

Top court clears appointments of V-Cs to eight Bengal varsities

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday cleared the appointment of Vice-Chancellors to eight State universities in West Bengal after noting that both Governor C.V. Anand Bose and the State government had accepted the recommendations of an independent search cum selection committee headed by former Chief Justice of India U.U. Lall.

S. L. THIRUGA
DELHI

INR/USD	USD/INR
1 INR = 83.17	1 USD = 12.02
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Delhi Weather

Temp	Humidity
24°C	24%
24°C	24%
24°C	24%

Delhi Pollen Today
24°C Morning with light breeze. Day will be mild with 24°C to 26°C. Night will be cool with 18°C to 20°C.

Delhi Pollen Tomorrow
22°C Pleasant morning with light breeze. Day will be mild with 24°C to 26°C. Night will be cool with 18°C to 20°C.

THE HINDU
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Kerala HC forms SIT to probe gold-clad Sabarimala idols case

SIT to be led by S. Sasikumar, SP of Crime Branch, under the supervision of H. Venkatesh, Additional DCP, Cyber Police too to be part of the team

The Hindu Bureau
KOCCHI

The Kerala High Court on Monday ordered the constitution of a special investigation team (SIT) to probe the alleged irregularities since 2019 that led to the reduction in the weight of gold-clad copper coverings of the Dwarapalika idols at the Sabarimala Ayappa temple by over 44g. The SIT would be led by S. Sasikumar, Superintendent of Police (SP) of the Crime Branch, under the supervision of H. Venkatesh, Additional Director General of Police (ADGP). Cyber Police personnel too would be part of the team.

The directive to form the SIT was passed by a Bench of Justice Raja V. Jagannathan V. and Justice K.V. Jayakumar after the Transcure Devaswom Board's Vigilance wing submitted an interim report on the matter. The Vigilance personnel had probed the reduction in weight of the idols after they were sent to a private firm in Chennai for electroplating by Choudhri Khan Potti, a businessman.

The High Court also directed that the SIT probe the matter with all confidentiality and that its report be submitted to it directly.

The High Court had a



The Opposition staging a protest outside the Kerala Assembly over the Sabarimala controversy on Monday. (Hindu Wirephoto)

Devaswom Minister welcomes HC probe

The Hindu Bureau
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Minister for Devaswom V.N. Vasudevan on Monday welcomed the high-level probe ordered by the High Court into the gold-clad idols at the Sabarimala temple, even as he said the issue goes back to 2019 and taking it up now is aimed at tarnishing the

glorious Ayappa Sangamam shrine. Addressing a press conference here, Mr. Vasudevan accused the Opposition United Democratic Front of deliberately portraying it as something new. The State government has faith in the court decision and would fully cooperate with it, he said.

week ago directed that a comprehensive inventory and expert evaluation of the valuables at the temple be carried out.

The court also appointed J.C. Santhosh, retired judge of the Kerala High Court, to depose a reputed jewel appraiser to conduct an appraisal of all items in the strongroom, those re-

corded in the Thiruvananthapuram register, and those which are gold-clad.

This came in the wake of a report submitted by the Sabarimala Special Commissioner regarding the alleged removal of gold-clad copper coverings of the Dwarapalika idols from the temple without his permission.

SC rejects plea against order for 67% quota in Telangana

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday declined to entertain a petition challenging a Telangana government order enhancing the Backward Classes' quota in municipalities and panchayats to 42%, leading to the total reservation of seats in local bodies in the State to touch 67%.

A Bench, however, gave the petitioner, Vanga Gopal Reddy, liberty to approach the Telangana High Court against the September 26 order of the State government. The Bench had queried why Mr. Vanga Gopal had moved the top court in the first instance and not the HC.

The petition, filed through advocate Somnath Sharma, raised the question whether States could increase the total reservation of seats in local bodies to breach the 50% ceiling. He pointed out the endorsement in the OBC quota had come prior to a notification issued by the Telangana State Election Commission announcing that the panchayat election process would commence from October 9. Polling would happen in two phases on October 23 and October 27.

Together with the existing 15% for the SCs and 10% for the STs, the aggregate reservation stands at 67%, directly violating the 50% ceiling, the petition had argued. The 50% ceiling rule was established by a nine-judge Bench of the Supreme Court in the Mandal Commission case judgment of 1992.

Cong. seeks SIT probe into Dalit man's lynching in U.P.

Mayank Kumar
LUCKNOW

The Congress on Monday alleged that Uttar Pradesh has turned into a hell for Dalits, minorities and backward communities under the regime of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath after a Dalit man was beaten to death on suspicion of theft in Raebareilly district last week.

On October 1, Harihar, a 36-year-old Dalit man, was beaten to death at Kandeepur jamaatpur. The police said the man was walking to his in-laws' house when a mob surrounded him and accused him of being a member of a gang marking houses with drums for theft. A video of the incident had surfaced where a group of men could be seen thrashing him with belts and sticks. It led to an uproar, after which Raebareilly police on Sunday suspended three police personnel, removed the Station House Officer, and



U.P. Congress chief Ajay Rai meeting the family of the deceased Dalit man in Raebareilly on Monday. (Hindu Wirephoto)

arrested four accused. On Monday, U.P. Congress president Ajay Rai visited the family of the victim and demanded a special investigation team (SIT) probe and Mr. Adityanath's resignation. "The lynching is a horrific picture of the jungle raj of the Yogi government... the safety of Dalits is left to God," he said, demanding ₹ crore compensation and a government job for the victim's family.

Rahul speaks to family
Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha and local MP Rahul Gandhi, whose name the victim's followed

to have mentioned in the viral video, also spoke with the family of the deceased on Sunday, offering help and support. "Under Yogi Adityanath's leadership, U.P. has become a hell for Dalits, minorities, and backward communities... law and order has completely collapsed in U.P.," Congress general secretary (organisations) K.C. Verma posted on X. Congress's Scheduled Caste cell head Rajendra Pal Gauram said Dalit oppression has increased rapidly with murders, incidents of social exclusion and discrimination against them.

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Ensure compliance

Firms that make poor quality drugs must face consequences

Amanthapur Bharat is an aspirational ideal well worth pursuing, but not without a sustained quality control framework in place. Time and again, there have been serious strains to the goal of 'making in India', particularly in the pharmaceutical sector. The issue of quality of cough syrups has repeatedly been raised, and India with great ambitions in the global pharmaceutical sector has often been short of what is required to build a robust and trustworthy industry. Recently, the Union Health Ministry sought strict drug compliance from all Indian drug manufacturers, in line with the revised Schedule M norms for pharmaceutical products in India. This came after a report from the Tamil Nadu Drugs Control Department listed above permissible limits of diethylene glycol (DEG) in samples of Cilex, a cough syrup being manufactured by a private company. The tests were initiated after cough syrup was suspected to be behind the recent deaths of at least 14 children in Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh. Sonmeh, while the Health Ministry ruled out the presence of DEG, in initial tests conducted on samples from the two States, it was detected in one of the batches listed by Tamil Nadu within the State. The State's Drugs Control Department also recorded several non-compliance factors in the Good Manufacturing Practices and Good Laboratory Practices of the Drugs Rules, at the manufacturing facility. Its report mentioned that the contaminated batch was manufactured using non-pharmaceutical grade propylene glycol as an excipient. It mentioned that this might have contaminated the drug with DEG and diethylene glycol, known nephrotoxic substances. The Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation has recommended cancellation of the firm's manufacturing licence. Meanwhile, a doctor who reportedly recommended the cough syrup to many of the children who died in Madhya Pradesh was arrested.

While these measures are good to address the situation in the instant case, what the Indian state must do is have a very threshold for poor quality drugs. Hawk like monitoring is necessary, and action when violations are detected. It is criminal to act only when deaths have occurred, that is unjustifiable. A framework of proven Good Laboratory Practices already exists, what is needed is enforcement in handling every such reported violation, along with regular surprise inspections of drug batches, with appropriate action taken for every violation. It is important to send the message down the assembly line that the government will not break any shoddiness or violations that endanger the lives of people.

Kept in check

The Nobel laureates' work has redefined the immune system itself

The 2025 Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine has recognised discoveries that transformed the scientific understanding of autoimmune regulation. Today, researchers are exploring these conditions' genetic, molecular, and environmental determinants, paving the way for early diagnostics and targeted interventions. An important chunk of this advance is owed to the work of Mary Brinkow, Fred Ramsdell, and Shimon Sakaguchi, who established the role of regulatory T-cells (Tregs) and the transcription factor FOXP3. In the 1990s, immunologists had already defined the defect of self-reactive T-cells during maturation, yet this process could not account for the persistence of autoreactive T-cells in healthy individuals. Sakaguchi figured that an additional mechanism must operate in the periphery. In 1995, his team identified a subset of CD4⁺ T-cells that, when they were removed from mice, led to multiple autoimmune diseases, while inserting the cells prevented disease. Next, Brinkow and Ramsdell, then at Celltech Pharmaceuticals, found that mice lacking FOXP3, which mice make scurfy mice developed severe multi-organ autoimmunity and died within weeks of birth. They were able to narrow the mutation to the X chromosome, identifying an insertion in the DNA that truncated a previously unknown gene. They named it FOXP3, and found that losing it led to immune collapse. Soon, clinical collaborators reported mutations in FOXP3 in boys with a lethal autoimmune disorder. These findings together established that self-tolerance relied on a molecular switch governing the differentiation and maintenance of Tregs.

Today, in autoimmune diseases, experimental treatments aim to expand or stabilise Tregs. Early clinical trials have shown that redefining this cell population can mitigate harmful immune activation without broad immunosuppression, a transformation, engineered Tregs are being infused to improve graft acceptance. In cancer, researchers are exploring selective depletion or reprogramming of tumour-associated Tregs to enhance immunity without triggering autoimmunity. Beyond therapy, the conceptual shift brought us by the laureates' work has redefined the immune system: from an on/off apparatus to a dynamic ecosystem of activation and restraint. That Brinkow and Ramsdell conducted their work within industry also underscores how private sector research can yield significant discoveries. But even now, some immunologists caution against understating the field's incremental nature. In a testament to the broader landscape including overlapping layers of control rather than a single molecular pathway, researchers face several obstacles to translating what they know in mice, available therapies. Cell-based therapies' high cost has also accentuated inequities in access, creating ethical and policy challenges.

Societies in search of a quick fix often look for a scapegoat. In today's India, for much of the ruling class, it is the courts which don the role. Public policy advisers are quick to point the judiciary as obstructionist and somehow responsible for stalling India's otherwise grandiose plans for economic prosperity.

Nin for the first time, Sanjeev Sanyal, a member of the Prime Minister's Economic Advisory Council, pointed to the courts as the chief roadblock to the country's development. "We effectively have somewhere between 20-25 years as because Vikas Bharat," he said. "The judicial system and the legal ecosystem, but the judicial system in particular, is now, in my view, the single biggest hurdle to (India) becoming Vikas Bharat and growing rapidly."

