnataka Undertaking)
CIN:-U40109KA2002SGC030438

TENDER NOTIFICATION (Through KPP Portal)

BESCOM invites tender against **Enquiry No. BESCOM/2026-27/SE0504 Dated: 28.10.2026** for Providing Mechanized Housekeeping Services and Security Services, Gardeners and STP Operator to DAS, BESCOM Integrated Control Centers (BICC-1 & BICC-2) at HSR Layout & Rajajinagar.

Availability of bid document on or after **04.11.2026 from 16.00 Hrs.**

The detailed notification can be obtained from the Website: **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in.** Further details can be obtained from the office of the undersigned.

Sd/-
General Manager (DAS), BESCOM, HSR Layout, Bengaluru - 560 102.

For Electricity related complaints call: 1912
Download BESCOM Mithra Mobile APP

KARNATAKA POWER TRANSMISSION CORPORATION LIMITED
(CIN: U40109KA1999SGC025521)

No. CGM(Tech)/PS/2026-27 Date: 31.10.2026

BRIEF TENDER NOTIFICATION
(Through Karnataka Public Procurement Portal Only)

KPTCL invites Bid on electronic mode for the following works against following Enquiry Numbers.

Tender Enquiry no's & Name of the Works
1) KPTCL/2026-27/RC/WORK_INDENT4291
Dismantling, Transportation (To & Fro) Repair of Faulty Power Transformer, Assembling, Testing, Erection and Commissioning of **Repaired Power Transformer of 220kV & above Voltage class** at KPTCL Destined Station on Rate Contract Basis.
2) KPTCL/2026-27/OW/WORK_INDENT4292
Dismantling, Transportation (To & Fro), Repair of **Faulty 31.5MVA & below capacity Power Transformer,** Testing, Assembling, Erection and Commissioning of Repaired Power Transformer at KPTCL Destined Station on Rate Contract Basis.

The bids will be received through electronic tendering mode only. The details regarding participation in the e-tendering process can be obtained by logging on to the KPTCL website **https://kptcl.karanataka.gov.in** with hyperlink "E Procurement KPTCL" or to **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** on or after **03.11.2026 at 15.00 hrs.** The Last date and time for receipt of bids is **15.12.2026 at 15.00 hrs. Any extension of due date for bid submission will be intimated in the e-procurement portal.** Any details required in this regard can also be had from the Office of the undersigned during office hours.

All Corrigendum/Addendums shall be noticed by the bidder before the last date of submission of bids.

Sd/- **Chief General Manager (Tech)., KPTCL, Corporate Office, 11th Floor, Indhana Bhavana, A.R. Circle, Bengaluru-560 009.**

TAMIL NADU CONSUMERS' COOPERATIVE FEDERATION LTD., XNC-663
29/2, Arcot Road, Saligramam, Chennai - 600093.
Email ID: tnccf@tn.gov.in

E-TENDER NOTICE
E-TENDER NO: TNCCF/2026-27/05 DATE: 30.10.2026

Tamilnadu Consumers Cooperative Federation invites all India online electronic tender for Purchase of 1300 Metric Tons of Double Roasted Rava in 1 kg Packets, 1200 Metric Tons of Samba Rava" in 1 kg Packets and 1300 Metric Tons of Semiya (Vermicelli) in 200 Grams Packet for **"The Peruthalaivar Kamarajar Breakfast Scheme" for a period of 3 months from 01.01.2027.**Complete E-Tender documents can be viewed and downloaded through **https://tntenders.gov.in** and also available in **nicgep/app** free of cost **from 02.11.2026, 11.30 A.M. onwards.**

The bidders have to participate online bidding only with Digital Signature Certificate (DSC) of Class-III.

Last Date and Time for Online Submission: **02.12.2026 Upto 12.30 P.M.**

DIPR/3328/TENDER/2026 MANAGING DIRECTOR

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

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

Sealed proposals are invited from interested eligible Central/State Government PSUs for 'GIS-based Land and Infrastucture Mapping (Land Management System) for all 742 Degree Colleges under the Higher Education Department, Odisha.

The last date of submission of tender is **on or before 18.11.2026, 5 PM.** Tender received after stipulated date shall not be entertained.

The detailed RFP document containing eligibility criteria, scope of work, submission requirements, evaluation process and other terms & conditions may be downloaded from the Department website: **https://dhe.odisha.gov.in** and HIMS Portal.

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

Tenders must be sent via Speed/Registered Post/Courier to :

Deputy Secretary to Government (IT) , Higher Education Department, Lokseva Bhawan, Sachivalaya Marg, Bhubaneswar-751001 Or By **MAIL : sectionithed@gmail.com.**

11001/395/2627 OIPR-11001/11001/1/26-27/0082

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

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

Sealed proposals are invited from eligible Central/State Government Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) for creation of dedicated Wikipedia Pages for 742 Degree Colleges under the Higher Education Department, Odisha. The last date of submission of tender is **on or before 23.11.2026, 5 PM.** Tender received after stipulated date shall not be entertained.

The detailed RFP document containing eligibility criteria, scope of work, submission requirements, evaluation process and other terms & conditions may be downloaded from the Department website : **https://dhe.odisha.gov.in** and HIMS portal.

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

Tenders must be sent via Speed / Registered Post / Courier to :

Deputy Secretary to Government (IT), Higher Education Department, Lokseva Bhawan, Sachivalaya Marg, Bhubaneswar-751001 Or By MAIL : **sectionithed@gmail.com .**

11001/397/2627 OIPR-11001/11001/1/26-27/0083

INBRIEF



FPIs pull out ₹34,843 crore from Indian equities in Oct.

Foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) withdrew ₹34,843 crore from Indian equities in October, marking the second consecutive month of heavy outflows, amid concerns over higher crude oil prices, global interest rates, and the outlook on corporate earnings. However, foreign investors turned net buyers towards the end of the month, infusing around ₹6,300 crore from October 26 to 30 when compared with net outflows of nearly ₹2,700 crore in the week ended October 23. According to data from the Central Depository Services Limited, FPIs withdrew ₹35,861 crore in September. Before that, they had invested ₹20,200 crore in July and ₹29,631 crore in August. PTI

Six Indian tourists stranded in Nepal, rescue under way

Security personnel are making efforts to rescue six Indian tourists, including two women, stranded in heavy snowfall in the Shey-Phoksundo National Park area of Nepal since Saturday afternoon, officials said on Sunday. The tourists had gone to the Dho area in Shey Phoksundo Rural municipal ward no. 8, which was covered in heavy snow, according to Dolpa Chief District Officer Junu Dhakal. "We have located the area where they are stranded, and an Army helicopter is arriving to rescue them. We hope to rescue them soon," Ms. Dhakal said. The Indian tourists had ventured into the area despite warnings. PTI

Four held as Bengal STF busts inter-State drug network

Four people were arrested after the Special Task Force (STF) of the West Bengal Police busted an inter-State drug network in Kaliachak in Malda district on Saturday night. According to officials, the operation was part of the STF's ongoing crackdown on narcotics syndicates. On Saturday, an STF team intercepted a vehicle on National Highway 12 and recovered 2.688 kg of morphine, estimated to be worth around ₹3 crore. Four key operatives, including the main supplier, Sahibar Ali, were arrested. All four are residents of Malda. A case has been registered under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act at Kaliachak police station.

Search on for eight missing trekkers in Uttarakhand

The State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) initiated a search and rescue operation on Sunday for seven trekkers and one guide who went missing after being stranded on the Kedartal trek in Uttarakhand due to inclement weather. On October 27, a group of 13 people, consisting of seven trekkers and six support staff, set out from Gangotri for the Kedartal trek. A team from Gangotri had already reached the area for an initial assessment. However, heavy snowfall hindered their progress. The SDRF has now decided to conduct aerial reconnaissance and search the region using a helicopter.

Why make litigants rush to SC for early hearings, CJI asks HCs

Chief Justice's remark comes even as over 65 lakh cases remain pending in High Courts; SC has consistently respected autonomy of HCs, he says

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Chief Justice of India (CJI) Surya Kant on Sunday flagged a "growing tendency" among litigants to approach the Supreme Court with requests to speed up justice delivery in State High Courts.

"We are witnessing a growing tendency of litigants approaching the Supreme Court requesting directions for urgent listing or early hearing of matters pending before the High Courts," Chief Justice Kant said in an address at the Kerala High Court.



On stage: CJI Surya Kant and SC judge S.V.N. Bhatti at the inaugural of the Kerala High Court's platinum jubilee celebrations. R.K. NITHIN

Major backlog

His remarks are significant, as 65,54,788 cases are pending in High Courts across the country. The pendency in the Supreme Court is dangerously close to an unprecedented one-lakh mark, with a backlog hovering at 97,201 cases.

The increase in the number of judges from 34 to 38 (including the Chief Justice of India) has not stemmed the steady northward progress of pendency.

The 25 High Courts have 292 judicial vacancies against a total sanctioned strength of 1,122 as on October 6, 2026.

The CJI conveyed his anxiety about the frequency of requests from litigants for early hearing of their cases pending in High Courts.

"The Supreme Court has consistently respected the institutional autonomy of High Courts, including their authority to regulate their own rosters... Yet the frequency of such requests invites us to consider whether there is room to improve the responsiveness of our processes," he said.

The CJI said his questions must not be construed as a criticism of the institution of High Courts, but as a vocalisation of collective responsibility. The breadth of powers of the High Courts to safeguard legal rights under Article 226 of the Constitution exceeds the Supreme Court's powers under Article 32.

"We must ask ourselves – Can urgent matters be identified more effectively? Can listing procedures be made more transparent and predictable? And can we ensure that a litigant's access to timely justice does not depend upon their ability to travel to the national capital?" he asked.

Mahadev betting syndicate 'kingpin' extradited to India

Shubhomoy Sikdar
RAIPUR

Sourabh Chandrakar, one of the promoters of the illegal betting app Mahadev Online Book, has been extradited to India from Oman, a Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) spokesperson said on Sunday .

"[The] CBI, in coordination with other Central agencies, has successfully secured the extradition of Sourabh Chandrakar, the promoter of the Mahadev App illegal betting syndicate, from the Sultanate of Oman," the CBI official said.

The development comes months after Chandrakar, who is from Chhattisgarh's Durg district and has been described by investigating agencies as one of the kingpins of the alleged Mahadev Online Book betting app scam pegged at ₹6,000 crore, was traced to the Gulf country. Following an Interpol Red Corner Notice issued against him, he was located and detained by the Royal Oman Police, after which the CBI and the Enforcement Directorate (ED) sent formal extradition proposals to Oman.

The CBI official said that a team from the agency that was specially deputed to Oman had escorted Chandrakar back to India and that he would now be produced before the CBI Special Court in Raipur.



Sourabh Chandrakar

Betting syndicate

In 2024, cases related to the alleged Mahadev app scam were handed over to the CBI, while the ED has been probing the money laundering aspects linked to the cases. Investigators said that Mahadev Online Book was one of the largest illegal online betting syndicates in the country, and that it was run from outside India.

It allegedly offered illegal betting on cricket, football, card games, and other events through a network of franchised "panels" and "branches" spread across India, which enrolled users and collected stakes from them.

Minister calls on EPFO to evolve with the times

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) celebrated its 74th Foundation Day on Sunday. Inaugurating the event, Union Labour Minister Mansukh Mandaviya asked EPFO employees to focus on worker-centric innovations, adapting and building resilience, and evolving processes in tandem with changing times.

Mr. Mandaviya said the trust reposed in the organisation was reflected in the ₹32 lakh crore corpus accumulated through contributions from more than eight crore members. He added that social security must be driven by human sensitivity and every concern and grievance of workers must be addressed with compassion.