Misinformation, vague censure is no solution Leaving aside what Vikas Bharat might, in fact, mean, these comments once again reduce the judiciary to a caricature. Mr. Sanyal's speech, delivered at the Nyaaya Nirman conference last month, recycles familiar tropes about judges working short hours and going on vacations. Mr. Sanyal, perhaps justifiably, claims that we must stop being self-congratulatory when it comes to analysing the workings of our legal processes. But the solution is not misinformation or vague and hazy censure.

India's judicial system is far from perfect. But to brand its imperfections as the "single biggest hurdle" to growth distorts its place in India's democracy. What is true is that our courts are overburdened and under-resourced, but other wings of government scarcely consider these to be issues of priority. In reality, the courts only mirror the failures that mire the rest of India's governance.

Mr. Sanyal's own example undercuts his case. He cites the enforcement of Section 12A of the Commercial Courts Act, 2015, which makes pre-suit mediation mandatory. He says that in Mumbai, most of such mediations fail, demonstrating that the courts are imposing an ineffective procedure. But what this ignores is that it is not our courts that dream up Section 12A. Parliament wrote it into law. Judges are bound to enforce what legislatures enact. If a provision is poorly designed, the failure lies with the drafters, not with those applying it.

Mr. Sanyal also invokes what he calls the "99-0-1 problem". In his telling, most of India's rules and regulations are drafted to guard against the abuse of laws by a small fraction of people—exceptions, which he argues, should be left to the courts to resolve. "Because I do not think it will get sorted out there, the rest of the 99% of laws and rules end up being complicated to address that 1%, feeding back into a spiral," he says. The



Sanjeev Sanyal

is an advocate practising in the Madras High Court

India's judicial system only mirrors the failures that mire the rest of its governance

precise meaning of this formulation is difficult to pin down, but what it points to, once again, is less a judicial failing and more a familiar malaise of Indian law-making—that is, imprecision in drafting.

He further suggests that this 99-0-1 problem manifests in the court's inability to enforce contracts efficiently. But this too is a superficial critique which ignores how the country's largest contractors, the Union and State governments, behave. Tender documents are riddled with arbitrary conditions, routine processes are overburdened, and legal rights are treated as discretionary favours. It is easy to speak about judicial delays without emphasising on the role played in it by India's biggest litigant—the government.

Top authorities file appeals against routine orders as a matter of course, often dragging disputes all the way up to the Supreme Court of India. Ministries fight over simple contractual matters that they ought to litigate. Public enterprises are with little thought, squandering judicial resources. Citizens, pensioners, teachers, public service employees and doctors serving the state are forced to litigate for simple benefits that they are entitled to in the ordinary course. If efficiency is our concern, then we must ask ourselves why successive governments—both at the level of the Union and the States—have been unwilling to discipline their own litigation practices.

The system, the reality

Another easy target is court sittings. The visible part of the job might run only from 10:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. In the case of the Supreme Court and a little longer in the case of the High Courts. But judges may hear anywhere between 50 to 100 cases during this window. It is a difficult job to do well.

Behind these hearings lie hours of preparation: reading briefs, drafting and signing orders, and considering precedents. Much of judicial work requires cerebral thought and happens behind closed doors, in the early hours of the morning or late into night and certainly across weekends.

Vacations too are misunderstood. Their colonial origins make them an easy target. But courts have benches sitting through vacations too, and the holidays that other judges get to meant for a little relaxation but for the most part to complete their reserved judgments. India's judges are already working against improbable odds. They face one of the heaviest caseloads in the world, a fact that is only compounded by continuing vacancies. To deny them structured breaks would only undermine the cause of justice.

What Mr. Sanyal's lament also ignores is that

Israel's new doctrine of 'going on the attack'



Nareesh Kamdhil

is a former editor at Associated Press and BBC News, and is based in London

There is a new wave of optimism among both Palestinians and Israelis after United States President Donald Trump revealed his peace plan to the presence of Israel's Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, a week ago. With Hamas agreeing to release all Israeli hostages and Mr. Trump welcoming the move and asking Israel to stop bombing, optimism has increased further. But there is little hope of a lasting peace if one looks back at Israel's conduct since the Hamas terror attack two years ago.

A setback response

Last month, the day after a United Nations commission of inquiry found Israel guilty of committing genocide against Palestinians in Gaza, a senior Israeli Minister revealed a plan for the occupied territory. Far-right Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich told a real estate conference in Tel Aviv that the Gaza Strip was a potential real estate "business" and that he was in talks with the U.S. on how to divide up the coastal enclave after the war.

Mr. Smotrich's comment came 24 hours after Israel launched its long-awaited ground offensive in Gaza City with a new wave of killings and destruction. Little of Palestinians were forced to flee their homes again, and if one believes Mr. Smotrich, they will never be able to return.

Israel claims that it has been fighting to destroy Hamas in Gaza. But its military has targeted the entire Palestinian community and tried to dehumanise it. Yoav Gallant, who was Defence Minister at the time of the Hamas-led October 7, 2023 terror attack on Israel, said that Israel was fighting "human animals".

Soon after Israel launched its military campaign in response to the Hamas attack in 2023, Mr. Netanyahu compared the Gaza war to the story of the Jewish fight against an enemy

known as Amalek. In the Old Testament, God tells the Jewish people to eliminate all the Amalek men, women and children, as well as their possessions and their animals.

This suggests what the Palestinians are up against. The use of brutal military force has emerged as the main pillar of Israel's security policy since the Hamas attack. This policy is backed by the U.S., which provides unfettering military and diplomatic support to Israel.

Mr. Netanyahu has already declared that there will be no Palestinian state, despite most of the world, including several western governments, recognising Palestine. Last month, he signed an agreement to go ahead with a controversial settlement plan for Jews that will cut across the occupied West Bank territory, which Palestinians seek for a state. The far-right Israeli parties have always opposed a Palestinian state, and their leaders have been calling for the annexation of the entire West Bank and Gaza.

Across borders

Israel's military doctrine of using brutal force against its enemies goes beyond its borders. The Netanyahu government now acts like a regional hegemon in West Asia. After he launched air strikes against Iran in June, Mr. Netanyahu declared his intention to change the regime.

Earlier, Israel used to kill its enemies abroad but would not acknowledge it. Not any more. Its actions in Syria, Iran, Yemen, and the recent attack on Hamas negotiators in Qatar show that it is not hesitant to go after its enemies.

There is no doubt that Israel has achieved remarkable military successes against its enemies in the past 20 months. It has decapitated the leadership of Hamas and its ally Hezbollah in Lebanon, killed thousands of their fighters and inflicted a severe blow to the Iranian military with

much of the judiciary's burden comes from laws that are misinterpreted, vague, and designed for optics rather than clarity. The government's much vaunted criminal law reforms went little further than changing the names of India's age-old criminal legislation. For the most part, they recycle the colonial framework, if merely converting what were codes into statutes, leaving judges and lawyers grappling with decades of precedent with newly rebranded sections.

The new Income Tax Act, which will come into force next year, is another case in point. Its enactment has been touted as an effort at simplification. But a reading of its provisions suggests that it is old wine in a new bottle. Exemptions, exceptions and provisions have been removed and inserted as new sections, only likely leading to a new wave of litigation.

The word "notwithstanding" used in many places in the existing income-tax law has been replaced with the word "irrespective". The first word has deep legal roots. There is a mountain of case law on how phrases such as "notwithstanding anything contained in any other statute" should be interpreted. In theory, the word "irrespective" is meant to serve as a simpler substitute. But how exactly does this change make the law any clearer for the everyday taxpayer? If anything, it swaps one piece of legal jargon for another. For the ordinary taxpayer, the law is, at best, differently obscure.

None of this is to deny that the judiciary needs reform. Delays are real, infrastructure is outdated, and accountability mechanisms are weak. But lampooning the system as the "biggest hurdle" to our development only clouds the debate.

Must act in the lower judiciary

It is no doubt politically convenient to cast the judiciary as the culprit. Doing so allows governments to deflect their own failures—both administrative and legislative. But our disputes drag on for the most part, not because judges are not vacationing, but because our laws are poorly framed, governments have an endless appetite for litigation, and docket remains overloaded even as vacancies persist. These pressures are felt most acutely in the district courts, where most Indians encounter the justice system.

India's constitutional democracy is not designed for speed alone. Courts were never meant to be rubber stamps for governance but independent checks on executive power. To weaken them is to chip away at the very foundation of what distinguishes us in these sense-right in merit. The judiciary is not flawless. But if we are serious about reform, we must look beyond distractions on vacations and delays and confront the structural failings that lie closest here.

the U.S. backed air strikes.

But Israel has failed to defeat Hamas—in its stated objective of the war—underlining a reality that the use of brutal force alone cannot achieve. It remains the most powerful group in Gaza and retains the ability to recruit new fighters. Although Mr. Trump's peace plan does not give any future role to Hamas and demands that it lay down arms, the group is unlikely to accept that.

The global response is changing

There is an even more important issue that should worry Israel. After killing over 67,000 people, most of them civilians, in Gaza, destroying its infrastructure, flattening most of its buildings and creating a famine-like situation, Israel is becoming isolated internationally.

The European Commission plans to restrict trade with Israel and impose sanctions on its extremist politicians. Norway is removing Israel-based companies from its sovereign wealth fund. In Hollywood, there has been a signature campaign going on to boycott Israeli companies.

This has made many Israelis worried. According to a recent opinion poll, 78% of Israelis are in favour of ending the war. Israel's generals are also not happy with Mr. Netanyahu. Many opposition politicians accuse him of prolonging the war to stay in power.

Most Israelis are nervous that the current military doctrine will only make Palestinians more desperate, driving more of their youth towards Hamas.

Mr. Trump's pressure on Israel to accept its plan suggests that even American support is no longer certain. But can the world trust Mr. Trump, who is known to chicken out? Is he really committed to peace and willing to run in Mr. Netanyahu?

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Drug makers, safety norms

It is surprising that some manufacturers of cough syrup in India have not learnt any lesson after the uproar by some foreign countries such as Zambia and Uzbekistan, some years ago, following a similar incident—and the enforcement caused to India (inside pages, "Drug makers must comply with revised norms: govt", October 6). (As inspection and a weak oversight mechanism

appear to have emboldened some pharma manufacturers to cross red lines, it is not enough that the government prescribes norms and Good Manufacturing Practices. Hawk-like oversight with regular inspections and stringent action against pharmaceutical units not adhering to prescribed norms are imperative, India is called the "Pharmacy of the world" and drug manufacturers have to be extra cautious and adhere

to international standards. Nareesh Chennivenuki, Hyderabad

I write this letter as a Professor of family medicine, paediatrics, clinical ethics and medical education. One fails to understand the failure to recognise important combinations of numerous medications available in the market. In the present instance, the cough syrup under scrutiny is like many others available in the

market—i.e., irrational combinations. It allegedly has chlorpheniramine, phenylephrine and paracetamol. The first two have the potential for serious adverse effects, hence they are globally disallowed in children under age two if not age six. Combining them with paracetamol, which has a different frequency of administration, makes it a high-risk for overdoses. These risks are irrespective of the addition of glycerol

levels. Should not these irrational combinations be scrutinised and the approving authority held responsible? Dr. Sanjay Joshi, Bangalore

An ugly law

It is unfortunate that growing hostility between India and Pakistan has seeped into sport. In cricket, for example, one had the men's and women's teams refusing post-match handshakes, tarnishing the

spirit of the "gentleman's game". Latest win or lost come later; dignity comes first. Sports should unite, not divide. The authorities must act to restore respect and fair play or stop teams from spreading animosity. True athletes rise above politics, showing that teamwork is a game's values is the real victory. R.S. Nair, Palani, Punjab

Letter's signatories: letters@thehindu.co.in must carry the postal address.

Reforming passive euthanasia in India

In June, the U.K.'s House of Commons passed the Terminally Ill Adults (End of Life) Bill, negotiating a global conversation about euthanasia. The proposed law permits physician-assisted dying for mentally competent adults expected to live fewer than six months, subject to medical certification and oversight by a national panel. While it is awaiting approval from the House of Lords, the Bill marks a bold legal and moral step that many western countries have embraced.

While India has recognised passive euthanasia through a series of Supreme Court judgments, it has consistently drawn a line against active euthanasia. Cultural values, institutional capacity, and socio-economic conditions make it unlikely that India will mirror the U.K.'s path. But that does not mean it should remain static.

Practical inaccessibility

Passive euthanasia permits the withdrawal of life-sustaining treatment when it merely prolongs suffering. It is not an act of killing but an allowance for death to take its natural course. Yet, despite legal recognition, procedural requirements, such as advance directives, dual medical board clearance, and occasional judicial oversight, make implementation painfully slow.

For patients in terminal stages or their families, these delays amount to cruelty. The law, though sound in principle, is often hollow to practice. Reports from tertiary hospitals suggest that in most cases, families are forced to make decisions informally and outside the legal framework, thus placing doctors in a difficult legal position. The absence of an efficient implementation system erodes the very clarity the law was intended to preserve.

The U.K. model, while progressive, rests on strong institutional supports such as the National Health Service, universal access to general practitioners,



K. Kannan
former judge, Punjab and Haryana High Court, and author, *Medical and Law* (2025)

and a reliable regulatory framework. India's healthcare system is fragmented, uneven, and under-resourced. Moreover, its societal context — marked by deep family involvement, religious sensitivities, and varying literacy levels — makes end-of-life choices more complex. Introducing active euthanasia, even with safeguards, may inadvertently pressure the elderly, disabled, or financially dependent to opt for death. As medical care is expensive and palliative care underdeveloped, this could produce ethical dilemmas of coercion.

There are also jurisprudential concerns. While Article 21 of the Constitution guarantees the right to life and has been interpreted to include the right to die with dignity, this cannot be stretched to mean a right to be killed. The Supreme Court has been cautious in maintaining the distinction between omission and commission, between allowing death and causing death. The Indian approach reflects a careful ethical conservatism suited to the realities of the country.

Charting its own course

Rather than expanding into active euthanasia, India should focus on refining its passive euthanasia protocol. A humane, efficient system can be built by integrating digital tools and streamlining procedures. There is already growing consensus among medical professionals and legal scholars that the present system is no longer tenable.

Advance directives should be legislated on a national digital portal, linked with Aadhaar for biometric verification. This system should allow patients to create, update, or revoke their directives easily. A treating physician should validate the patient's mental capacity and intent online.

Hospital ethics committees, consisting of senior doctors, a palliative care specialist, and a neutral third party, should be empowered to authorise withdrawal of life support within

48 hours. Exceptional cases can be flagged for further scrutiny.

Although a State-level ombudsman was initially proposed for oversight, India's experience with ombudsman schemes in banking and insurance has been mixed. Delays, limited enforcement powers, and public unfamiliarity have marred their effectiveness. Instead, a more transparent, decentralised review mechanism — perhaps built into hospital networks and monitored through digital dashboards — may be more suitable. Independent medical auditors or health commissioners with statutory backing could be alternatives worth exploring.

Mandatory safeguards, such as a seven-day cooling-off period, psychological counselling, and palliative care review, should remain part of the process to prevent misuse and ensure decisions are fully informed. These align with international best practices and help address fears of abuse, especially among vulnerable populations.

The way forward

India's constitutional promise of dignity in life must extend to dignity in dying. Reforming passive euthanasia does not require India to imitate the U.K.'s active euthanasia model, but it does compel it to make the current framework workable. Digitally driven procedures, local hospital-based ethics review, and effective (but not burdensome) oversight can make end-of-life decisions more accessible and humane. This path is consistent with Indian values, safeguards against abuse, and empowers patients without risking exploitation. In addition, medical education must integrate training on end-of-life care, including ethical and legal components. Public awareness campaigns are essential to normalise discussions on advance care planning. Without public trust and awareness, even the best laws will fail to serve their purpose.

We need an urban climate emergency fund

Disaster recovery cannot depend on ad hoc grants or delayed relief measures

STATE OF PLAY

Serjib Nallathil
senior author, *Water* (2025)

B rains of localised flooding across Hyderabad during the 2025 monsoon threatened residents, damaged roads, forced businesses to close, and disrupted electric supply for days. This year's deluge is yet another reminder of how rainfall patterns have shifted in Telangana. The average monsoon rainfall for Hyderabad through the 20th century was 76.88 cm, but over the last 25 years, the city has recorded an average of 91.84 cm. While scientists debate the extent to which this shift is attributable to climate change, for citizens, the cause is less pressing than the consequence.

In Hyderabad, the basements of high-rise apartments were flooded and cars were swept away. And as always, the poor, particularly those who live along the Musi River and lake beds, were impacted the most. They lost talloos, home appliances, documents, and vehicles. For families in areas such as Moosa Nagar, Choudiguda, and Kishanpally, which are on the edge of the river, flooding means a lost school year for children, rising cases of water-borne diseases, and the struggle to rebuild their lives with no insurance safety net.

Hyderabad's vulnerability is the result of wilful ignorance of the city's natural gradient and watersheds, decades of civic corruption, and the systematic dereliction of zoning regulations. By shrinking lakes and encroaching on storm water drains, the city has systematically dismantled its natural floodwater flow patterns. Shifting rainfall patterns



are aggravating the problem.

The state government's creation of the Hyderabad Disaster Management and Asset Protection Agency in 2024 was a step forward in dealing with the crisis. The agency has been working to clear lake bed encroachments and rejuvenate water bodies. It restored the Bathikamma Ganga lake, which offers a glimmer of hope. Yet, these interventions cannot undo the damage caused over decades. For instance, the main office of the Hyderabad Metropolitan Development Authority was built in the 1970s on what used to be one of the four lakes in the Amerpet area.

Climate change is making cities vulnerable. Is India trying to make cities resilient? On July 24, 2025, MP Basikumar Choudhary asked in the Lok Sabha, "Will the Minister of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) be pleased to state the manner in which the government is incorporating climate resilience into urban planning and infrastructure development to address recurring issues such as flooding, waterlogging and damage to critical systems...?"

In response, the Minister of State for MoHUA, Tolkun Satba, said that urban affairs falls under the purview of the State governments and urban local bodies. The only financial commitment that the Centre made in this year's budget was the Urban Challenge Fund of

₹1 lakh crore, aimed at implementing proposals for 'Cities as Growth Hubs', 'Creative Re-development of Cities', and 'Water and Sanitation'. "This fund finances up to 25% of the cost of bankable projects with a stipulation that at least 50% of the cost is funded from bonds, bank loans, and Public Private Partnership," he said.

What Hyderabad and other urban areas need is a dedicated climate emergency fund. Cities should be able to draw from such a fund for both short-term reconstruction and long-term adaptation. Disaster recovery cannot depend on ad hoc grants or delayed relief measures. If extreme events are going to be the new normal, funding mechanisms need to reflect that reality.

Building resilience is a key challenge, and the Telangana government's Musi Riverfront Development Plan embodies this effort. The plan aligns with the MoHUA's document of 2020, 'River Centric Urban Planning Guidelines', which factored in climate change and suggested the creation of active and passive recreational areas and enforcement of eco-sensitive zoning regulations. The project costs an estimated ₹1 lakh crore-₹1.5 lakh crore. Yet, securing funding has proved to be difficult. Without substantial commitment from the Centre, projects such as this risk becoming cosmetic.

Indian cities are engines of economic growth; they are home to over a third of the country's population and provide most of the jobs in the informal sector. But without climate resilience, these engines will stall. The story of Hyderabad's flooded streets is not just about poor drainage — it is about a development model that requires urgent funds to ride over the climate emergency unfolding in front of us.

Crimes against children surge in Assam, Rajasthan, and Kerala

A rise in the number of cases does not always mean a rise in the number of crimes; it may also indicate better reporting

DATA POINT

Devyashil Dikshit

In 2023, cases of crimes against children recorded the sharpest rise in three States — Assam, Rajasthan and Kerala, according to the latest data from the National Crime Records Bureau.

In Assam, recorded cases of crimes against children surged by nearly 100% — from an average of around 5,100 cases between 2018 and 2022 to more than 10,000 in 2023. In Kerala, the number increased by 100% — from an average of more than 1,600 cases between 2018 and 2022 to more than 3,900 cases in 2023. In Rajasthan, the number increased by 70% — from an average of 6,200 cases between 2018 and 2022 to more than 10,500 cases in 2023.

In comparison, overall recorded cases of crimes against children in India increased by 29% in that period. Map 1 shows the percentage change in cases of crimes against children in 2023 compared with the average number of cases recorded between 2018 and 2022. While these three States stand out, the reasons for the rise in each of them vary considerably.

In Assam, a recent crackdown on child marriage led to a sharp rise in the number of cases filed under the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006. In fact, a close look at Assam's crime data against children shows that the spike was driven almost entirely by this State-led intervention. Between 2020 and 2022, about 150 cases were recorded annually in Assam under the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act; this increased to 5,267 in 2023. That year, cases related to child marriage accounted for nearly 52% of all crimes against children in the State, a dramatic jump from 3-4% in the preceding years, as shown in Chart 2.

In Rajasthan, two key factors appear to have driven the rise. The first is the sudden shift in the way

offences against children were categorised — from only non-POCSO sections to specific POCSO provisions. POCSO refers to the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012. In 2021 and 2022, over 2,700 cases were filed separately under the rape provision Section 375 of the Indian Penal Code. However, in 2022 and 2023, no cases were filed independently under this section; instead, there was a corresponding rise in cases registered under the relevant POCSO provision. Cases filed under Sections 4 and 6 of the POCSO Act read with Section 376 of the IPC increased from just three in 2021 and 2022 to more than 3,500 in 2022 and 2023 (Chart 3). This shift — from filing cases solely under IPC provisions to invoking relevant sections of the POCSO Act — was seen across the country, but was most pronounced in Rajasthan.

It should be noted that the more accurate classification of child rape cases occurred alongside an actual increase in such offences in Rajasthan — from about 2,700 in 2022 to more than 3,500 cases in 2023. However, whether this rise is primarily due to proper classification or an actual increase in offences is an open question.