Union Labour Secretary Chandra Bhushan Kumar said the EPFO strengthened India's social security framework, creating a model worth emulating. "Social protection and labour reforms must reach not just the organised sector, but also unorganised sector workers at the last mile," he said, adding that the EPFO had set an example of how to achieve this through institutionalised processes.

Four workers die in waste chamber at private hotel in M.P.

Mehul Malpani
BHOPAL

Four workers died after entering a waste chamber at a private hotel in Ujjain, Madhya Pradesh, with officials suspecting suffocation caused by a poisonous gas leak.

The incident took place around 10.30 p.m. on Saturday when two workers entered an overground chamber containing residual and leftover food at Shri Ganga Hotel and collapsed, officials said. Two other workers then entered in an attempt to rescue them, resulting in the death of all four.

Ujjain Superintendent of Police Pradeep Sharma told *The Hindu* that all four workers had entered the tank without the required protective gear, adding that three had been hired externally for the cleaning work while one was a hotel staff.

Mr. Sharma added that the bodies were recovered after police personnel and hotel staff broke open the chamber, during which some people, including police officers, sustained minor injuries.

He said the bodies had been sent for post-mortem examinations and that an FIR will be registered based on the findings.

The deceased have been identified as Wahid Khan, 29, Nitin Binarwan, 28, Kamlesh Tamboli, 30, residents of the locality, and the hotel supervisor Manoj Meena, 25, a resident of Rajasthan's Jhalawar.

Chief Minister Mohan Yadav condoled the deaths and announced financial assistance of ₹4 lakh to each family of deceased.

Bhutan builds 108 stupas in 9 hours, dedicates Chorten no. 76 to Modi

Rahul Karmakar
GELEPHU (BHUTAN)

Bhutan King Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuk on Sunday dedicated one of the 108 Buddhist stupas erected in a nine-hour construction feat to Prime Minister Narendra Modi as a mark of appreciation for India's support for the country's ambitious Gelephu Mindfulness City (GMC) project.

About 40,000 trained volunteers built the 108 Jangchub Chortens in what could be a potentially record-breaking royal initiative to lay the spiritual foundation of the planned city.

Spiritual City

About 240 km southeast of Bhutan's capital, Thimphu, Gelephu borders Assam's Chirang district. King Wangchuk envisions the city as a spirituality-driven global economic hub.



Bhutan dedicated Chorten no. 76 to Prime Minister Narendra Modi for India's support to the Gelephu project. RAHUL KARMAKAR

The King, other members of the royal family, top officials and foreign dignitaries faced Chorten Number 79 from the ceremonial ground as thousands of people around chanted a six-syllable Tibetan Buddhist mantra a billion times while the volunteers completed the mission between 3 a.m. and noon. About two hours later, the focus shifted to Chorten Number 76, which the King dedicated to Mr. Modi "as an enduring symbol" of his "profound appreciation" for the latter's "unwavering commitment and India's steadfast support for the realisation" of GMC. Bhutanese officials said the number was chosen because Mr. Modi turned 76 more than a month ago.

Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju, who represented India for 'Project 108', thanked the King. "This remarkable milestone is an enduring symbol of the deep spiritual and civilisational bonds between our two nations," he said, congratulating Bhutan on the achievement.

Collective spirit

Each 15 metres tall and 108 metres apart, the Jangchub Chortens, or Buddhist stupas, stand in a single meandering file along the Mau Chhu River, Gelephu's lifeline.

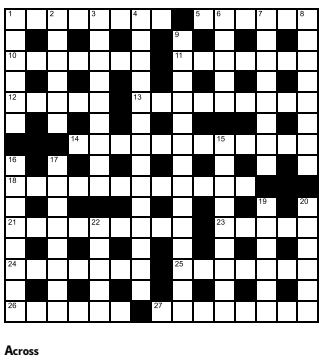
Addressing the people after the completion of Project 108, King Wangchuk said: "People from every walk of life and every generation came together to make this possible," stressing the Bhutanese collective spirit and ability to achieve "anything impossible".

THE CROSSWORD + 14938

(set by Dr. X)

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

SCAN TO PLAY



Across

1 Brought back ace detectives to probe extremely gruesome massacre (8)
5 Injured ribcage, needs right device that reduces swelling (3,3)
10 Park near a city in California (7)
11 Worker rushed to pick up cold tin of alcoholic drink (4,3)
12 Remain in bed in place close to workshop (3,2)
13 Stylish renter captivates Dutch manager (9)
14 Brave to tackle nervous thief showing sign of cowardice (5,7)
18/6 What teacher might do at end of class to forget past mistakes (4,3,5,5)
21 Exhibition by director in compound after broadcast (5,4)
23 Reason to have square bed (5)
24 Friend hosting popular artiste's last daytime performance (7)
25 Waste time in bash controlling old fellow getting high (4,3)
26 Assess again as retreat's largely revamped (6)
27 Continue to consume gin on the rocks with starter of raw fish (8)

Down

1 Group of animated people shaking a leg after drinking grog on vacation (6)
2 Queen enthralled by seven, rare butterflies (6)
3 Fellow's angry about wife's latest unkind remark (5,4)
4 Unable to function and inert? Had weed at rave (4,2,3,5)
6 See 18 Across
7 Second expert checking husband's lumbago (8)
8 Endless spell involved in magical being's birth (8)
9 Italian on round trip enthralled by a smart, attractive woman (1,3,2,3,5)
15 PM of Cuba leaving oceanfront complex (9)
16 Write to master about cheater (3-5)
17 Slop in small dish (8)
19 Almost jump and run excitedly to receive Oscar award (6)
20 Gasp! No power in filthy place that's airless (6)
22 German painter in ultramodern studio (5)

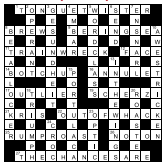
SUDOKU

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

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★☆

No.5276 Distribution: www.kingfeatures.com

Solution to previous puzzle



Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

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

FAITH

Hayagreeva's divine grace

From Lord Narayana's sacred navel emerged a divine lotus, from which Brahma was born. Lord Narayana blessed Brahma with the four Vedas and entrusted him with the task of creating the universe, Tirukkudanthai Dr. Venkatesh said in a discourse. Over time, Brahma grew proud, believing himself the supreme creator. To humble him, Lord Narayana brought forth two demons, Madhu and Kaitabha, who stole the sacred Vedas from Brahma. To retrieve the Vedas and restore divine knowledge, Lord Narayana incarnated as Lord Hayagreeva, an embodiment of jnana-ananda – clear as crystal and the supreme source of wisdom and learning. Subsequently, Lord Hayagreeva blessed Saraswati and Brahma with direct divine grace. Besides, sage Yajnavalkya received the sacred wisdom of the Yajurveda when the God, hiding in the Sun, blessed him with divine knowledge through sound "*Hala Hala*."

Next was Nammazhwar, who glorified Lord Hayagreeva in a single significant word in the fifth pasuram of the eighth section in the second decad of his Tiruvaimozhi. Similarly, Thirumangai Azhwar praised Lord Hayagreeva in two pasurams of his Periya Tirumozhi. Ramanuja received divine blessings when Goddess Saraswati praised his commentary on the Brahma Sutras and bestowed upon it the title Sri Bhashya, reflecting the wisdom of Lord Hayagreeva. Swami Vedanta Desika received Lord Hayagreeva's divine vision and blessings at Oushadhagiri Hill in Tiruvaheendrapuram, near Cuddalore. Through His grace, Swami Desika became a renowned scholar, poet, and philosopher, composing masterpieces such as Paduka Sahasram and Raghuveera Gadyam.

Playbook to overcome inflation

Rushabh Desai

Inflation is a persistent concern for households trying to protect buying power. Beating inflation means aligning spending, saving and investing with data on price trends, real returns, and risk.

Inflation landscape

India's inflation is more stable now vis a vis 2010s though still uneven. Over the last decade, annual CPI inflation has averaged at about 5%, broadly within the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) 2-6% target band. Headline CPI fell to multi-year lows in 2025 but inflation edged up again by mid-2026 with September CPI at 5.54%. This is still high enough to erode real returns on low-yield assets.

Fuel, education, healthcare, and travel costs tend to surge in urban and semi urban areas and hence inflation can differ depending on what you consume. Nominal returns alone are misleading. If savings earn 6% and inflation is 5%, your real return is only about 1%. Bank FDs and SBs often fail to preserve purchasing power after tax and inflation.

A practical framework

Personal inflation rate

Food inflation may average 5-7%, transportation 5-7%, travel 8-10%, rent 5-7%, education 10-12% and healthcare 11-13%. Map monthly spend on these and track how prices of your top 10-15 items move over 6-12 months. If education, travel, or healthcare take a large share, effective inflation may run well above headline CPI which says how aggressive return target must be.

Cut waste not essentials

Plan purchases in advance and stick to a list to avoid impulse buys. Switch to home brands or unbranded staples where quality differences are minimal. Use car-pooling or public transport to blunt fuel price shocks. These steps will lower the real return your investments must deliver.

Inflation-resilient investment

Equity: To outpace inflation, most households need a mix of growth and income assets. Indian equities have historically delivered nominal CAGRs well above inflation over 10+ year periods. So, diversified equity mutual funds can be the primary inflation beater for long-term goals like retirement and children's education.

Debt and hybrid funds: Certain categories have beaten CPI inflation in 5-10-year windows while offering better liquidity and tax efficiency than traditional products. Use them for medium-term goals and as a buffer against equity volatility.

Gold: A 10-15% allocation to gold mutual funds can hedge currency and inflation risk without the storage and purity issues of physical gold.

Align Tenure with Goals

Under 3 years: prioritise capital protection with liquid/short-duration debt funds, high-quality FDs or government schemes. 3-5 years: Blend debt, commodity and equity to target returns over inflation with controlled volatility. Beyond 5-7 years: tilt toward equity-heavy portfolios; short-term drawdowns matter less when compounding over decades. This discipline prevents panic selling when inflation spikes and markets wobble.

Grow income

Indians are boosting income via upskilling, side gigs and multiple earners. In an inflationary world, rising nominal income matters as much as investment returns. Direct part of any raise or bonus into investments before lifestyle creep absorbs it.

Policy tailwinds, risks

RBI's inflation targeting framework helped anchor expectations. Fiscal steps and better management output have supported price stability. But risks remain. A diversified, long-term, data-aware strategy is therefore more robust than chasing the "best" short-term product. Beating inflation is more about the system: understand your own price basket, minimise avoidable spend and invest with a clear, long-horizon asset mix designed to deliver real returns above inflation.

(The writer is founder, Rupee With Rushabh Investment Services www.rupeewithrushabh.com)

Send queries on personal finance and investing to the moneywise@thehindu.co.in ID. Our experts in personal finance will respond to select queries, but will not give specific recommendations for investment in a particular mutual fund, share or fixed deposit.



ILLUSTRATION: SAAI

No-cost EMI: a loan that is portrayed as free

A ₹60,000 phone, 6 easy instalments of ₹10,000, no interest. It feels as if the shopkeeper has done you a favour. He has not. Nobody lends money for free and nobody sells at a loss. Someone pays.

TERRA INCOGNITA

Joydeep Sen

> Even an ordinary personal loan from the bank is often cheaper. You would never knowingly borrow at 20% to buy a phone

> Decide on purchase, put the "instalment" into a savings account/RD every month for 6 months. Buy the phone in cash at discount.

Every festive season, the same board greets you at the electronics shop: "No-cost EMI". TVs, washing machines and appliances are available at no-cost EMI. A ₹60,000 phone, 6 easy instalments of ₹10,000, no interest. It feels as if the shopkeeper has done you a favour. He has not. Nobody lends money for free and nobody sells at a loss. Someone pays. Lets see who.

Who pays interest?