The second is that there was a sharp spike in cases related to the kidnapping and abduction of children. In Rajasthan, cases filed under various sections related to the kidnapping and abduction of children rose sharply, with their share in total crimes against children climbing to over 54% in 2023 — a steep increase (Chart 4).

There was a surge in POCSO cases in Kerala too. The increase appears partly linked to more accurate classification of offences under specific POCSO sections, accompanied by an increase in the reported cases (Chart 5).

It is important to note that the rise in cases, particularly those involving crimes against children, may indicate improved reporting, rather than a genuine increase in the incidence of such crimes.

Three States, one trend

The data for the charts were sourced from the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) from 2018 to 2023

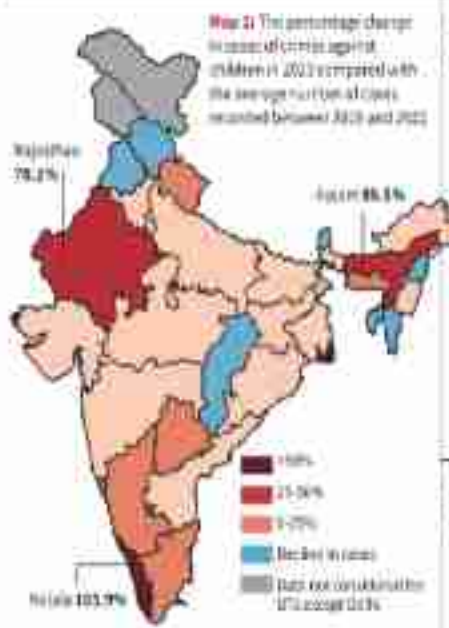


Chart 1: The number of cases registered under the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act in Assam, and its share (%) in total cases of crimes against children

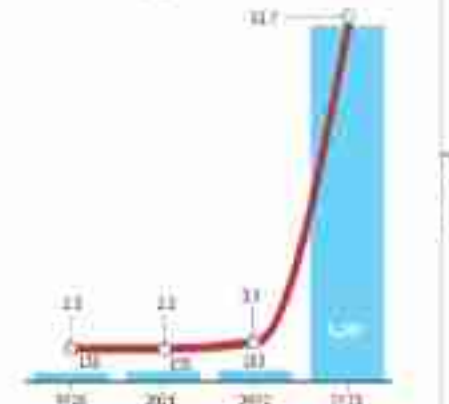


Chart 2: It is important to note that the rise in cases, particularly those involving crimes against children, may indicate improved reporting, rather than a genuine increase in the incidence of such crimes

Chart 3: Cases registered under various POCSO provisions in Rajasthan, and its share (%) in total cases of crimes against children



Chart 4: Cases registered under kidnapping and abduction of children in Rajasthan, and its share (%) in total cases of crimes against children

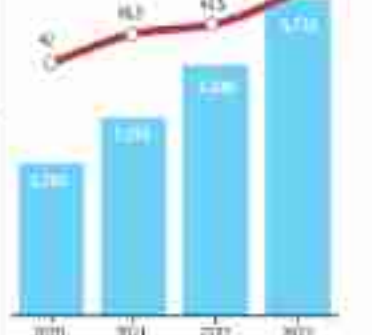


Chart 5: Cases registered under various POCSO provisions in Kerala, and its share (%) in total cases of crimes against children



FROM THE ARCHIVES

The Hindu.

FIFTY YEARS AGO - OCTOBER 7, 1975

Computer to aid quick recruitment by UPSC

New Delhi, Oct. 6: The Union Public Service Commission is applying its mind now on how best it can improve the efficiency of its recruitment processes. It is also considering measures to ensure speedy completion of recruitment to various posts.

After a great deal of study, it has finally been decided to go in for computerising to achieve these two objectives. A contract for consultancy on the steps to be taken for computerisation has been concluded with the Indian Statistical Institute in Calcutta.

To ensure a more meaningful scrutiny of applications received for scientific and technical posts and for dealing with related matters, the UPSC has appointed to its Secretariat highly qualified technical personnel.

Simultaneously, the UPSC has initiated steps to constitute a data bank on experts in various fields who can be considered for appointments to senior positions and who can be utilised for assisting the Commission either as advisers while interviewing candidates or as examiners. The work has been completed in a number of fields while in a few fields it is yet to be completed.

It has been the experience of the UPSC that for some important posts, the right type of persons do not apply either because they do not want to face open competition or because they are not inclined to apply for the jobs. So the UPSC itself circulates periodically details of vacancies to important institutions which have the talent suitable for the posts. The data bank will enable the UPSC to keep the names of such persons ready and offer them the posts. From experience, the UPSC has found that this is a useful way of getting the most competent person for certain specialities.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO - OCTOBER 7, 1925

Anti-malaria Congress

Burne, Oct. 6: The Anti Malaria Congress closed, after unanimously approving acceptance of invitation from France to hold the next conference at Algiers in 1930 on the occasion of the centenary of the French occupation of Algiers and the 100th anniversary of the discovery of the parasite of Malaria in Algeria.

Text & Context

THE  HINDU

NEWS IN NUMBERS

Migrants who died on the Serbia-Croatia border since 2014

413

A Chinese migrant has died and nine others have been rescued after their boat capsized crossing the Danube river on the Serbia and Croatia border. Croatia, a member of the European Union, is a major transit country for undocumented migrants trying to reach the political bloc. **AP**

Jobs shed by the UNHCR this year amid a funding crisis

5,000

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) is facing a funding crisis amid surging global displacement, humanitarian funding has been fast evaporating since U.S. President Trump returned to office in January. **AP**

Persons killed in the landslides and floods in north Bengal

28

The toll in the devastating landslides and floods in northern West Bengal rose to 28, as disaster management personnel continued rescue operations on Monday with several people still missing and thousands of tourists stranded in cut-off hill pockets, officials said. **AP**

First-time voters in the upcoming Bihar Assembly election

14

In total, over 7.6 crore people are eligible to vote in the upcoming Bihar Assembly elections, Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Gyanesh Narayan announced on Monday. The CEC assured that the Bihar elections will be conducted in a transparent and peaceful manner. **AP**

Number of Gaza flotilla activists deported by Israel

171

Israel said it deported 171 more activists who were detained while taking part in an aid flotilla bound for Gaza. It added that the deportees were citizens of several countries, including Greece, Italy, France and the U.S. **AP**

COMPILATION BY THE HINDU DATA TEAM

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Can a third party be liable for marital disruption?

What is the alienation of affection tort? Do States in the U.S. enforce this common law? Does the Delhi High Court's move go against the Supreme Court's judgment in the Joseph Shine case? Can a family court decide damages against a third-party?

EXPLAINER

Shubham Shukla
Kartikay Singh

The story so far:

Recently, the Delhi High Court (HC), in a first-of-its-kind move in *Shelly Mahajan versus MS Jhansabhai Raut & Anr*, has opened the door for spouses to seek damages, in the civil sphere, from third parties who interfered in their marriage with mala fide intention, causing its breakdown. Overruling the objections to the suit's maintainability, the High Court issued summons to a wife's suit seeking damages for Alienation of Affection (AoA), against her husband's alleged affair partner. The decision revived an old Anglo-American concept, long abolished globally, putting the spotlight on a rarely tested legal idea in India. Seen as sidestepping the Supreme Court's mandate in *Joseph Shine versus Union of India*, it also raises fresh questions on whether Indian civil courts can impose liability for third-party interference in marriage.

What is alienation of affection?

AoA is a term from common law referring to a "heart-balm" tort, which allows a spouse to sue a third party, usually the lover, for wilfully interfering in the marriage and causing "loss of affection and companionship". The doctrine rests on the idea that marriage carries legal interests like consortium, intimacy, support and a shared life. Notably, the Indian legal framework neither codifies nor prohibits AoA, yet in *Pinnoli Maheswari Raut versus State of Gujarat* (2013), the Supreme Court held that "alienation of affection by a stranger, if proved, is an intentional tort." In *Indira Sarma versus V.K.R. Sarma*, the top court further noted that AoA could even give children a cause of action against a third party for alienating their father. However, the doctrine has never been used to award damages in India.

How do U.S. courts view AoA?

In the U.S., AoA lawsuits remain in only a few States, like Hawaii, Mississippi, New Mexico, North Carolina, South Dakota, and Utah, while most others have abolished them over the past century as outdated or prone to abuse. In these States, for establishing a claim, the aggrieved spouse must prove three elements — (i) existence of genuine love and affection in the marriage; (ii) its loss; and (iii) that a third party's malicious conduct caused the loss. In contrast, States that have abolished AoA, through legislation or court rulings, consider such claims to be against public policy or incompatible with modern views of marriage. Thus, U.S. courts' stance on AoA varies, as a small number of courts still uphold the tort with strict proof requirements, while the majority reject it, treating marital breakdowns as private matters not suitable for compensation under tort.

What did Supreme Court decide in Joseph Shine's case?

In *Joseph Shine versus Union of India* (2018), a five-judge Constitution Bench led by then Chief Justice of India (CJI) Jhanku Mishra decriminalised adultery, striking it from the Indian Penal Code while clarifying it remains a civil wrong and valid ground for divorce. In 2020, another five-judge Bench headed by former CJI Sharad A. Bobde dismissed review petitions as futile. Earlier, the law



GETTY IMAGES

punished a man with up to five years' imprisonment for sexual relations with another man's wife, but exempted the consenting wife from prosecution and did not apply if the married man engaged in sexual relations with an unmarried woman or widow.

The 2018 *Joseph Shine* verdict held that consensual extramarital sexual relationships are no longer criminal, that is, no one can be jailed or fined for adultery, striking down the colonial provision, the Supreme Court highlighted that adultery is not a crime if the husband consents or consents to his wife's extramarital affair, thereby treating a married woman as her husband's "channel". Emphasising that adultery is "absolutely a matter of privacy at its pinnacle," the top court reasoned it should remain only a ground for divorce, not a crime. Thus, while decriminalised, adultery still carries civil consequences in family law or tort, as *Joseph Shine* did not expressly or impliedly sanction such implications.

What did the Delhi High Court say?

In *Shelly Mahajan*, the Delhi High Court issued summons by taking a *prima facie* view that a spouse can sue the partner's paramour for interfering in the marriage and seek compensation. The HC clarified that while *Joseph Shine* decriminalised adultery, it did not grant a licence for 'extramarital relationships' free of civil or

legal implications. Matrimonial statutes like the Hindu Marriage Act, 1955, offer remedies between spouses (for example, divorce), but none against a third party intruding into the marriage, the court further stressed.

Since matrimonial laws like the Hindu Marriage Act, 1955, provide remedies only between spouses, a civil tort claim against a third party for such interference remains open, in the absence of a specific bar, the court further stressed. However, the HC also acknowledged an important limitation that there has to be wrongful inducement or misconduct by the third party that caused the marital breakdown. When one spouse claims to have suffered legal injury on account of the disruption of the marital relationship, the law, under tort, recognises that compensation may be sought from those alleged to have contributed to the breach, the court noted.

The ruling clarified that while adultery is decriminalised and not punishable by the state, it still carries civil consequences in India. These include loss of consortium claims, compensation suits like the AoA case, and the personal remedy of divorce, where a betrayed spouse may petition the family court to dissolve the marriage on grounds of adultery. More importantly, the HC also laid down a three-fold test to decide such a claim. First, intentional and wrongful conduct by the paramour directed at alienating the marital

relationship of the aggrieved spouse. Second, clear causation linking that conduct to a legally cognisable injury to the aggrieved spouse. Third, the loss claimed is susceptible to rational assessment.

Who has jurisdiction to decide the AoA claim?

One key issue before the Delhi HC was whether AoA suits should go for trial in family courts or civil courts. It held that family courts have exclusive jurisdiction over matrimonial causes between spouses (divorce, alimony, custody, etc.), but a claim against a third party for interfering in a marriage is an independent civil injury (a tort), not arising from the marital relationship itself. Therefore, a family court cannot adjudicate a tort claim against a third person, and the civil court retains the jurisdiction. The Court added that if a spouse has a protectable interest in the marriage, third parties bear a correlative duty not to intentionally and wrongfully alienate that affection.

The Delhi High Court's ruling marks a significant step in recognising civil recourse for spouses affected by interference in marriage. It opens the door for carefully framed claims that respect both personal autonomy and marital rights, offering a path for justice where harm has been caused.

Shubham Shukla and Kartikay Singh are lawyers based in New Delhi.

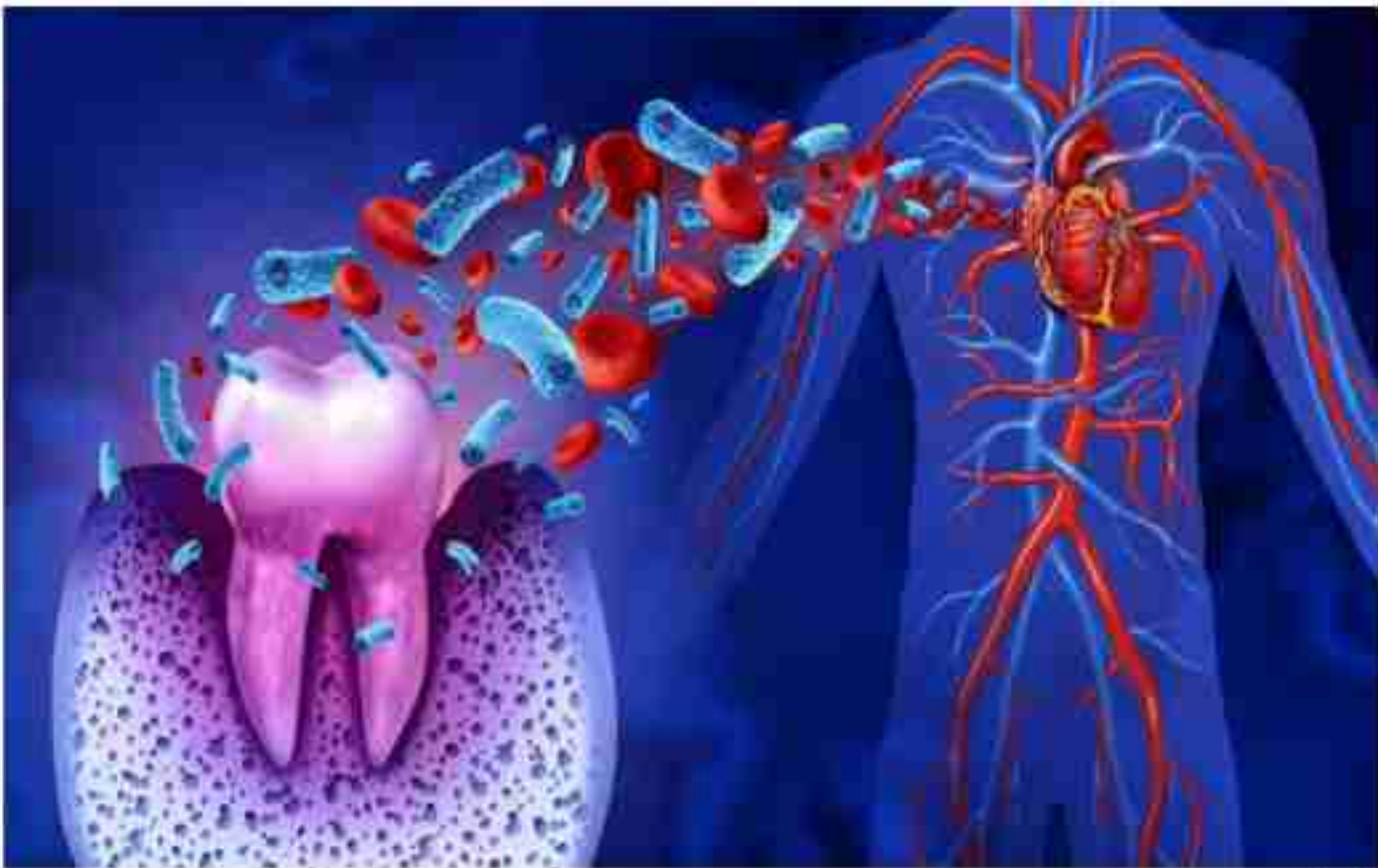
THE GIST

Alienation of Affection is a term from common law referring to a "heart-balm" tort, which allows a spouse to sue a third party, usually the lover, for wilfully interfering in the marriage and causing "loss of affection and companionship".

In *Shelly Mahajan*, the Delhi High Court issued summons by taking a *prima facie* view that a spouse can sue the partner's paramour for interfering in the marriage and seek compensation.

Since matrimonial laws like the Hindu Marriage Act, 1955, provide remedies only between spouses, a civil tort claim against a third party for such interference remains open, in the absence of a specific bar, the court further stressed.

PULSE-CHECK



GETTY IMAGES

Could hidden dental bacteria help explain sudden and deadly heart attacks?

A new study, by a research team in Finland, examined coronary arteries from 121 sudden-death autopsies and 96 patients undergoing vascular surgery. Using DNA detection tests and microscopic staining, the researchers found bacterial DNA in a significant proportion of samples

Anirban Mukhopadhyay

A new study published in the *Journal of the American Heart Association* has found that *viridans streptococci*, a group of common oral bacteria, can form sticky bacterial layers called biofilms deep inside atherosclerotic plaques, remaining hidden from the immune system until the moment of rupture. The findings suggest that oral bacteria could persist in coronary arteries and contribute directly to fatal heart attacks.

Coronary artery disease has long been understood as a condition driven by cholesterol deposition, high blood pressure, diabetes, and smoking, all of which promote chronic inflammation in the arteries. Alongside these established factors, researchers have also proposed infection-related inflammation as a trigger for plaque rupture, leading to heart attacks. Previous studies had linked microbes related to pneumonia, herpes viruses, and nicotine inside atherosclerotic plaques, although none had been linked directly to rupture events.

"This study is a step forward in our understanding of the reasons for increased incidence of heart attacks in individuals with gum disease and the increased prevalence of gum disease in patients with heart attacks," C.C. Kurth, professor of medicine at the Rajiv Gandhi Centre for Biotechnology, Thiruvananthapuram, said.

Plaques and heart attacks

The new study, by a research team at Tampere University in Finland, examined coronary arteries from 121 sudden-death autopsies and 96 patients undergoing vascular surgery. Using DNA detection tests and microscopic staining, the researchers found bacterial DNA in a

significant proportion of samples. *Viridans streptococci* were the most frequent species, present in about 42% of both autopsy and surgical cases.

The bacteria were seen forming biofilms within the lipid-rich cores of plaques, where immune cells called macrophages largely failed to notice them, suggesting they could persist silently for years. In ruptured plaques, however, the bacteria had shifted location into the outer layer that covers the plaque and prevented it from spilling into the bloodstream. Here, they were associated with the activation of toll-like receptor 2 (TLR2), an immune sensor that helps the body detect microbes. This pattern was consistent with inflammation leading up to rupture.

The team also took steps to rule laboratory contamination out. Lead author Pekka J. Kallunki explained that their controls showed no signal when unrelated bacteria were tested and that the same bacterial signatures were found in both autopsy and surgical cases.

The question now is whether these hidden bacteria can be treated. Attempts to treat coronary disease with antibiotics have repeatedly failed in large clinical trials, and the Finnish group suggested that biofilms may explain why. The bacteria embedded in these structures strongly resist both antibiotics and immune clearance.

Prof. Soma Chakrabarti, cardio-vascular and thoracic surgeon, and Honorary Advisor at Nair's Heart Hospital, Chennai, said the oral biofilm could one day be treated in suspected high-risk individuals, who could be offered preventive penicillin treatment in a strategy modelled on the way doctors manage rheumatic fever. While this is speculative, such proposals show how the findings are already

opening new lines of inquiry.

Oral health and heart risk

Dentists have long observed how bacteria in dental plaque can alternate between stable biofilms and free-floating, invasive forms. "Bacteria in dental biofilms can form robust communities that, under certain conditions, can disperse and release more virulent cells," Teikari-based orthodontists Hiten and Priyanka Kanchal Kalra explained.

They said that such shifts are plausible in arteries as well as through microbes in the blood vessel lining, on prosthetic surfaces such as valves or stents, and the lipid-rich environment of plaques. When conditions change, dispersed free-floating cells can re-emerge and penetrate deeper tissues, like those seen in infective endocarditis, a serious infection of heart valves.

The Kalras pointed to population-level evidence linking oral care with cardiovascular health. "The ARIC study showed regular dental care was associated with a 21% lower stroke risk, while a large Korean cohort found more frequent tooth brushing linked to reduced cardiovascular events," Untreated periodontal disease, apical periodontitis and chronic dental infections, by contrast, correlate with higher risks of stroke and coronary disease.

They emphasised early management of gum disease, prompt treatment of abscesses or necrotic teeth, and regular cleaning, alongside collaboration between dentists and cardiologists in high-risk patients.

Public health resonance

The insights from dentistry highlight the everyday routes by which bacteria could reach the arteries – a concern made sharper in India's context. Cardiovascular

disease affects people in India of younger ages even while untreated oral disease remains widespread.

"The oral cardiac link is well known, though the causal link has not been established," said Dr. Kurth. "It is important to educate the public regarding the mouth-heart connection and the importance of oral hygiene as well as detecting and treating gum disease early, especially in patients with risk factors such as high LDL and diabetes."

Prof. Gobathuraj added that oral swab surveillance after the age of 40 could be one way to test the biofilm-heart link in community settings, if validated by further research.

The Finnish group is also extending its investigations. "We aim to publish our bacterial genetic sequencing findings on the whole microbiome of coronary atherosclerosis in the near future," said Dr. Kallunki. Looking further ahead, he added, "We also aim to study the possibility of developing a vaccine against bacterial biofilm formation and bacterial-induced clotting."