A bank or finance firm funds the purchase and charges interest. The shop agrees to bear interest but it will recover it in one of two ways. Either the price quoted to you is higher, or you lose the discount a cash buyer would have got Take the same phone. A cash buyer gets it for ₹57,000. The EMI buyer pays ₹60,000. The ₹3,000 gap is the interest.

The Reserve Bank, in September 2013 banned 0% interest schemes on credit cards saying such interest is non-existent and the levy was being camouflaged as a processing fee. Years later, the "no cost" label is still everywhere.

The loan is dearer than it looks. The sum of ₹3,000 on ₹57,000 sounds like about 5% which seems small. It is not. You are not borrowing ₹57,000 for six months. You repay ₹10,000 every month. After the first instalment you owe less. After the third you owe about half. In the last month you owe a single instalment. Yet the interest is charged as if you kept the full amount all along. Work it out on the balance you actually owe each month, and the rate is about 18% a year.

Then comes the tax. Even in a no-cost EMI, the bank technically charges interest and 18% GST applies to on that. On the phone, it is ₹540 more. Add processing fee of a few hundred rupees plus GST, you now pay over ₹60,500 for something a cash buyer gets for ₹57,000. The real rate climbs to about 20% a year, sometimes more.

A home loan costs less than half of that. Even an ordinary personal loan, from the bank is often cheaper. You would never knowingly borrow at 20% to buy a phone. "Free" made you stop asking.

Bigger damage

The worst part is what the scheme does to thinking. Without EMI, the question is: can I afford ₹60,000? For most people, the honest answer is no. The basis for saying 'most people cannot afford it' is a big chunk of the new iPhone launches is bought on EMI/ credit cards.

With EMI, the query turns into: can I afford ₹10,000/month? The reply- is mostly yes. The price drops out of the picture. That is why retailers push the schemes. Offering no-cost EMI significantly increases conversion rates.

Now stack it. A phone at ₹10,000/month. A TV at ₹8,000. A refrigerator at ₹6,000. None of them look heavy on its own. Together they take ₹24,000 out of salary/month for the next six months before you have paid for groceries, rent or school fee. The card limit also shrinks while the plan runs which matters if a real emergency strikes. And a missed instalment is not forgiven. Late charges apply and card due unpaid can cost as much as 36-42% a year.

When it can make sense

No-cost EMI is not a villain in every case. If the shop sells at the same price whether you pay cash or EMI, the loan really is almost free. You then pay only the GST and a small fee. Spreading necessary purchase such as a fridge over a few months can be sensible. The test is simple. Would you buy this anyway and still be comfortable if the instalments run into next month's budget? If cash discount exists, the scheme is a paid loan and you should treat it as one.

Before signing

Ask three questions at the counter. First: what is the price if I pay in full today? This exposes the interest. Second: what is the total I will pay across all instalments, including GST and fee? Ask for it in writing or read it on the card's EMI screen before you confirm. Third, and the one that matters most: would I buy this if I had to pay ₹60,000 today? If the answer is no, or if you are in two minds, the EMI is not making the phone affordable. It is only hiding that it is not.

There is a better habit. Decide on the purchase, then put the "instalment" into a savings account or recurring deposit every month for six months. Buy the phone in cash at discount and get it at a lower price. There is no 20% loan. You also learn if you wanted the phone or only the instalment plan. What you are sacrificing here is 'instant gratification' but doing a favour to yourself.

Retail has a favourite word – "free". It is the costliest word you will hear this festive season.

(Joydeep Sen is a corporate trainer (financial markets) and author)

Gold, silver lose sheen

PRECIOUSMETALS

Gold and silver have clocked negative returns. Even the outlook for both gold and silver have turned negative. Precious metal prices are likely to drift lower until resistance level is breached.

B.Krishnakumar

Precious metals lost sheen last month too with both gold and silver clocking negative returns for the second consecutive month. The rise in crude oil price and concerns over rising inflation and potential hike in U.S. interest rates played a key role in denting precious metals sentiment.

As a result, Comex gold closed 7.26% lower to settle at $3,884.9/ ounce by October end. Comex silver suffered a much steeper cut of 19.1% last month to settle at $49.13/ ounce.

Mirroring global market trend, the precious metal prices settled at lower levels in the local markets too. MCX Gold fell 7.16% to settle at ₹1,38,419 per 10-gm. MCX Silver suffered a massive 20% cut in to ₹1,78,900 per kilogram.

Comex gold price slid to a one-year low on October 30 and closed well below the psychological $4,000 mark. This is a major sign of weakness as the price breached the prior support zone at $3,900. Comex gold may now slip to next support zone of $3,650-$3,750. Price has to clear upper end of range at $4,550 to invalidate overall weak outlook. Comex silver price too was weak last month and dropped below the support level of $54. As expected, breach of this crucial support zone imparted more weakness and price dropped to a low of $48.9 on Friday. The short-term trend is negative and the price is vulnerable to a slide to $42-$43 range. The price has to move past the resistance level at $55 to invalidate the negative outlook.

Gold slips

MCX gold price too slid below crucial support level at ₹1,41,000 mentioned last month. This imparted more weakness and the price slipped to a low of ₹1,38,249 on Friday. The short-term outlook for MCX gold is negative and the price is vulnerable to slide to ₹1,30,000-₹1,32,000. Only a move over ₹1,48,000 would invalidate the negative outlook for MCX gold.

MCX silver price turned extremely bearish last month. The price breached the crucial support zone at ₹2,15,000 which imparted further weakness and led to a drop below the psychological level of ₹2,00,000/kg Short-term outlook is weak and price looks to slide to ₹1,55,000-₹1,57,000. Only a move past ₹2,10,000 would invalidate the negative outlook.

Conclusion

To summarise, the outlook for both gold and silver have turned negative. Precious metal prices are likely to drift lower until resistance level mentioned above is breached.

(The author is a Chennai based analyst / trader. The views and opinion featured in this column is based on the analysis of short-term price movement in gold and silver futures at COMEX & Multi Commodity Exchange of India. This is not meant to be a trading or investment advice.)

Bank Fixed Deposit Rates

Bank Name	Interest Rates (%) Highest Slab	1-year Tenure	3-year Tenure	5-year Tenure
Small Finance Banks				
AU Small Finance Bank	7.40	6.35	7.40	6.75
Equitas Small Finance Bank	8.00	7.10	7.10	7.00
ESAF Small Finance Bank	8.00	6.00	6.00	5.75
Jana Small Finance Bank	8.00	7.00	8.00	7.77
Shivalik Small Finance Bank	8.00	6.00	7.50	6.25
slice Small Finance Bank	7.75	6.50	7.50	7.25
Suryoday Small Finance Bank	8.25	7.25	7.25	8.25
Ujjivan Small Finance Bank	8.10	7.25	7.25	7.20
Utkarsh Small Finance Bank	8.10	6.00	7.50	7.00
Private Sector Banks				
Axis Bank	6.50	6.25	6.50	6.50
Bandhan Bank	7.45	7.00	7.25	5.85
City Union Bank	7.30	6.65	7.30	6.55
CSB Bank	7.10	5.00	5.75	5.75
DBS Bank	6.50	6.25	6.50	6.25
DCB Bank	7.50	6.90	7.00	7.50
Federal Bank	6.70	6.25	6.50	6.40
HDFC Bank	6.50	6.25	6.45	6.40
ICICI Bank	6.60	6.25	6.55	6.60
IDFC FIRST Bank	7.10	6.50	7.10	6.75
IndusInd Bank	7.00	6.75	7.00	6.65
Jammu & Kashmir Bank	6.75	6.55	6.70	6.75
IDBI Bank	6.55	6.20	6.35	6.25
Karnataka Bank	7.00	6.50	6.15	6.15
Kotak Mahindra Bank	6.75	6.45	6.40	6.25
RBL Bank	7.00	6.90	7.00	6.70
SBM Bank India	7.30	7.10	7.10	7.00
South Indian Bank	6.80	6.25	6.20	5.70
Tamilnad Mercantile Bank	7.25	6.80	6.70	6.70
YES Bank	7.25	6.65	7.00	6.75
Public Sector Banks				
Bank of Baroda	6.75	6.25	6.25	6.30
Bank of India	6.85	6.50	6.70	6.00
Bank of Maharashtra	6.65	6.40	5.25	5.00
Canara Bank	6.60	6.25	6.25	6.25
Central Bank of India	6.75	6.10	6.00	6.00
Indian Bank	6.80	6.10	6.05	6.00
Indian Overseas Bank	6.60	6.50	6.10	6.10
Punjab National Bank	6.60	6.25	6.30	6.35
Punjab & Sind Bank	6.85	5.85	5.85	5.95
State Bank of India	6.45	6.25	6.30	6.05
Union Bank of India	6.55	6.20	6.10	6.00

Home Loan Interest Rates

Name of Lender	Loan Amount (Rs.) Upto 30 lakh	Above 30 lakh & upto 75 lakh	Above 75 lakh
			(In %)
Public Sector Banks			
Bank of Baroda	7.40-9.15	7.40-9.15	7.40-9.40
Bank of India	7.35-10.25	7.35-10.25	7.35-10.50
Bank of Maharashtra	7.25-9.90	7.25-9.90	7.25-9.90
Central Bank of India	7.25-9.40	7.25-9.40	7.25-9.40
Indian Bank	7.35 #	7.35 #	7.35 #
Indian Overseas Bank	7.45 #	7.45 #	7.45 #
Punjab and Sind Bank	7.60-11.00	7.60-11.00	7.60-11.00
Punjab National Bank	7.50-9.50	7.45-9.40	7.45-9.40
State Bank of India	7.50-8.80	7.50-8.80	7.50-8.80
UCO Bank**	7.40-9.50	7.40-9.50	7.40-9.50
Private Sector Banks			
Axis Bank	8.00-12.25	8.00-12.25	8.00 - 12.25
Bandhan Bank	8.80- 13.77	8.80- 13.77	8.80- 13.77
City Union Bank	8.25-9.50	8.50-10.00	8.75-10.50
CSB Bank	8.75 #	8.75 #	8.75 #
Federal Bank	8.50 - 10.25	7.50 - 10.25	7.50 - 9.25
HDFC Bank	8.00 #	8.00 #	8.00 #
HSBC Bank	7.45 #	7.45 #	7.45 #
ICICI Bank	8.75 #	8.75 #	8.75 #
Karnataka Bank	7.51-11.83	7.51-11.83	7.51-11.83
Karur Vysya Bank	8.50-10.90	8.50-10.90	8.50-10.90
Kotak Mahindra Bank	7.60 #	7.60 #	7.60 #
RBL Bank	9.00 #	9.00 #	9.00 #
South Indian Bank	7.50 #	7.50 #	7.50 #
Tamilnad Mercantile Bank	8.15 - 9.55	8.15 - 9.55	8.15 - 9.55
Housing Finance Companies (HFCs)			
Aridity Birla Capital	7.75 #	7.75 #	7.75 #
Bajaj Housing Finance	7.50 #	7.50 #	7.50 #
GIC Housing Finance	8.20 #	8.20 #	8.20 #
Godrej Housing Finance	7.65 #	7.65 #	7.65 #
ICICI Home Finance	7.50 #	7.50 #	7.50 #
LIC Housing Finance	7.15 #	7.15 #	7.15 #
PNB Housing Finance	7.75-10.05%	7.60-10.05%	7.50-9.95
Sammaan Capital	8.75 #	8.75 #	8.75 #
SMFG India Home Finance	9.25 #	9.25 #	9.25 #
Tata Capital	8.00 #	8.00 #	8.00 #

**Concession of 0.05% & 0.10% more for women borrowers & takeover loans, respectively.
Rates as on Oct. 28 # onwards Source:Paisabazaar.com

MOGADISHU

Somali pirates seize Iranian fishing vessel, raising fears of attacks



AP

Somali pirates have seized an Iranian fishing vessel, the *Azini*, carrying 23 people, the Maritime Security Centre Indian Ocean said, warning that the ship was approaching a commercial shipping lane and could become a floating base for further attacks. The crew's safety was unknown, the centre said in an alert dated Saturday. AP

SANAA

Houthi media say Saudi strikes target Yemen's Hodeidah port



AFP

Houthi media said on Sunday that Saudi air strikes targeted Hodeidah, a strategic port under Houthi control, as the group battles a Saudi-led coalition supporting the internationally recognised government. "The Saudi enemy has launched two air strikes on Ras Issa port," *Al-Masirah TV* said. AFP

DHAKA

Bangladesh forms wage board as garment workers keep up protests



AFP

Garment workers in Bangladesh on Sunday staged protests in Gazipur and Dhaka over their longstanding demand for higher pay, prompting the government to announce the formation of a wage board, according to local media reports. Bangladesh is the world's second-largest apparel exporter after China. PTI

MOSCOW

Russia says drone hit 'industrial enterprise' near Moscow overnight



REUTERS

Russia said on Sunday that a drone had struck an "industrial enterprise" east of Moscow overnight, after Ukraine claimed it had hit a major oil refinery. Ukrainian media reported an attack on the Kstovo oil refinery, calling it "one of Russia's largest oil refineries, producing fuel and lubricants". AFP

Iran says new war could last longer after Trump threats

The U.S. President would not be in a position to dictate the timing or conditions of its conclusion, says Tehran; Revolutionary Guards add that there would be 'no geographic limitations' in conflict

Agence France-Presse
TEHRAN

Iran warned on Sunday that any renewed war with the United States could last longer than the previous round of fighting, after President Donald Trump said he still had to "take care" of more targets.