These ideas reflect a broader effort to move beyond association and determine whether targeting hidden biofilms can alter the course of coronary disease.

For now, cardiology practice remains centred on cholesterol control, blood pressure management, and diabetes care. Yet the new findings and the voices of clinicians and dentists alike underline that oral health may be more closely tied to heart health than is recognised. Whether through everyday gum care or future biofilm-targeting therapies, the bacteria in our mouths could prove to be an overlooked player in the story of India's most common killer.

Anirban Mukhopadhyay is a generalist by training and a science communicator from New Delhi.



FROM THE ARCHIVES

Know your English

Upendran

"How was the programme?"
"It was awful. The singers were just terrible. We gave them the bird."
"Really? What bird did you give them?"
"A! A! What you give a performer the bird, you make fun of him/her."
"The audience ridicules him/her off the stage, I suppose."
"That's right! It's an informal expression. Here's an example. When the actor forgot his lines, the audience gave him the bird."
"Many people have come to our school and given speeches. But we have never given anyone the bird."
"I don't think such things are done in schools! Last week I sang at the office party. I got the bird from my friends."
"That's not surprising! While we are on the subject of birds, what does 'hawkish' mean?"
"If you refer to someone as being 'hawkish', it means he/she believes in using force and violence to achieve something."
"This person doesn't believe in peaceful methods!"
"No, he doesn't. This is a word used in politics quite a lot. For example, the Opposition stated that the new Defence Minister would be too hawkish."
"There was a time when Americans used to accuse Russia of being hawkish."
"Now it's true that in accusing the American President of being hawkish."
"That's true. And when you refer to someone as being a 'hawk'..."
"...it probably means that he/she believes in using force rather than peaceful means to achieve something."
"Exactly! The President of our union is a hawk."
"What is the opposite of a hawk?"
"A person who is interested in finding a peaceful solution to a problem is called a 'dove'. For example, no-one knows whether the new Minister is a hawk or a dove."

"I am told that she is a hawk."
"Some people say that she is a dove."
"A what?"
"D...d...d... Both the syllables rhyme with the words do, go and show. The stress is on the first syllable."
"Yes. A 'dove' is a bird, right?"
"That's right! But it no longer exists. It is extinct. When you refer to someone as being a dove, it means that you think he/she is silly or foolish. For example, I felt like a dove when I slipped on the banana peel!"
"Every time I talk to Saptarshi, I feel like a dove!"
"My boss was made to feel like an unfortunate dove by our chairman."
"Is your chairman very intelligent?"
"He thinks he is. But we all know that he is a dove. He merely parrots what the GM says."

"Parrots what the GM says!"
"When you 'parrot' someone, you merely repeat or reproduce what he/she said without really understanding it."
"Many children parrot what is in their textbooks!"
"Some teachers want their students to parrot everything they say in class."
Published in *The Hindu* on May 12, 2008.

THE DAILY QUIZ

The Missionaries of Charity was founded by Mother Teresa on this date 75 years ago. A quiz on the organisation and its founder

Y.N. RAO

QUESTION 1

Mother Teresa said the right to found the order came on a train journey to which place in 1947?

QUESTION 2

How many sisters were part of the initial congregation and where did it start in 1950?

QUESTION 3

What were the names of the first home for the dying destitute and abandoned children opened in 1952 and 1953 respectively?

QUESTION 4

After getting the Decree of

Pope from Pope Pius VI in 1963, in which country did the order start its first house outside India?

QUESTION 5

What did the Government of India do to mark the centenary of Mother Teresa on September 4, 2016?

QUESTION 6

Who founded the Missionaries of Charity in 1963 along with Mother Teresa?

QUESTION 7

How long does it take to become a full-fledged missionary of the Church?



Visual questions

Name the headquarters of the Missionaries of Charity where the tomb of Mother Teresa is located. (10)

Questions and Answers to the previous day's daily quiz:

1. The year in which the UN declared Gandhi's birthday as the International Day of non-violence. **Ans: 2007**
2. Mahatma Gandhi was named the Person of the year by Time magazine in this year. **Ans: 1930**
3. The name of the book written by Mahatma Gandhi on vegetarian diet. **Ans: The Moral Basis of Vegetarianism**
4. Mahatma Gandhi had an important friendship with the person. **Ans: Russian novelist Leo Tolstoy**
5. This person gave Gandhi the title of 'Mahatma' in this year. **Ans: Rabindranath Tagore in 1915**
6. The group led by Gandhi in 1942 for the British as member leaders during the Second War Was. **Ans: Netaji Indian Subhas Chandra Bose**
7. The small bathroom of Mahatma Gandhi which he returned after the Japanese flag was raised. **Ans: Kuber Chandel**
8. The journal started by Mahatma Gandhi in South Africa which carried news of Indians in South Africa. **Ans: Indian Opinion**
9. The name of this object. **Ans: Charkha**
10. Early Hindi (C. Surasena) (Pyth. 1st) (Sard. Madhavan) (Hind. 1st) (Sard. 1st)

Word of the day

Consonium

an association of companies for some definite purpose

Synonyms:

Usage: They formed a consortium to focus on the project.

Pronunciation:

International Phonetic Alphabet: /kənˈsɒʃɪəm/

Feedback and suggestions for Text & Context: please write to letters@thehindu.co.in with the subject 'Text & Context'

From Page One

Stage set for two-phase electoral battle in Bihar

Mr. Kumar said that of the total 90,712 polling stations across the State, 13,361 will be in urban areas and 76,801 in rural areas. While 262 of these stations will be managed by persons with disabilities, 1,144 will be managed by women, and 38 by youth. The average number of eligible voters per polling station is 88. "Voting will be done at all the polling stations for the first time," he said.

"Police patrolling on horseback will be done across 'tilah' regions covering 250 polling stations, and patrolling parties will use boats at 100 polling stations," the CEC said.

He said there will be one general observer (senior officials from outside the State) per constituency, apart from 38 police and 67 expenditure observers in Bihar. A total of 0.5 lakh officials, including 4.5 lakh polling and 2.5 lakh police personnel, 90,712 anganwadi workers (who may also assist in verifying identities of 'tropical' women voters if required), 17,800 mao observers for polling and 4,800 for counting, 28,300 counting officials, and 1,600 sector officers, will be deployed.

On the preparation of electoral rolls, Mr. Kumar said the special intensive revision (SIR) went on from June 24 to July 25, and the draft list was published and distributed among stakeholders, including political parties, on August 1. Voters, parties, and Booth Level Agents (BLAs) were given ample opportunity to file claims and objections. The final list was published on September 30.

Describing the SIR as the process of "purification" of electoral rolls that would set a benchmark for future revisions, Mr. Kumar said close to 88 lakh names have been struck off the list. The reasons included deaths, unproven citizenship, duplicate entries, or permanent migration to other States. He said a breakup could not be given in a "decentralised" set-up as Electoral Registration Officers make voter lists. It can be appealed before District Magistrates and the Chief Electoral Officer.

Given the demand from several political parties, the commission has now made it mandatory to complete postal ballot counting before the last two rounds of Electronic Voting Machine (EVM)/ Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT) counting. The counting of VVPAT slips will be mandatory in case of a mismatch between form 17C, which contains details of votes polled per booth among other crucial data, and EVM data and wherever mismatch data has not been erased meticulously. Among 17 new initiatives taken by the commission are facilities to deposit mobile phones at polling stations and a one-stop digital platform named E2020, on which real-time voter turnout updates will be given.

PM calls CJI, says incident has 'angered all Indians'

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi called Chief Justice of India (CJI) S.R. Gavai following a violent incident aimed at the latter on the Supreme Court premises on Monday.

Mr. Modi condemned the attack and appreciated the calm displayed by CJI Gavai.

In a post on X, Prime Minister Modi said the attack on CJI Gavai had "angered every Indian". "Spoke to Chief Justice of India Justice S.R. Gavai. The attack on him earlier today in the Supreme Court premises has angered every Indian. There is no place for such reprehensible acts in our society. It is utterly condemnable. I appreciated the calm displayed by Justice Gavai in the face of such a situation. It highlights his commitment to the values of justice and strengthening the spirit of our Constitution," the Prime Minister posted.

Mr. Modi's call and post came after Chief Justice Gavai was attacked by a lawyer, who threw what looked like a sheet of papers at him during court proceedings.

Advocate throws papers at CJI-led Bench, raises slogan

The incident, which occurred during court proceedings, comes amid controversy over CJI Gavai's recent remarks in Vishnu idol restoration matter; Bar Council of India suspends Rakesh Kashore

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

In a shocking incident, an object resembling a sheet of papers was thrown at a Supreme Court Bench of Chief Justice of India and Justice K. Vinod Chaudhary on Monday by a person present in the courtroom.

The incident occurred while the Bench was in the process of hearing oral submissions filed before it. The day started as usual, though an hour later than usual court hours, at 11:30 a.m. The court had resumed after a week-long holiday, and many urgent cases had been lined up for hearing.

The offending object flew in from the left side of the Bench while the judges were turned to their right, hearing advocate Shrikanth Singh mention his case for an urgent listing.

CJI remains unfazed.

The CJI and Justice Chaudhary made an initial exclamation of surprise, but quickly collected their wits to urge Mr. Singh to continue his mentioning.



"Do not pay attention to such things. Please carry on. If we are not perturbed, why are you? Just ignore," the CJI told the distracted lawyers present in the court room.

"I was more rattled than the judges," Mr. Singh recounted later.

The individual, identified as advocate Rakesh Kashore, raised slogans about "Sanatana" while being escorted out of the court room by security personnel.

The CJI's recent remarks about a Vishnu idol had attracted controversy.

After incessant social media outrage for almost two days thereafter, Chief Justice Gavai had explained

in open court that he believed in all faiths and "freedom of religion".

"This incident, reportedly stemming from a misguided backlash against the Chief Justice's judicial observations in the Vishnu idol restoration matter, where His Lordship emphasised respect for all religions and clarified his remarks amid social media distortions, cannot be tolerated. It constitutes a direct assault on judicial independence, violates constitutional values of decorum and discipline," the Supreme Court Bar Association linked the incident with the CJI's earlier remarks.

Meanwhile, the Bar Council of India (BCI) issued an interim suspension order against its Chairman, senior advocate Mahesh Kumar Mishra, against Mr. Kashore, who is enrolled with the Bar Council of Delhi, under the Advocates Act, 1961 and the Bar Council of India Rules on Standards of Professional Conduct and Discipline. The BCI order even said Mr. Kashore removed his sports shoes and "attempted" to hurl them during court proceedings.

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In 2009, a woman had thrown a slipper at Justice Arjit Pasayat (now retired) during the hearing of a contempt case. The woman was taken into custody.

The Supreme Court Advocates-on-Record Association (SCORA) expressed its deep anguish. "Such conduct is unbefitting of a member of the Bar and strikes at the very foundation of mutual respect that sustains the relationship between the Bench and the Bar," it said and urged the top court to take suo motu cognizance and initiate proceedings for contempt of court.