Diplomatic efforts to end the West Asia war have been punctuated by repeated threats from the U.S. and Israel to resume bombardments as they hold crucial elections.

"A potential future war could last longer than previous conflict, and the American President would not be in a position to dictate the timing or the conditions of its conclusion," said Army spokesperson Mohammad Akraminia, according to Iranian state television.



Committed stance: An Iranian woman holds Iran's national flag on a street in Tehran on Sunday. AFP

Mr. Akraminia's remarks followed Mr. Trump's suggestion that the U.S. could swiftly strike its remaining targets in Iran.

"We still have to take care of, I would say one or two sites, but we can do that in 10 minutes," Mr. Trump told presspersons at his Florida residence.

Top military and political officials in Iran have warned against any new attack.

Revolutionary Guards spokesman Hossein Mohebbi on Sunday echoed a warning issued a day earlier in a written message by Iran's new Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Mojtaba Khamenei.

"In a conflict with America, there are no geographical limitations; a vast theatre has been defined for inflicting damage upon the enemy," Mr. Mohebbi said, according to state television.

Historic win, humongous challenges

NEWS ANALYSIS

Srinivasan Ramani
CHENNAI



Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva greets his supporters in Sao Bernardo do Campo, Brazil. REUTERS

At the end of the first round of Brazil's presidential elections, Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva looked like a leader on his way out after a record third term. He trailed Flavio Bolsonaro by 45.2% to 47%, hurt by an abstention rate of 21%, the highest since 1998, as many of his supporters stayed home.

In the three weeks that followed, Lula managed a remarkable turnaround, helped by several factors. First, the day after the first round, thousands of students from the Fluminense Federal University marched through the streets of Niteroi to stand against Bolsonarism. Days later, thousands more young people occupied Candelaria Square in Rio de Janeiro. Similar student, youth and workers' marches soon spread across urban Brazil. The protesters gathered without party banners, united less by support for Lula than by opposition to Bolsonarism, a far-right movement opposed to institutions, supportive of high-handed actions against crime and eager to curtail civil liberties. The newspaper *O Globo* described the marches as the Left's return to the streets after more than a decade of absence.

Meanwhile Lula changed tack. He replaced the leadership of his campaign. Congressman Andre Janones launched a WhatsApp channel, 'Lula's Army', which grew to 10.8 million followers who were given daily missions to make campaign videos go viral, push hashtags and mobilise new voters. This combination of online activism and street level mobilisation helped, according to political scientists, reduce abstention and get undecided voters to support Lula in the runoff.

Lula also tweaked his campaign's message, speaking more about reducing working hours, relief for indebted families and higher welfare payments under the Bolsa Familia scheme, instead of harping only on sovereignty and rare earth minerals. The outcome was striking as Lula won with 51.79% of the vote to Flavio Bolsonaro's 48.21%, turning a first-round deficit of 2.2 million votes into a decisive lead of around 4.4 million.

'Enthusiastic victory'

Over the past three years, Latin America has been swept by what Vijay Prashad calls the "angry tide". Javier Milei in Argentina, Jose Antonio Kast in Chile, Nasry Asfura in Honduras, and Abelardo de la Espriella in Colombia have come to power, most of them openly backed by the U.S. President Donald Trump. Venezuela, once the lynchpin of the socialist Left in Latin America, has been reduced to a near client state of the U.S. since President Nicolas Maduro was abducted and taken to New York in January this year, with its oil revenues held by the U.S. Treasury and its oilfields increasingly handed to U.S.-backed entities.

Seen in this light, the loss of Mr. Bolsonaro, who was clearly a Trump-backed candidate, marked the first time such a candidate lost during the U.S. President's second term. It is no wonder that the region's Left and centre-left governments, among them Claudia Sheinbaum's Mexico, Yamandu Orsi's Uruguay, and Miguel Diaz-Canel's Cuba, welcomed Lula's victory so enthusiastically.

"At a time when the right is on a brutal offensive, Lula's victory generates hope, the idea that it can be done," Uruguayan senator Gustavo Gonzalez told the progressive weekly *Brecha*, crediting the students with having "revived what the left must never lose, which is mobilisation." Elections are due in Argentina in 2027 and Uruguay in 2029 and Lula's victory gives progressive forces hope in these countries.

It is also good news for the project of multilateralism. During Lula's three tenures, Brazil has been an enthusiastic backer of BRICS cooperation, emphasising strategic autonomy. Celso Amorim, Lula's long-time Foreign Minister and now his special adviser, explained it as the freedom to talk to everyone while not living in either China or the U.S.'s shadow. Lula has also pressed for trade within BRICS to be settled in local currencies rather than the dollar. He has backed the New Development Bank, now headed by the former President from his Workers' Party, Dilma Rousseff, as an alternative to the Bretton Woods institutions. Brazil, like India, has supported links between national payment systems, though India frames them as a way to cut transaction costs rather than to reduce dependence on the dollar. Both India and Brazil have also sought larger roles in the UN Security Council. Lula's Brazil has also been vocal about reviving a rules-based international order, criticising the actions of the Trump administration.

In the short term though, Lula's priority will be to manage expectations at home. Lula is known to be skilled at the art of negotiating and getting things done while retaining most of his working-class positions. But with diminished powers for the presidency, and the Bolsonaros' Liberal Party now the largest in both houses of Congress, his work is cut out for him.

France launches 'attempted murder' probe over attacks

Agence France-Presse
PARIS

France on Sunday opened an attempted murder probe after petrol bombs were thrown at security forces during Paris protests, as footage of an officer engulfed in flames sparked outrage.

On Saturday, clashes erupted in Paris and other cities after hundreds of thousands of people staged a third weekend of protests against soaring living costs.

The Paris police prefecture said several hundred rioters had attacked security forces with projectiles.

While riots were less widespread than two weeks ago, Interior Minister Laurent Nunez said the violence perpetrated by some was "extraordinary".

Prosecutors said an investigation had been opened for "attempted murder of persons vested with public authority".

"Explosive devices were thrown at around 15 gendarmes as well as police officers," prosecutors said.

Terrorism is 'red line', Pak. tells Afghanistan as it warns of action

Press Trust of India
ISLAMABAD

Pakistan has warned Afghanistan that it reserves the right to take all necessary measures to eliminate cross-border terror threats, asserting that terrorism remains a "red line" and its national security cannot be held hostage to the Taliban regime's "inaction".

In a strongly worded statement issued Saturday night, the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting accused the Afghan Taliban leadership of refusing to address militancy emanating from Afghan soil and instead shifting blame on Islamabad for the deterioration in bilateral ties.

"Pakistan's position is unequivocal: Terrorism is a red line and the security of its citizens is non-negotiable," the Ministry said.

The statement came in response to remarks by Afghan Taliban, which accused Pakistan of being unwilling to resolve tensions through dialogue.

Sport

Navy edges BPCL in shootout to triumph

MURUGAPPA GOLD CUP

S. Prasanna Venkatesan
CHENNAI

Indian Navy clinched the 97th All-India MCC-Murugappa Gold Cup hockey title, beating Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd (BPCL) 5-4 in a penalty shootout at the SDAT Mayor Radhakrishnan Stadium here on Sunday.

The final went into sudden death after both sides converted four of their five attempts. Navy goalkeeper Ankit Malik then came up with a crucial save, denying Sudeep Chirmako before Kuldeep scored to seal the title.

The teams were locked 1-1 in regulation time.

The contest was closely fought, with both teams struggling to convert their penalty-corners and other close chances. Navy took the lead in the 14th minute when Abhishek Topno finished off a pass from Pawan Rajbhar, who had combined with Sundra Pandi to advance down the left. BPCL goalkeeper Vikas Dahiya kept his side in the contest, blocking Harjeet Singh's close-range effort in the 21st minute. BPCL eventually drew level in the final seconds of the first half with Anmol Ekka scoring off the second of two successive penalty corners. Neither side could find a breakthrough in the third and final quarters.



Joyous bunch: The Indian Navy squad celebrates its success. R. RAGU

For Navy, Ashis Topno, Pawan Rajbhar, For Kuldeep, and K. Selvaraj scored in the first five attempts, while Charanjeet Singh, Sudeep Chirmako, Harjeet Singh, and Devindar Walmiki found the net for BPCL. Deepak Pradhan missed for BPCL and Yogesh Singh for Navy.

The result (final):
Indian Navy 1 (Abhishek Topno 14) drew with BPCL 1 (Anmol Ekka 30-pc). Navy won 5-4 in the shootout.

Weather could impact final WTA Chennai Open

TENNIS

Nihit Sachdeva
CHENNAI

In the last week of a long and hectic tennis season, most players are usually running on fumes and already thinking about either off-season training or planning their vacation.

The flip side, however, is that some view it as that time of the year where they can collect crucial ranking points and set themselves up for the next season.

It is this duality which may ultimately decide who wins the third edition of the WTA 250 Chennai Open, which gets underway at the SDAT Stadium in Nungambakkam here on Monday.

The field for what is the last Tour-level event in the country for the foreseeable future – this WTA 250 tournament shifts to the Philippines next year – is not particularly strong with Indonesian World No. 47 Janice Tjen, the reigning champion and top seed.



It's swing time: Vaishnavi will look to justify her wild card. R. RAGU

Austrian World No. 53 Lilli Tagger, seeded second, and British World No. 115 Harriet Dart – Sunday's Guangzhou Open finalists – pulled out with abdominal injuries. Japan's Mei Yamaguchi and Slovakia's Viktoria Morvayova, the lucky losers, replaced them in the main draw.

None of the Indians, however, could make the cut purely on ranking.

Vaishnavi Adkar (334), Sahaja Yamalapalli (369) and top Indian female junior Maaya Rajeshwaran (716) will look to justify the wild cards awarded to them by the Tamil Nadu Tennis Association.

The 21-year-old Vaishnavi is aware of the challenges of playing a Tour-level event as compared to the ITFs.

"Against the higher-ranked players, more balls will come back. You have to be physically and mentally stronger to stay in every point," said the top-ranked Indian.

The weather could play spoilsport, just like last year when the first two days of the main draw were washed out.For the first time in the tournament's history, the Electronic Line Calling system will be used on all three match courts.

ON A ROLL

Prolific Phillips becomes highest run-scorer in a bilateral T20I series



AFP

Glenn Phillips became the highest run-scorer in a bilateral T20I series with a tally of 341 against India in the five-match series. Phillips achieved the milestone during his unbeaten 65 at Seddon Park in Hamilton on Sunday. The previous record was held by England's Phil Salt (331 against the West Indies in 2023).

FACE-OFF

'Awesome to play against Kohli after sharing a dressing room'



FILE PHOTO: K. MURALI KUMAR

He's (Virat Kohli) obviously a megastar — for him to be so down-to-earth and sort of welcome all us overseas guys in RCB was pretty cool, so very appreciative for him for that. It'll be awesome to play against him now that I've sort of shared a changing room with him as well — New Zealand pacer Jacob Duffy.

A TUSSLE

Jurel completes century, but Boyle leads New Zealand-A's fightback



FILE PHOTO

New Zealand-A reached 218 for three at stumps on day two of the second 'Test' against India-A in Christchurch on Sunday, riding on Matthew Boyle's unbeaten ton. **The scores:** India-A 346 in 102.4 overs (Padikkal 80, Jurel 105, Akash Deep 68, Sheat 4/63) vs. New Zealand-A 218/3 in 66 overs (Boyle 107 batting, Foxcroft 80 batting).

PRECAUTIONARY MEASURE

Pant ruled out of India-A's final 'Test' against New Zealand-A



FILE PHOTO: IMRAN NISSAR

Wicketkeeper-batter Rishabh Pant was on Sunday ruled out of the third and final red-ball fixture between India-A and New Zealand-A, starting on November 7, as a precautionary measure, casting a shadow over his availability for the first Test in Wellington. Pant was earlier ruled out of the first two India-A games in New Zealand.

Sindhu, Lakshya make it a double delight for India

The former adds the Hylo Open to the Japan Open triumph earlier in the year and boosts her hopes of making the World Tour Finals while the latter ends his title drought in style

BADMINTON

Press Trust of India
SAARBRUCKEN



Super Sunday: Sindhu and Lakshya rose to the occasion when it mattered most. INSTAGRAM/HYLO_OPEN

Double Olympic medallist P.V. Sindhu and Lakshya Sen made it a double delight for India, claiming the women's and men's singles titles with straight-game victories in the finals of the Hylo Open Super 500 badminton tournament here on Sunday.

Precision and control

Former World champion Sindhu, who won the Japan Open in July and finished runner-up at the French Open last week, displayed excellent control and precision in her stroke play to register a commanding 21-12, 21-14 win over eighth seed and world No. 25 Line Hojmark Kjaersfeldt of Denmark in a final which lasted 39 minutes.

Later, Lakshya outwitted Jonatan Christie of Indonesia 21-17, 21-10.

"It was important for me to give my 100% irrespective of who the opponent was. We've played a lot of times and for me it was important that I focus on every point. It's just not about the whole game, but every point mattered to me. I took the lead from the beginning and didn't give her a chance," Sindhu said.

With the win, the World No. 8 Sindhu earned 9,200 ranking points to strengthen her bid for a place in the season-ending World Tour Finals.

"This gives me a lot of boost, a lot of confidence. I'm happy that things are going according to plan. I'm very grateful and thankful to my whole team. Everyone has worked really hard.

"I know there were days when you're absolutely low, but still your team is there to pump you up. It's been an amazing week and I think it's time to go back and celebrate now. It has been an amazing two weeks," she said.

Lakshya, who won the Australian Open and reached the finals at Hong Kong Open in 2025, came into the final with a 3-4 head-to-head record against Christie. He made a strong start and remained in control.

"It has been quite some time since I won a tournament, so it feels good. Couple of first-round losses affect you but the way I played here gave me a lot of confidence," he said.

Milne and Seifert ensure Black Caps finish the T20I series on a high

INDIA IN NZ

Agence France-Presse
HAMILTON



A triumph to savour: It was the first series win for India in a SENA country under Shreyas. AP

Tim Seifert narrowly missed a maiden international century but did enough to steer New Zealand to a seven-wicket win over India in the fifth and final T20I on Sunday.

Opener Seifert found some form with the bat, blasting 93 off 50 balls as the home side eased to 195 for three off 18 overs, after Adam Milne had earlier taken four for 19 to restrict the Men in Blue to 191 for eight.

The result wasn't enough for New Zealand to salvage the series, which the tourist won 3-2 after clinching the first three games. Incidentally, its was skipper Shreyas Iyer's first series win in a SENA (South Africa, England, New Zealand, Australia) country.

Seifert had scored just 36 runs across the first four matches but the big-hitter found his touch at Seddon Park, swinging the game in New Zealand's favour by smashing 11 fours and five sixes.

He looked devastated when he played on to Nitish Kumar in the 16th over, having posted an 18th half-century before failing to reach three figures again.

Glenn Phillips finished unbeaten on 65 (38b, 8x4, 3x6) to complete an exceptional series with the bat, which included 107 when New Zealand won the previous game in Auckland.

Earlier, Milne's pace proved too hot to handle for the Indian openers Sanju Samson and Abhishek Sharma who fell inside four overs. Ishan Kishan and captain Shreyas Iyer struck rapid half-centuries. The two combined for 93 off 43 balls for the third wicket before Kishan departed for 61 (32b, 5x4, 5x6) and Shreyas for 50 (23b, 3x4, 4x6).

The teams will next play in a five-match ODI series in Auckland from Wednesday.

SCOREBOARD

INDIA

Sanju Samson c Bracewell b Milne 4 *(10b)*, Abhishek Sharma c Mitchell b Milne 1 *(2b)*, Ishan Kishan c Smith b Tickner 61 *(32b, 5x4, 5x6)*, Shreyas Iyer c Seifert b Smith 50 *(23b, 3x4, 4x6)*, Tilak Varma c & b Smith 6 *(8b)*, Naman Dhir c Bracewell b Tickner 33 *(23b, 4x4, 1x6)*, Nitish Kumar c Phillips b Milne 22 *(17b, 2x4, 1x6)*, Bhuvneshwar Kumar c Mitchell b Milne 6 *(4b, 1x4)*, Prince Yadav (not out) 0 *(1b)*, Arshdeep Singh (not out) 1 *(1b)*; Extras (b-1, lb-1, nb-1, w-4): 7; Total (for eight wkts. in 20 overs): 191.

FALL OF WICKETS

1-2 (Abhishek, 1.1 overs), 2-19 (Samson, 3.1), 3-112 (Kishan, 10.2), 4-123 (Shreyas, 11.3), 5-133 (Tilak, 13.4), 6-179 (Dhir, 18.4), 7-185 (Nitish, 19.2), 8-190 (Bhuvneshwar, 19.5).

NEW ZEALAND BOWLING

Duffy 3-0-27-0, Milne 4-0-19-4, Smith 3-0-28-2, Tickner 4-0-38-2, Santner 4-0-39-0, Bracewell 2-0-38-0.

NEW ZEALAND

Tim Seifert b Nitish 93 *(50b, 11x4, 5x6)*, Finn Allen c Kishan b Arshdeep 2 *(3b)*, Daryl Mitchell c Abhishek b Varun 29 *(16b, 4x6)*, Glenn Phillips (not out) 65 *(38b, 8x4, 3x6)*, Bevon Jacobs (not out) 1 *(1b)*; Extras (lb-2, w-3): 5; Total (for three wkts. in 18 overs): 195.

FALL OF WICKETS

1-9 (Allen, 1.3), 2-82 (Mitchell, 8.3), 3-168 (Seifert, 15.3).

INDIA BOWLING

Bhuvneshwar 4-0-41-0, Arshdeep 4-0-40-1, Prince 3-0-35-0, Varun 4-0-45-1, Nitish 2-0-19-1, Abhishek 1-0-13-0.

Toss: New Zealand.

New Zealand won by seven wickets with two overs remaining, India clinched the series 3-2.

PoM: Milne.

PoS: Phillips.

Next match: First ODI: November 4, Auckland, 7.30 a.m. IST.

Harmanpreet's hat-trick takes India past Malaysia

ACT

Uthra Ganesan
JALANDHAR



Leading by example: Harmanpreet, centre, converted two penalty corners and a penalty stroke. X@THEHOCKEYINDIA

It was expected to be India's toughest test of the tournament and the match between the two highest ranked sides in the competition lived up to its billing. Malaysia tested the host before India prevailed 4-2 to remain the only unbeaten side at the Asian Champions Trophy here on Sunday.

The penultimate day of the league competition at the Olympian Surjeet Stadium also confirmed the semifinalists with Japan and Korea completing the line-up.

The rematch between the Asian Games finalists was a much closer affair but it was also more tactical as well. A lot of play was confined to the midfield with neither team being in complete control but neither willing to pull back either.

India took an early lead when Harmanpreet Singh converted the team's first penalty corner in the third minute but then missed a couple of chances up front. With both teams well matched in every department, it was more a battle of attrition than one of skills.

Compared to the final in Nagoya, Malaysia was more compact and read the Indian team better, anticipating the overlapping and passes and using short passes to try and break the flow.

On the other hand, India found its own way around, pressing harder off the ball and being inventive with the passing.

Both coach Craig Fulton and captain Harmanpreet admitted that the finishing needed to be clinical.

"We created chances, it is up to us to make use of them," Fulton agreed.

Harmanpreet got a hat-trick, converting another PC in the 33rd and a penalty stroke in the 58th. Malaysia equalised through Akhimullah Anuar to be level at half time, then Shello Silverius pulled one back in the final seconds.

The results: Korea 5 (Son Dain 17, 32, 51, Park Geunwoo 7-pc, 34-pc) bt Bangladesh 0; Japan 2 (Raiki Fujishima 48-pc, Yuma Nagai 48) drew with China 2 (Jialiang Zhang 8, Chen Benhai 60-pc); India 4 (Harmanpreet Singh 3-pc, 33-pc, 58-ps, Sukhjeet Singh 43) bt Malaysia 2 (Akhimullah Anuar 25-pc, Shello Silverius 60).

Manav wins first international crown; Sutirtha is runner-up

WTT

K. Keerthivasan
CHENNAI



Manav Thakkar.

India's Manav Thakkar showed why he was the top seed. Against an in-form Samuel Walker of England, who had dropped just two games en route to the final, Manav produced a remarkable fightback, recovering from a two-game deficit, to win 6-11, 8-11, 11-9, 11-3, 11-8 and clinch his maiden international men's singles title at the WTT Feeder Chennai at the Tamil Nadu Physical Education and Sports University near here on Sunday.

Walker had been exceptional, with his attacks from the back of the table on both flanks proving ferocious and consistent. They remained so through the first two games against Manav.

At 9-9 in the third, Manav changed his serve, opting for a short backhand delivery that denied Walker the space to unleash his attacking shots. The Indian grew in confidence, winning several points in long rallies.

Earlier, South Korea's second seed Yoo Yerin trounced India's Sutirtha Mukherjee 11-6, 11-7, 11-9 to claim her first international singles title. Much was expected of Sutirtha, who had upset top seed Yang Ha-eun in the semifinals. But against Yerin, she was subdued. Her counter-attacks lacked precision and a string of unforced errors allowed the Korean to take control.

"Over the last two or three years, I have become a little more mature in my playing style. The draw was tough, but I was well prepared, having come from the China Smash. I learnt a lot after the bad patch at the Asian Games. The change in blade also helped. Though I use Tibhar equipment, I switched from the Alexis Lebrun blade to the Felix Lebrun blade. It helped me control the rallies better. I have to say I had lost my first final to Sathiyan in the WTT Feeder Beirut in 2024," Manav told *The Hindu*.