Those against survey do not want equality: Siddaramaiah

The Hindu Bureau
KOLKATA

Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Monday said there was absolutely no question of suppressing or discriminating any community in the ongoing Social and Educational Survey being conducted by the State Commission for Backward Classes.

"Those who oppose the survey are the ones who do not want an egalitarian society," he said while addressing media in Koppal.

Responding to Union Minister V. Suresh's allegation that the survey was aimed at "undermining upper castes", the CM said that such claims were baseless and misleading.

"If there is no such survey, it will be impossible for a government to understand the social, economic and educational conditions of various sections of society. The purpose is not to demean anyone, but to ensure equitable development," he said.

On Union Minister Pralhad Joshi's statement that he would not take part in the survey, the CM questioned whether the Minister would also oppose the caste census proposed by the Centre.

BJP MP, MLA attacked during visit to flood-hit north Bengal, party accuses Trinamool

The Hindu Bureau
KOLKATA

BJP MP Khagen Murmu was hospitalised on Monday with severe head injuries after stones were thrown at a delegation of BJP leaders in Nagrahata in Jalpaiguri district of West Bengal.

The delegation was visiting the flood and landslide-hit areas in north Bengal for inspection and relief work. The two-time MP from Malda Uttar was seen bleeding profusely from the head after he and BJP MLA Shankar Ghosh were surrounded and attacked by a large group of local people. Their vehicle was also vandalised. "Khagen da is lying in the vehicle soaked in blood. There are shattered glass and stones everywhere inside the car," Mr. Ghosh said while on his way to hospital with Mr. Murmu.



BJP member holds a photo of injured Khagen Murmu, during a protest in Kolkata. PTI

The BJP alleged that the attack was carried out by people affiliated to the ruling Trinamool Congress.

"Today in Nagrahata, while BJP MP Khagen Murmu and Shankar Ghosh, MLA and the chief opposition whip in the West Bengal Assembly, were inspecting flood-affected areas and distributing relief, they were brutally attacked in the presence of the Mamata police. Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee,

the people of Bengal will never forget this cowardice and shamelessness. The people of Bengal will punish every one of your immoral and inhuman acts of brutality," Union Minister Jitendra Kumar said.

BJP leaders in Kolkata took out a rally and burnt effigies near their office in protest against the attack.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi slammed the attack as "outrageous and appalling". On X, Mr. Modi said, "The manner in which our party colleagues were attacked in West Bengal is outrageous and appalling. It highlights the insensitivity of the Trinamool Congress as well as the absolutely pathetic law and order situation in the State."

Trinamool Congress spokesperson Rana Ghosh refuted the BJP's claims and said his party did not support any form of aggression.

Attack on CJI shows bigotry and fanaticism engulfing society, says Congress chief

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Opposition leaders on Monday strongly condemned the attempted attack on Chief Justice of India S.R. Gavai, with Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge saying the "shameful" and "mindless" act reflects the "hate, fanaticism and bigotry" engulfing the society.

Calling the incident "unprecedented, shameful and abhorrent", Mr. Kharge said the incident was an "attack on the dignity of the judiciary and the rule of law".

The Congress president said it was disturbing that a sitting judge, who rose to the nation's highest judicial office through merit, integrity, and perseverance, was targeted in such a manner. "It reflects an attempt to intimidate and humiliate a man who has



Mallikarjun Kharge

broken social barriers to uphold the Constitution. Such a mindless act shows how hate, fanaticism and bigotry have engulfed our society in the past decade," Mr. Kharge wrote on X.

Congress Parliamentary Party Chairperson Sonia Gandhi said no words were adequate to condemn the attack.

"It is an assault not just on him, but on our Constitution as well. The nation must stand in solidarity with CJI attacked with a deep sense of anguish and

outrage," Ms. Gandhi said.

Former Law Minister Kapil Sibal, who is an independent Rajya Sabha member, said the "unprovoked behaviour of a member of the Supreme Court Bar must be publicly condemned by all of us in a fit of the majesty of the court". "The silence of the Prime Minister, the Home Minister and the Law Minister is, to say the least, surprising," he said.

CPI, CPI(M) condemn Communist Party of India (CPI) general secretary B. K. Roy, on X, said the attempted assault was "a challenge before the entire judiciary to abide by the right-wing's code of conduct instead of the Constitution of India".

In a statement, the CPI (M) Polit Bureau demanded action against the lawyer for targeting the Chief Justice.

Bhupendra Patel to open Vibrant Gujarat regional conference

Abhinav Deshpande
AHMEDABAD

Gujarat Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel will inaugurate the Vibrant Gujarat Regional Conference (VGR) in Gandhinagar on October 11 at Gujarat University. The event will see participation from international delegates, especially from Japan, South Korea, Vietnam, and the Netherlands.

Before the opening, dignitaries will tour the exhibition, which covers 85,000 square metres with over 400 exhibitors in sectors like agro-processing, green energy, and technology.

Companies such as Adani, Maruti Suzuki, ONGC, and Taty MSMEs will be present.

Special pavilions will highlight Agri-Tech, Food-Tech, and renewable energy innovation, interactive pavilions and seminars will foster partnerships and business opportunities, officials said.

The Vendor Development Programme and the Reverse Buyer-Seller Meet will connect local businesses with international buyers from 17 countries.

The "Udyam Mitra" and millet-themed food court will showcase local entrepreneurship and cuisine. According to officials, the event aims to support startups, spread awareness of government schemes, and encourage sustainable and community-led growth in line with Gujarat's development goals.

SC pulls up man claiming to be father of children found in cave at Gokarna

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday questioned a man claiming to be the father of two minor Russian children found alive along with their mother in a cave near Gokarna in Karnataka early this year.

Appearing before a Bench headed by Justice Surya Kant, the petitioner, identified as Alex Nikolov Goldstein, challenged a Karnataka High Court decision allowing the Centre to grant travel documents to the mother and children

for their repatriation to Russia.

"Show us any official document to prove he is the father of these children... Why should we not direct your deportation?" Justice Kant asked the man's counsel.

Justice Jyoti Chaudhary, who accompanied Justice Kant on the Bench, turned the petition as a "publicity litigation". "What were you doing when your children were living in a cave?" Justice Chaudhary asked. The court finally allowed the petitioner's counsel to withdraw the plea.

No one is spared on social media, says judge trolled for condemning TVK

Mohamed Jameelullah S.
CHENNAI

Justice N. Chandrababu Naidu of the Madras High Court on Monday said he chose to ignore the social media trolling he was subjected to after he recorded his "strong condemnation" of the viralised Tirumala Venkateswara Temple (TVK) response to the stampede at a rally in Kurnool on September 25.

The judge breached the subject while hearing a civil suit filed by chef and actor Madhupratap T. Rangaraj to restrain costume designer Jay Chitrakala from making films, cartoons, and defamatory statements against him in any

form of media, as they disparage his personality rights. When senior counsel Srinath Aridavan argued about the damage caused to his client because of the "defamatory" statements made by Mr. Chitrakala on social media, the judge said: "Senior counsel, please tell me who is spared on social media these days. Even judges are trolled."

Later, the judge invited notice to Mr. Chitrakala and asked her senior counsel S. Prakashan to ensure that a counter-affidavit is filed by October 22. He refused to pass any interim order without giving her an opportunity to respond.

India, Australia to sign joint defence and security cooperation declaration

Saurabh Tripathi
NEW DELHI

Australia has acknowledged India's growing capabilities in producing high end defence equipment, signalling potential for greater engagement with Indian defence manufacturers in the future. While Canberra has traditionally relied on American and other Western systems, sources said that they are little as an emerging and reliable partner in defence production.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh's upcoming visit to Australia underscores the growing momentum in the defence partnership and its pivotal role in ensuring stability across the Indo-Pacific, an official said.



Rajnath Singh

Mr. Singh will be on a two-day visit on October 9 and 10, during which he will meet Australian Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Defence Richard Marles in Sydney and observe live air-to-air refuelling activities aboard a Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) KC-30A multi-role tanker.

Following at broader strategic discussions, the se-

nior official said defence talks during the visit are expected to cover major bilateral and regional issues, including countries of mutual concern.

Maritime strategy

Australia and India are also developing a Maritime Security Road Map to enhance collaboration on maritime domain awareness in the Indian Ocean. According to sources, both countries are working toward a new joint Declaration on Defence and Security Cooperation to set the parameters for future engagement.

This year also marks the fifth anniversary of the India-Australia Comprehensive Strategic Partnership, which has witnessed unprecedented progress

across diverse sectors — from trade and investment to education, sports, and renewable energy.

"Defence and security cooperation now stand as one of the strongest pillars of our partnership. Australia and India have emerged as top-tier security partners, with defence engagements more than tripling in the past decade — from 11 activities in 2014 to 31 in 2019," said a source. "Our partnership enhances each other's strategic autonomy, options, and capabilities. The Air-to-Air Refuelling, Implementing Arrangements — India's first with any partner — exemplifies growing interoperability," the source added.

Australia is also a strong supporter of India's defence industry ambitions.

Nitish gives ₹2,100 crore to women, opens Metro

The Hindu Bureau
PATNA

Hours before the Bihar election was announced, Chief Minister Nitish Kumar on Monday transferred ₹2,100 crore into the bank accounts of 21 lakh women beneficiaries under the Mahatma Gandhi Mahila Nigam Yojana and inaugurated a section of Bihar's first Metro rail service in Patna.

With this, the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government in Bihar disbursed ₹2,100 crore to 21 crore women beneficiaries, with each woman receiving ₹10,000 under the scheme. While launching the scheme on September 30, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had transferred ₹7,500 crore to 75 lakh women beneficiaries via video-conferencing from New Delhi in the presence of Mr. Kumar. On October 3, Mr. Kumar transferred ₹2,500 crore to 25 lakh women beneficiaries.

Mr. Kumar also inaugurated the first phase of the elevated priority corridor of the Patna Metro rail project. For now, the service will cater to three stations — Patliputra Bus Terminal, Zito Maid, and Bhoothan.

Election dates out, but coalitions yet to lock in seat-sharing

JDU wants largest share in NDA, with BJP providing for smaller allies; BJP offers 12 seats to Vikashdeep Insaan Party, six to CPI, four to CP(M)

Subhiana K. Nair
NEW DELHI

Though the Bihar Assembly election dates are out, the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) and the Opposition grand alliance are yet to finalise seat-sharing. Each side is struggling to strike a balance between aspirations of its partners and winnability.

The composition of each bloc has changed since the 2020 election, with additional claimants for the 243 seats. As per sources, in the NDA, the Janata Dal(J) could contest 107 seats and the BJP 105. The remaining 31 will be divided among the Lok Janshakti Party (Gian Vilas), Hindustani Awam Morcha, and Rashtriya Lok Samta Party.

JDU is the pre-eminent partner in the alliance and should be given the largest share. As far as BJP (RV), HAM and BLS are concerned, they have been BJP's allies and it is for the BJP to negotiate the deal

Party performance

The table shows the party and alliance-wise vote share and number of seats won in the 2020 Bihar Assembly elections

Party	Vote share (%)	Seats won (%)
NDA	47.1 (2010: 44.4)	174 (71.6)
Grand Alliance	52.9 (2010: 55.6)	69 (28.4)
Grand Democratic Front	44.4 (2010: 44.4)	17 (7.0)
Others	0.6	2

SOURCE: INDIA'S PARLIAMENTARY RECORD

with them," JDU's spokesperson E.C. Tripathi said.