The results:

Men: Final: Manav Thakkar bt Samuel Walker (Eng) 6-11, 8-11, 11-9, 11-3, 11-8; **Semifinals:** Manav bt G. Sathiyan 5-11, 8-11, 11-8, 11-5, 11-2; Walker bt SFR Snehit 11-4, 11-8, 11-9.

Doubles: Final: Sathiyan & Harmeet Desai bt Payas Jain & Priyanuj Bhattacharyya 11-6, 8-11, 11-7, 11-8.

Women: Final: Yoo Yerin (Kor) bt Sutirtha Mukherjee 11-6, 11-7, 11-9; **Semifinals:** Sutirtha bt Yang Ha Eun (Kor) 11-4, 11-7, 13-11; Yerin bt Swara Karmarkar 11-6, 6-11, 11-8, 12-10.

Doubles: Final: Kim Seoyun & Yein Jeong (Kor) bt Haelin Lee & Gyurin Kim (Kor) 11-3, 11-8, 11-3.

Mixed doubles: Final: Manav & Taneesha Kotecha bt Mehan Senthil & Ananya Muralidharan 15-17, 11-6, 11-7, 10-12, 11-6.

Havertz helps Gunners break Anfield hoodoo

EURO LEAGUES

Agencies
LIVERPOOL



Havertz. REUTERS

Arsenal moved to the top of the Premier League with its first win away to Liverpool in 14 years as Kai Havertz's early strike secured a 1-0 victory for the Gunners at Anfield on Sunday.

Real Madrid beat host Racing Santander 3-0 in LaLiga with goals from Kylian Mbappe, Jude Bellingham and Yan Diomande. Earlier, Raphinha and Lamine Yamal each struck twice as Barcelona thrashed Alaves 6-1.

In the Serie A, Lazio took full advantage of defending champion Inter Milan's loss to city rival AC Milan on Saturday to move three points ahead, but needed a late winner from striker Andrea Pinamonti.

Fabio Silva's 89th-minute goal earned Borussia Dortmund a 2-2 draw at Bayern Munich after Harry Kane missed a penalty in a see-saw Bundesliga clash on Saturday.

Top results: Premier League: Liverpool 0 lost to Arsenal 1 (Havertz 16).

LaLiga: Racing Santander 0 lost to Real Madrid 3 (Mbappe 11-pen, Bellingham 22, Diomande 37).

Serie A: Como 1 (da Cunha 43-pen) bt Venezia 0; Lazio 2 (Isaksen 36, Pinamonti 83) bt Cagliari 1 (Nzola 21).

On Saturday: Premier League: Tottenham 2 (Gray 25, Van Hecke 73) bt Crystal Palace 0; Aston Villa 1 (Jackson 39) drew with Fulham 1 (Suzuki 64-og).

LaLiga: Real Betis 2 (Bartra 38, Fornals 45+2) bt Malaga 1 (Nino 68); Barcelona 6 (Raphinha 8, 41, Lopez 23, Yamal 45+1, 64, Gordon 81) bt Alaves 1 (Diaz 84).

Serie A: Udinese 2 (Zaniolo 50, Palma 78) lost to Roma 5 (Cristante 10, Mora 31, Malen 33, Ndicka 37, Ghilardi 90+2); AC Milan 3 (Pulisic 4, Rabiot 10, Moreira 43) bt Inter Milan 1 (Bastoni 22).

Bundesliga: Bayern Munich 2 (Laimer 38, Upamecano 66) drew with Borussia Dortmund 2 (Guirassy 60, Silva 89); Bayer Leverkusen 2 (Schick 28, Maza 79) lost to Stuttgart 4 (Demirovic 14, 65, Leweling 22, El Khannouss 51); Schalke 0 lost to RB Leipzig 2 (Nusa 37-pen, Romulo 78).

INBRIEF



Alcaraz beats de Minaur to win Vienna Open

Seven-time Grand Slam winner Carlos Alcaraz beat Alex de Minaur 6-1, 6-4 to win the Vienna Open on Sunday and defeat his opponent for the seventh time in as many meetings. Alcaraz has beaten the Australian on grass and clay as well as on indoor and outdoor hard courts. It was the Spaniard's fourth title of the year – including the Australian Open for a career Grand Slam – and his 28th overall.



'Canelo' Alvarez wins back WBC crown from Mbilli

Saul "Canelo" Alvarez, *right in pic*, defeated French fighter Christian Mbilli and regained his WBC super middleweight title in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, on Saturday. The 36-year-old Mexican won a 12-round decision after exerting his influence in the second half of the fight.

Marc Marquez on the verge of clinching World MotoGP title

Marc Marquez moved to the brink of an eighth world title with an imperious victory at the Malaysian MotoGP on Sunday. The Ducati star and reigning champion romped home ahead of Pedro Acosta and brother Alex Marquez at a sweltering Sepang. With just three race weekends left, Marquez, who was second in Saturday's sprint behind Acosta, sits top of the pile with 399 points. Martin is second on 355, with Marco Bezzecchi third with 332.

Lifter Usha tops 61kg Group D at World championships

Indian weightlifter Usha topped Group D, while compatriot Nirupama Devi finished fourth in Group C of the women's 61kg competition at the IWF World championships in Ningbo, China, on Sunday. Usha lifted a total of 212kg – 93kg in snatch and 119kg in clean and jerk. Nirupama managed a total of 211kg (91+120).

LIVE TELECAST

Ranji Trophy: JioHotstar, 9.30 a.m.
Premier League: SS Select 1 & JioHotstar, 1.30 a.m. (Tuesday)
New Zealand-A vs. India-A: Second 'Test', Day 4, Sony Sports Ten 1 & LIV, 3.30 a.m. (Tuesday)

Battle between two teams desperate to pull off a win to stay in contention

Host Delhi needs nothing less than an outright victory to be in the knockouts race; Services enjoys familiarity with the conditions at Palam Ground

RANJI TROPHY

Vivek Krishnan
NEW DELHI

In the first round of the 2026-27 Ranji Trophy, Delhi ran into a Bengal outfit comprising Mohammed Shami, Akash Deep and Mukesh Kumar and tasted a nine-wicket rout in Kalyani.

In the second round, Delhi amassed 648 for six declared against Gujarat, but a shirtfront at the Palam 'B' ground thwarted its bowlers and compelled the host to be content with three points after a high-scoring draw.

In the third round, Delhi's batters and bowlers stepped up in unison against Jharkhand. However, rain in Ranchi negated any chances of play on the final two days and offered no more than a point each.

Going into the fourth round against Services in Group C, therefore, Delhi needs nothing less than an outright victory at the Palam 'A' ground to stay in the race for the knockouts when the First Class competition resumes in January.



Purple patch: Delhi will be well served if skipper Badoni continues his prolific form. FILE PHOTO: R.V MOORTHY

In trouble

Services is further up the creek. Rajat Paliwal's men have only compiled one point from their first three matches, courtesy a rain-affected draw against Odisha in Bhubaneswar last week.

In the circumstances, a result-oriented surface at the Air Force Complex Ground in Palam this week, perhaps similar to the turner that was dished out for the Services-Bengal encounter a fortnight ago, will be to the liking of both teams.

Although Delhi is the designated host for the contest from Monday, Services, which plays all its home games here, enjoys greater familiarity with the conditions. But even Services skipper Paliwal is unsure about how the strip will behave.

"The pitches at Palam were relaid before the season started," Paliwal said after practice.

"The track for our last home game was unexpected. Because the pitches are fresh, sometimes it takes time for them to settle down.

"It is in that process right now. Compared to the last two games, the pitch looks in a better shape. But it is hard to judge how it will play".

Services players seek exposure to State-based T20 leagues

Vivek Krishnan
NEW DELHI

Every season, Services, a trifecta of the Indian Army, Navy and Airforce, plays its part as one of 38 teams in strengthening and diversifying India's domestic cricket ecosystem. It does so even as its cricketers seldom get the limelight.

Given the game's popularity, Services skipper Rajat Paliwal, who has been around the domestic scene since 2011-12, hopes that his players can also reap the benefits of a thriving environment.

One way would be participation in State-based T20 leagues around the country.

"We want greater exposure as players. We want that initiative to be taken. In the whole country, cricket has developed a lot. Other cricketers play through the year and prepare comprehensively," Paliwal said ahead of the Ranji Trophy game against Delhi.

"We are far away from that. As players for Services, we also want that. It will help improve the quality of preparation. We hope things change in the future."

The 34-year-old, who belongs to the Airforce, offered a suggestion. "For example, the Airforce players are Delhi-based. So if the Delhi & District Cricket Association (DDCA) opens its T20 league for us to participate, there are 5-7 players who can add value and also get exposure," he proposed.

With Services having no age-group teams, selection for the senior set-up is dependent on a tournament among the three departments just before the domestic campaign.

"We have an inter-Services tournament across all three formats a month or two prior to the start. Based on the best performances, the teams are picked," said new coach A.P. Singh, a Lieutenant Colonel in the Indian Army.



Think-tank: Services coach A.P. Singh and skipper Rajat Paliwal.

RANJI TROPHY - ROUND FOUR SCHEDULE

Elite: Group A: Uttar Pradesh vs. Baroda (Kanpur), Goa vs. Bihar (Panaji), Vidarbha vs. Madhya Pradesh (Nagpur), J&K vs. Pondicherry (Srinagar).
Group B: Assam vs. Karnataka (Guwahati), Tripura vs. Saurashtra (Agartala), Chhattisgarh vs. Hyderabad (Hyderabad), Punjab vs. Andhra (New Chandigarh).
Group C: Odisha vs. Jharkhand (Bhubaneswar), Bengal vs. Maharashtra (Kolkata), Gujarat vs. Kerala (Ahmedabad), Delhi vs. Services (New Delhi).
Group D: Uttarakhand vs. Haryana (Dehradun), Himachal Pradesh vs. Rajasthan (Dharamshala), Railways vs. Mumbai (Mumbai, Brabourne Stadium), Chandigarh vs. Tamil Nadu (Chandigarh).
Plate: Manipur vs. Sikkim (Ahmedabad), Meghalaya vs. Nagaland (Shillong), Mizoram vs. Arunachal Pradesh (Anand).

Delhi won't host India-Lanka ODI

Vivek Krishnan
NEW DELHI

With the renovation of the outfield at the Arun Jaitley Stadium having begun a week ago, the change in venue for India's ODI against Sri Lanka on December 13 has been all but confirmed. The national capital was slated to host the first one-dayer of the series when the schedule was announced back in March, but the switch to a sand-based outfield means that the Ferozeshah Kotla ground won't be ready for any cricket before the 2027 Indian Premier League.

"It will take around four months for the work to be completed. Mullanpur, Lucknow and nearly 75% of the venues in the country have sand-based outfields. It makes a massive difference to the drainage system, and will help get the ground ready after rain without much delay," a source told *The Hindu* on Sunday.

It had been reported in *The Hindu* on September 23 that the Delhi & District Cricket Association (DDCA) was planning to revamp the outfield.

"When the work gets completed, there will be no need to cover the entire ground in case of rain. Puddles won't form on the outfield," the source added.

The proposed renovation had resulted in Delhi's home games in the Ranji Trophy being moved to the Airforce Complex Ground in Palam. After a draw against Gujarat in the second round, Delhi's clash against Services from Monday is also at the highly guarded venue adjacent to the airport. In the second phase of the First Class competition, Delhi will face Maharashtra at home.



A hiatus: The Ferozeshah Kotla ground won't be ready for any cricket before the 2027 IPL. FILE PHOTO: SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR



Paes. FILE PHOTO

Parikh, Paes to contest AITA elections under 'Tennis First' banner

Sports Bureau
KOLKATA

In a significant development ahead of the All India Tennis Association (AITA) elections scheduled for November 27, incumbent president Chintan Parikh and West Bengal Tennis Association president Leander Paes have announced a joint panel to contest the polls.

The alliance was finalised in a meeting recently. Under the arrangement, Parikh will seek re-election as AITA president, while Paes, an 18-time Grand Slam champion, will contest for the post of vice-president. The duo will campaign under the banner of 'Tennis First', an initiative aimed at bringing reforms to the administration of tennis in India.

Indian men and women reign supreme in C'wealth kabaddi

Sports Bureau

Indian men and women dominated the inaugural Commonwealth kabaddi championship, winning the titles in one-sided finals at the Veer Savarkar Sports Complex in Ahmedabad on Saturday.

In the women's category, India defeated Uganda 35-15 thanks to an emphatic performance by Sakshi (nine points), Anu Sen (six points) and captain Nidhi Sharma (five points).

The home team's defence was just as solid, with Ritu Mitharwal and Suman Sahu getting four tackle points each.

In the men's category, India beat Sri Lanka 54-20. Aditya Shinde led from the front with a Super 10 (10 points) from 14 raids, and was ably supported by Bharat Hooda (eight raid points).

On the defensive front, Yogesh Dahiya starred with five tackle points.





Dominant: The victorious Indian teams with their big prize. VIJAY SONEJI

ISL: Delhi rallies to beat Mumbai City

Sports Bureau

SC Delhi netted three times in the final 20 minutes to beat Mumbai City FC 3-2 in an Indian Super League fixture in Mumbai on Sunday.

Carlos Fortes (73), Akshat Mehra (90+2) and Juan Pena (90+4) were on target for the visitor, which had trailed 0-2 at the break following goals from Muhammad Ajsal (6) and Zothanpuia (27).

The host took the lead as Ajsal played a superb one-two with Noufal before slotting home following a defensive error from Lamgoulen Hangshing.

Mumbai doubled its advantage in the 27th minute. Noufal made a strong run down the left before crossing for Zothanpuia, who calmly finished with his right foot.

In the 73rd minute, T.P. Rehenesh spilled a corner, and the ball fell to Ashutosh Mehta, who set up Fortes for a tap-in to reduce the deficit.



Pena. X@OFFICIALSCDELHI

Substitute Mehra made an immediate impact, taking a pass from Richard Ndayishimaye into his stride and curling an effort at Rehenesh, who could only push the ball into his own net.

Only minutes later, Pena completed the turnaround, sprinting forward in the 94th minute and dancing his way past two Mumbai City defenders before slotting homel.

The results: Mumbai City FC 2 (Ajsal 6, Zothanpuia 27) lost to SC Delhi 3 (Fortes 73, Mehra 90+2, Pena 90+4); **At Pune:** Inter Kashi 1 (Passi 51) lost to FC Goa 2 (Feuillassier 34, Chiki 66).

Chiranth edges rival Sarthak again, completes a double

MOTORSPORTS

Sports Bureau
CHENNAI

Chiranth Vishwanath held off his arch-rival and Petronas TVS Racing teammate Pune's Sarthak Chavan for the second time in two days to complete a double in the premier Super Sport 301-400cc Open class as the third round of the MRF Indian National Racing Challenge 2W 2026 concluded at the Madras International Circuit here on Sunday.

Earlier, Savion Sabu delivered another strong performance as he led a maiden podium sweep for MadRabbit Racing team, besides achieving a double this weekend in the Pro-Stock 200cc Open class.

Senthil Kumar (Rockers Racing) and K.K. Anandhu from (Veedol C2 Racing) bagged a double apiece in the Super Stock 301-400cc Open and Super Stock 165cc Intermediate classes, respectively.

The competition will resume in January, 2027.



Fine show: Chiranth, flanked by Sarthak and Mohamed, topped the Super Sport 301-400cc Open class. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

The results (winners only, provisional, all 6 laps unless mentioned): Super Sport 301-400cc Open (Race-2): Chiranth Vishwanath (Petronas TVS Racing) (11min, 09.613sec).
Pro-Stock 200cc Open (Race-2): Savion Sabu (MadRabbit Racing) (11:51.669).
Super Stock 301-400cc Open (Race-2): Senthil Kumar (Rockers Racing) (11:28.204).
Super Stock 165cc Intermediate (Race-2): K.K. Anandhu (Veedol C2 Racing) (12:42.998).
Stock 301-400 Novice (Race-2): S. Venugopalan (Motul Sparks Racing) (12:20.189).
Stock 165cc Novice (Race-2) 3 laps: R. Hari Haran (RACR Castrol Power 1) (06:36.460).
Petronas TVS One-Make Championship: Expert (Apache RR 310) Race-2: Rajender Beedani (11:32.870).
Rookie (Apache RTR 200) Race-2: Pothu Vignesh (13:13.874).
Media (Apache RR 310): Ansh Srivastava (Auto Today) (13:06.610).



A steep learning curve for Sooryavanshi

Just when one started to envision more pyrotechnics from the scything blade, the lad was restored to the bench after Kishan made a full recovery and was available for the fourth match in Auckland. It did seem an unkind cut, especially after his heroics in Wellington, but it was hard to miss the message – no special treatment, we will stick to our policy of sticking with our core and only making changes in the event of extreme loss of form or injuries

CREIMAS/BCCI

R. Kaushik

Just like that, another Twenty20 International series has passed into history. Within a fortnight of squaring a five-match showdown against West Indies 2-2 at home (the final match in Bengaluru was washed out, with just 46 deliveries possible), Shreyas Iyer's men came away on the right side of a 3-2 scoreline in New Zealand, meaning that in the space of 32 days, starting with the Asian Games matches in Nisshin, India have played 12 T20Is.

That might not appear a lot until one factors in the gruelling timeline that necessitated them to play in Lucknow just three days after retaining their gold medal in Japan, or that their first outing in New Zealand came within five days of the Bengaluru washout after another long journey that took them to Christchurch via Dubai. It has been a manic, whirlwind ride with little scope for ironing out kinks and even lesser windows for recovery. If there is a zombie-like feel to some of the players, it is understandable but while the T20 specialists have some respite, those who are in the One-Day International side, such as Shreyas himself, are in for another crazy haul over the next two weeks.

One of the most obvious takeaways from the T20I series is that India are a side heavily dependent on their batters. More than in any other format, of course, it is the strength, power and depth of the batting group that has the decisive say in 20-over cricket, but perhaps few other top teams are so reliant on their batting firepower than India, whose lack of bowling penetration in the absence of Jasprit Bumrah was seriously exposed.

One of the most obvious takeaways from the T20I series is that India are a side heavily dependent on their batters

No hurry to shuffle pack

One of the other truisms is that India are in no hurry to shuffle their pack so as to give Vaibhav Sooryavanshi an extended look-in. Opinion will remain divided on that subject, as it invariably is in all things selection-related so far as Indian cricket is concerned. To say that the 15-year-old is a generational talent is stating the obvious. Having made the world sit up and take notice in IPL 2025 for the novelty factor his age provided, he made that number almost irrelevant with a wonderful debut half-season, and backed it up with a slew of awards, including the Orange Cap for becoming the highest run-getter, in IPL 2026.

It is said that in cricket more than any other sport, the second season is the biggest test for any player. In the first year, the player is a bit of an unknown commodity despite the wealth of data at everyone's disposal. That data, for instance, doesn't reveal how an individual will react to pressure, how they will be affected by the energy and electricity that is such a constant in the world's most vibrant 20-over league. Sooryavanshi seemed unaffected by the external noise in his debut outing, and positively thrived on it in season two as he shattered reputations and egos with such unerring regularity that the national selectors had no choice but to throw him into the deep sea.

No favours

Picked for the twin tours of Ireland and England in June-July, it was clear from the outset that no favours would be bestowed on him. India stuck with the tried and tested in Ireland, placing their faith in Abhishek Sharma and Sanju Samson at the start of what turned out to be an ill-fated misadventure in which they lost all six completed fixtures (including a chastening 0-2 humbling at the hands of the unfancied Irish).

It wasn't until Samson failed for three games on the bounce that Sooryavanshi was awarded his maiden cap, in the second of five matches against England in Manchester. He did unleash two trademark sixes but fell for 14 to the clever off-spin of Will Jacks, charging and missing a slash, thereby allowing Jos Buttler to pull off a smart stumping. He followed it up with scores of 13 and 15 in his next two hits before making way for Samson in the final game, but when he went as automatic opening partner to Abhishek to Harare towards the end of July, he positively grew wings.

At the same venue where he had lashed 175 off 80 deliveries in the Under-19 World Cup final against England in February, Sooryavanshi made his maiden half-century in the first of three fixtures. Two innings later, he raced to 82 off 49, clinching the Player of the Match and the Player of the Series honours. Apart from the fact that there was great feel-good in returning to a ground where he had tasted tremendous success, the left-hander flourished in the company of the coaching staff under whom he had cut his teeth at the international level.

V.V.S. Laxman was there alongside Hrishikesh Kanitkar and Sunil Joshi, the same troika that had overseen the Under-19 World Cup campaign and the same group that was also at the Asian Games when Sooryavanshi played alongside Abhishek, Samson and Ishan Kishan to form an explosive top four.

However, once regular head coach Gautam Gambhir, who was given a break from the Zimbabwe tour and the Asiad, returned to take charge, Sooryavanshi was relegated to the bench from where to watch and learn and equip himself for the rigours of senior international cricket. He didn't get a single game against West Indies at home, and only played in New Zealand because Kishan picked up an adductor injury that kept him out of games two and three.

Unfamiliar No. 3 slot

In the first of those two matches, Sooryavanshi was sent in at an unfamiliar No. 3 with just eight balls remaining in the PowerPlay after Abhishek and Samson had put on 40 in 4.4 overs at the Hagley Oval. He struggled to get a move on, limping to four off seven when he drove Nathan Smith to covers, where Daryl Mitchell held a good catch.

But when the teams moved to the Hnry Stadium in Wellington for the third match of the series, Sooryavanshi was restored to his opening slot and he responded in grand style, reminding everyone who needed reminding (not that there are many of those around) of the wonderful array of strokes he possesses to go with unflappable temperament. A four over mid-on off the first ball of India's chase of 199, off Jacob Duffy, set the tone and the teenager made the Kiwis pay for going short by repeatedly backing away and clattering the ball over and behind point for fours and sixes.

By the time he was smartly caught, again by Mitchell, he had raced away to 45 off just 19, with four fours and as many sixes. Alongside the marauding Abhishek, he realised 118 in the PowerPlay, the most ever in T20I history, and 133 in all off just 43 deliveries as India raced to a six-wicket victory with a whopping 40 deliveries to spare and took an invincible 3-0 lead.

Just when one started to envision more pyrotechnics from the scything Sooryavanshi blade, the young lad was restored to the bench after Kishan made a full recovery and was available for Friday's fourth match in Auckland. It did seem an unkind cut, especially after his heroics in Wellington, but it was hard to miss the message – no special treatment, we will stick to our policy of sticking with our core and only making changes in the event of extreme loss of form or injuries.

It can be safely assumed that the think-tank, prominent among them Shreyas, Gambhir and batting coach Sitanshu Kotak, will have had long discussions with Sooryavanshi with regard to the logic behind him spending so much time on the sidelines when he must be itching to get out on the park and do his thing. Sooryavanshi might not like it, but he will learn more lessons sitting outside (at this early stage in his career) and biding his time, paradoxical as it might sound because the greatest learning comes from playing and succeeding or failing.

There is such a logjam at the top of the tree that not even vice-captain Tilak Varma is guaranteed a position of his choice. The Hyderabadi has repeatedly been moved up and down the order as India embark on an odyssey of Total Cricket; when a far more seasoned campaigner who is part of the leadership group doesn't get a lot of leeway, why should a 15-year-old, no matter how extraordinarily gifted, be treated otherwise, is perhaps the unstated question being thrown up.

Hogging the bench is an acid test of Sooryavanshi's character and how he emerges from this examination will testify to his temperamental acumen. On the evidence of what he has showcased in the big league in the last year and a half, it must be presumed that he will not be worse off for the experience, but only time will tell if that presumption is the correct one. India host Sri Lanka for three T20Is (on the back of three ODIs) next month, by when time Sooryavanshi would have wielded his willow for Bihar in the inter-state T20 tournament for the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy. All he can hope to do is continue to make stirring, sterling statements for his state and continue to press his claims for another shot, at the very least, at international glory.

Mercurial presence

His immediate challenge will be to channel his justifiable disappointment at not being able to paint his masterpieces on a wider canvas into bruising knocks in the relative anonymity of domestic cricket, though his mercurial presence is guaranteed to attract plenty of interest in the port city of Visakhapatnam. He will run into several formidable opponents, among them Saurashtra, Tamil Nadu, Delhi and Punjab – what fun it will be, Sooryavanshi in one side, Abhishek in the other – and should relish the opportunity of testing himself against some of the best in the country who are not involved in international action.

Around all this, it is imperative that lines of communication remain open and those entrusted with major decision-making responsibilities continue to engage with the precocious teenager on a sustained basis. In their eyes, he may not warrant special treatment when it comes to selection, but he certainly does merit greater-than-normal attention when it comes to matters such as this.

THE GIST

- Sooryavanshi seemed unaffected by the external noise in his debut outing, and positively thrived on it in season two
- Hogging the bench is an acid test of the youngster's character and how he emerges from this examination will testify to his temperamental acumen
- His immediate challenge will be to channel his justifiable disappointment at not being able to paint his masterpieces on a wider canvas into bruising knocks in the relative anonymity of domestic cricket



It is said that in cricket more than any other sport, the second season is the biggest test for any player. In the first year, the player is a bit of an unknown commodity despite the wealth of data at everyone's disposal

Why even a strong El Niño does not guarantee a poor Indian monsoon

Seven Indian monsoons since 1950 have run into a moderate or strong El Niño; of these, in five years, including 2026, monsoon rainfall levels were at least 10% lower than the long-term average; the IMD refers to this level as 'deficient'; the 2023 season was something of an exception with 'below average' rainfall; however, 1997 had 'average' rainfall

Ankit Mishra

In the summer of 1997, one of the strongest El Niños of the 20th century took shape in the Pacific Ocean. The India Meteorological Department (IMD) predicted a monsoon rainfall deficit of 8% below the average, as was expected in El Niño years. However, by the end of September that year, rainfall levels were nearly normal.

This year, a "ferocious" El Niño is taking shape, and is expected to peak only in December. The 2026 southwest monsoon ended nearly 13% below the long-term average of 87 cm. East and Northeast India had their driest season since records began in 1901.

So what happened differently in 1997?

El Niño and the monsoon

Near the Earth's equator, steady winds blow across the Pacific Ocean from east to west. These winds drive warm surface water into Indonesia. The water then warms the air over it, and the warm air rises, creating rain clouds.

These winds diminish every 2-7 years. The warm water flows back east to South America, with the rain clouds trailing behind. Scientists call this phenomenon the El Niño Southern Oscillation.

This upsurge of warmer air from the Pacific eventually has to descend somewhere – and one portion sinks over India. As the air subsides, it becomes warmer and drier, and rain clouds struggle to form in it, which can weaken monsoon rains.

Records maintained by the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration show that seven Indian monsoons since 1950 have run into a moderate or strong El Niño. Of these, in five years, including 2026, monsoon rainfall levels were at least 10% lower than the long-term average. The IMD refers to this level as "deficient". The 2023 season was something of an exception with 'below average' rainfall.

Nonetheless, only 1997 had average rainfall.

During the monsoons, the 1997 and the 2015 El Niño were about equally strong. Sea surface temperatures in the equatorial Pacific were 1.64 degree Celsius above normal in 1997 and 1.59 degree Celsius in 2015, according to NOAA's Oceanic Niño Index. This year the figure was 1.98 degree Celsius.

Nevertheless, India received normal rainfall in 1997 but around 13% less than the normal in 2015. This is partly because of another ocean.

Indian Ocean Dipole

Like the Southern Oscillation, there is a see-saw in the Indian Ocean as well called the Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD). One end of the IOD is in the west, near Africa, and the other is in the east, near Indonesia. In specific years, the western extremity becomes warmer than usual and the eastern extremity cooler. This is known as the positive phase and is beneficial to India. The air over the warmer western waters rises more strongly, draws moist winds, and the monsoon carries more of that moisture over India. In most years, there is no tendency towards either end and the IOD is said to be neutral.

The IOD tends to tip around June and is most pronounced September-to-November, which means its impact tends to be later in the monsoon. And it tends to go into the positive phase when an El Niño occurs.

The see-saw shifted in India's favour in 1997 and offset the El Niño. In 2015, however, it barely moved. One 2024 study by researchers from India and the U.S., including IIT-Delhi, IIT-Kharagpur, NIT-Rourkela found why: a change in the belt of winds that encircles Antarctica sent westerly winds across the southern Indian Ocean, which kept the see-saw from tipping.

The IOD was again favourable in 2023. According to IMD, India received 36% less rain than normal in August 2023, the driest August since 1901.

The Department partly blamed the Madden-Julian Oscillation, a wave of clouds and rain that passes around the tropics every 30 to 60 days, which resided over Africa and the Americas during the month. The see-saw tipped in India's favour in late August and early September and extended itself into the seas off Indonesia, where it favours rains over the subcontinent.

Where an El Niño's warmest water sits also affects India's rain, according to a 2006 study in *Science*. If that water is in the middle of the Pacific Ocean, the sinking air is more likely to settle on India, which increases the odds of less rain. In 1997, the warmest waters were located further east around South America.

A study published this July in *Nature Communications* suggested that the see-saw is not the only explanation for 1997.

It also indicated other factors that occurred in July and August, notably an unusual high-pressure system high above the Iranian plateau in West Asia and additional moisture coming in from the Arabian Sea. The study also said that 1983 and 1997 were two years that made El Niño's influence on the monsoon appear less powerful than it was in reality.

Farmers and food prices

Seasons like 1997 are easier to explain in hindsight than in advance. Since 1997, IMD has changed its approach, and now updates its April forecast at the end of May. Also, since 2021, it has combined the forecasts of several global climate models into one. In both 2023 and 2026, both El Niño years, the season's rainfall levels fell within the error margin of IMD's forecast. In 2023 it forecast 96% of the long-term average, give or take 5 points, and the season ended at 94.7%. For 2026 it forecast 92%, give or take 5 points, and the season ended at 87.4%.

That said, this year was not spared complications or surprises. The IMD predicted the monsoon to be 'below normal' in April but it turned out to be 'deficient'. Only one of its four regional forecasts, for the south peninsula, came true.

Forecasters also disagreed about the IOD's see-saw. In April, IMD said "the latest climate models" showed the IOD turning positive towards the end of the monsoon season, and in early September the WMO still expected a positive IOD between September and November. The IMD's own model predicted the IOD would remain neutral from late May. Its records show it was neutral throughout the season.

The monsoon brings about three-quarters of India's yearly rain. About 40% of the country's farmland has no irrigation and depends on it, per the agriculture ministry's latest figures. Farmers plan their sowing around the forecast and officials use it to manage food stocks and water releases from dams. The onset of a weak monsoon thus reduces farmers' incomes and leads to higher food prices. IMD's May forecast also warned of "pressure on drinking water resources" nationwide.

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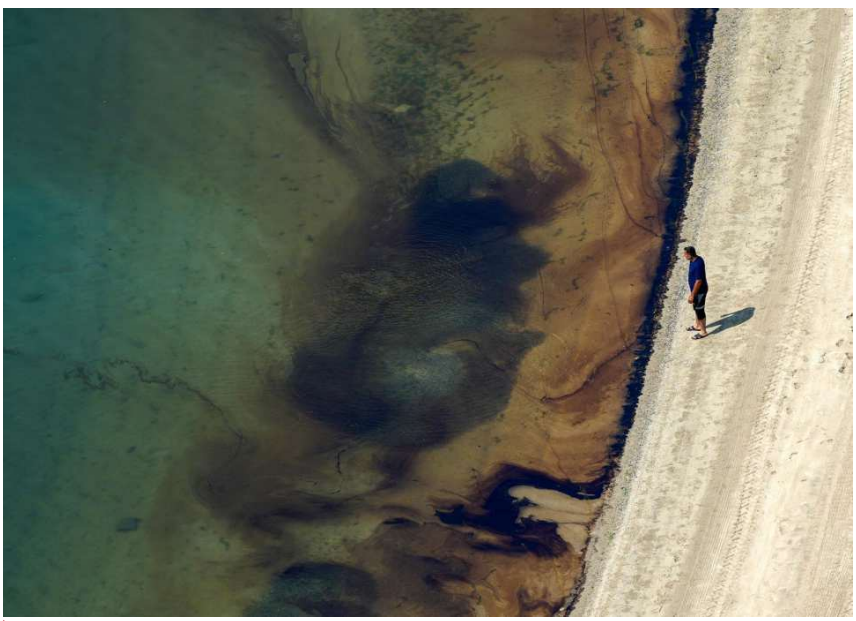


Scorched Earth: A farmer staring at a patch ofi dry agricultural land in Shivamogga, Karnataka. S.K. DINESH

THE GIST

- The Indian Ocean Dipole helped off set El Niño's impact in 1997, but had little eff ect in 2015, with one 2024 study linking this to wind changes around Antarctica that prevented the dipole from strengthening
- IMD has improved its monsoon forecasting since 1997 by updating its April forecast in late May and, since 2021, using a combination of multiple global climate models
- Despite El Niño conditions in 2023 and 2026, seasonal rainfall remained within the forecast error margin, highlighting gains in forecast accuracy

BIG SHOT



Man-made disaster: A man watches as oil washes ashore on a beach in Sharjah, United Arab Emirates, on Sunday. An oil spill from a tanker attacked near the Strait of Hormuz has spread along the UAE coastline. Sharjah has temporarily close all public beaches as a precaution. AP

WHAT IS IT?

Hell chicken: a fruity dino

Vasudevan Mukunth

Flowering plants evolved during the Cretaceous period (145-66 million years ago) and radically changed terrestrial ecosystems. Did this affect the dinosaurs as well? A new study in *Nature Communications* has answered in the affirmative, based on a small, bird-like dinosaur from the Hell Creek Formation in North America its authors found.

The species is a previously unknown member of the caenagnathids — toothless theropod dinosaurs belonging to the oviraptorosaurs.

The fossil described in the study, dubbed *Infernogallus jamesi*, had a nearly complete skull. The team estimated the animal was an adult when it died and weighed around 12 kg. 'Infernogallus' means 'hell chicken'.

CT scans and reconstructions of the jaw muscles revealed an unusual feeding apparatus. Unlike most non-avian theropods, whose jaws moved up and down, *I. jamesi* could slide its lower jaw forwards and backwards by up to 1.5 cm. Its jaw muscles also seemed to favour this motion rather than developing a strong downward bite.

As a result, the team figured that tough, fibrous vegetation or hard seeds couldn't have been an important part of the *I. jamesi* died. Instead, the researchers found the closest likeness in its jaw's motion to be among the Pesquet's parrots in New Guinea, which strip fruit pulp from seeds and chew the soft flesh in its mouth.

Thus, they have hypothesised *I. jamesi* ate lots of fleshy fruits and other soft plant tissues.

Prior research has found that the caenagnathids originated shortly after flowering plants began producing fruits, and their more elaborate feeding adaptations broadly coincided with when the fruits became bigger and more diverse.



The species is a previously unknown member of the caenagnathids. DANIELLE DUFAULT

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