In 2020, the JDU contested 115 seats, BJP 100, and HAM seven. The united Lok Janshakti Party contested 134 seats. Chirag Paswan's decision to contest alone led to a split in the party. Mr. Paswan's LJP (RV) is now in the NDA. "We do not want to be saddled with seats that no one else is willing to contest," a top LJP leader said.

It isn't easy for the grand alliance either. The RJD began discussions on Sunday with its allies.

Sources say it has offered 12 seats to the Vikashdeep Insaan Party. The CPI has been offered six seats and CP(M) four. The CPI is keen to be unhappy. To negotiate, party general secretary B. Raju will reach Patna on Tuesday.

No formal offer has been made in the CP(M), which has demanded 40 seats, or the Congress. The RJD, which contested 144 seats in 2020, did not want to clash down below 100, leaving 10 seats to be divided between five allies, including the Congress.

Ticket seekers lose no time, dash off to party offices to press their case

Anandharama
PATNA

Soon after the Election Commission announced the Bihar Assembly election dates on Monday, ticket seekers descended on the offices of major parties here to press their case.

With a crowd building up outside the Janata Dal (J) office, vehicular traffic on Berozhand Patel Path slowed down. The district administration has erected two makeshift shelters at the main entrance of the party office for men and women candidates. Similar scenes were seen outside the offices of the BJP and the principal Opposition party, Rashtriya Janata Dal, a few metres ahead on the same stretch of the road.

"Within hours of the election dates being announced, our leader has come to the party office to stake his claim," said a person in white kurta pyjamas inside an SUV parked outside the JDU office. The played on the vehicle was the slogan "Rajin Rajin Aise Nahin Surwa An Bhudhaya (We are the future of the Bihar Assembly constituency)".

Aural is in Munshiganj district of north Bihar. In the 2020 Assembly elec-



Analysts with BJP leaders watching the live telecast of the Election Commission's press conference on the Bihar Assembly election schedule at the party office in Patna on Monday.

tion, the BJP won the seat. The party's Ram Sarat Rai defeated the Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist) candidate Muhammad Akbar Alam by over 47,000 votes.

Poll prospects

Outside the BJP office, there was a traffic jam. Big billboards and posters of party leaders were visible from afar. People could be seen going in and coming out. At a tea stall outside, a few people in spotless white clothes stood on while discussing the poll prospects of the party this time. "Take it from me,

The election is not going to happen in more than three phases and our party is going to form the government in the state," Sahay Sharma, a businessman from Lakhmari, said. "Before the dates were announced,

Senior BJP leader and Deputy Chief Minister Vijay Kumar Sinha had from Lakhmari. Mr. Sinha has been a four-time MLA from the Lakhmari constituency since 2005. Asked if he was a supporter of the BJP leader, the businessman quipped: "No, I'm a worker of the party."

Some distance away at

the RJD's party office, a few vehicles were parked outside the premises while the boundary wall was plastered with posters of party leaders Tejashwi Yadav and Lalu Prasad.

"Tejashwi Yadav is going to be the Chief Minister of the state this time, if vote share (JDU) will not happen," said a young party member wearing a green gamucha (scarf) around his neck.

"The Mahagathabandhan (grand alliance) had secured 100 seats (for 2020), just 10 short of a majority in the 243-member State Assembly," he said.

Both NDA, grand alliance claim they will form new government in Bihar

Anil Bhaskari
PATNA

Both the ruling and Opposition parties in Bihar on Monday claimed they would form the next government in the State, following the Election Commission's announcement of Assembly election dates.

Senior Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader and Deputy Chief Minister Santosh Choudhary welcomed the commission's decision to hold the election in two phases. Speaking to press persons in Patna, he said the public would bless the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) with a landslide victory.

Mr. Choudhary said that the NDA's development efforts had left the Opposition without issues to raise, and that the NDA government's return to power on November 14 was certain.

BJP president J.P. Nadda also welcomed the announcement by posting a message on X, saying that under the leadership of the Prime Minister, the NDA government in Bihar had become synonymous with public welfare and good governance.

This election in Bihar is about continuously leading the state on the path of development, making it free from inflation, and preventing the return of Jangal Raj.

J.P. NADDA
BJP National President

Bihar will have the change after 20 years. Tejashwi will provide government jobs to everyone. What the previous government could not do in 20 years, we have accomplished in 20 months.

TEJASHWI YADAV
BJP Leader

"This election in Bihar is about continuously leading the state on the path of development, making it free from inflation, and preventing the return of Jangal Raj. I have full confidence that the people of Bihar will bless and support the NDA," Mr. Nadda said.

"NDA workers ready" Janata Dal (United) State president Umesh Singh Kushwaha said that workers of all alliance partners in the NDA were ready to enter the electoral battle.

"Under the leadership of Nitish Kumar, the NDA is fully prepared to script a

new victory on November 14. Over the past 20 years, Nitish has transformed Bihar, brought the rays of development to all sections of society, and ensured a free environment by establishing the rule of law," Mr. Kushwaha said.

Union Minister and Lok Janshakti Party (Ram Vilas) national president Chirag Paswan also posted a message on X, saying now is the time to take Bihar to new heights on the national map.

"The LJP(RV) is fully prepared to enter the electoral battlefield with the goal of 'Bihar Hindustan First' vision. Let us

come together in this festival of democracy and ensure our participation in building a new Bihar," Mr. Paswan said.

Letter to people

Opposition Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) leader and former Deputy Chief Minister Tejashwi Yadav penned a letter to the people of Bihar and went live on Facebook.

"Bihar will win the change after 20 years. Tejashwi will provide government jobs to everyone. What the previous government could not do in 20 years, we have accomplished in 20 months. Every voter is a super hit change, and everyone wants the government of Mahagathabandhan," Mr. Yadav said.

Attacking Mr. Kumar, the BJP leader said Bihar needs a Chief Minister in good health.

Meanwhile, while addressing a press conference in Patna, Jan Samaj Party (JSP) leader Prashant Kishor said, "This time, the people of Bihar will vote not for Modi, Nitish, or Lalu, but for the bright future of their children."

LAB questions claims of 'normalcy' in Ladakh

The Hindu Bureau
LAD

The Left Apex Body LABD, which has spearheaded the agitation for Statehood and Sixth Schedule status for Ladakh, on Monday questioned the administration's claims of normalcy, and demanded "lifting of all restrictions" and an "end to harassment of Bum-badens (village headmen) who supported the LAB's demands."

The demand came amid improved situation in Ladakh, with the administration announcing fresh reforms. It included reopening of schools up to Class 12, resumption of public transport, and opening of shops from 7 a.m. till 6 p.m. in Ladakh.

Four civilians were killed and around 90 were injured during protests demanding Statehood on September 24, following tension in the region, and were followed by spillover of curfew. Restrictions continue on the assembly of more than four people, under Section 144 of CrP. Mobile internet services also remain suspended.

Jaishankar says India's interests are best secured by strategic autonomy

Subhanshu Majhi
NEW DELHI

India has always exercised its strategic autonomy. External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar said on Monday, referring to the country's decision to sign a friendship pact with the Soviet Union in 1971 as a "necessary" choice, given the triangular threats India faced from the other big powers, the United States and China.

Speaking at the launch of the Aravalli Summit, organised by the Jawaharal Nehru University's School of International Studies, marking its 70th anniversary, Mr. Jaishankar, an alumna of the school himself, said that it was necessary for students of foreign policy to factor in a future of multi-alignment and multipolarity. Mr. Jaishankar said recent global volatility, including the imposition of tariffs by the U.S., had made the case for multi-alignment, more than aligning with any one power, much stronger.

"Imagine if (India were) not today adopting strategic autonomy. Please tell me, which country in the world would you like to join up with and put (India's) future in their hands," he asked. "I can't think of anybody. (India's) interest is best secured by maximising its options, maintaining (its) freedom of choices," he said.

Mr. Jaishankar's comments came a day after he said that trade negotiations with the U.S. would have to respect India's "red lines".



S. Jaishankar at the launch of the Aravalli Summit at Jawaharal Nehru University in New Delhi on Monday. (PTI/ANANDAM)

The purpose of India's policy is not to solve problems, but to manage relationships to national advantage, says Jaishankar

with Pakistan and Liberation of Bangladesh, when India signed a Friendship Treaty with Soviet Union.

"What we did was to our national interest — we were dealing with a U.S.-China triangle and we had to find a way out of this," Mr. Jaishankar said, answering questions from students at the event, which was co-hosted by the Ministry of External Affairs, and the newly launched Delhi-based Aravalli Group-owned think tank Chintan Research Foundation. "So, the decision we took in the midst of an acute national security crisis, was necessary," he added, addressing the audience, which included a number of diplomats, including the Ambassador of Russia in India Denis Alexeev, and Bangladesh High Commissioner Riaz Hamidullah.

Asked about India's neighbourhood first policy and signs of strains with a number of neighbours including Bangladesh, and protest-led regime changes in Sri Lanka and Nepal, Mr. Jaishankar said India has to

be prepared to unilaterally "underwrite the infrastructure for cooperation" with countries in the region, and should become the "go-to" option for neighbouring countries when in need.

Managing relations

"Every country has problematic neighbours, and every big country has more problematic neighbours," the External Affairs Minister said, stressing that the purpose of India's policy was not merely to solve problems, but to "manage relationships to national advantage". Without directly naming Pakistan, he said that barring one country, India has effected "transformational change" in projects with neighbouring countries, in the areas of energy, roads, railway lines, and the movement of people.

Asked about the "re-negotiation" of India with Pakistan, post Operation Sadium, and a reference to recent developments where the U.S., Saudi Arabia, China, Turkey, and other countries have forged closer ties with Islamabad, Mr. Jaishankar said India "cannot wish away a difficult neighbour", as that is a "reality". But he said that other countries no longer draw an equivalence between India and Pakistan.

Police should be thanked for their handling of stampede: Kamal

The Hindu Bureau
KATRA

Makal Nordini Meena leader and actor Kamal Hassan on Monday said the police should be thanked, and not blamed, for their handling of the September 27 stampede that claimed 41 lives at actor and TVK founder Vijay's rally in Katra.

He visited the site of the stampede at Vishwanagar and met the bereaved families. He urged the public and the media to show restraint and compassion. Appreciating the government's decision not to permit the rally at the Light House Corner, as sought initially by the TVK, Mr. Hassan said, "This is not



MNM president Kamal Meena during the site of the stampede at Vishwanagar in Katra on Monday. (PTI/ANANDAM)

the time to appreciate anyone, but we have to thank them for denying permission for the rally at the bridge (Lighthouse Corner). That would have been a larger black mark... My only consolation is that it has not become a bigger tragedy. Had permission

been given for that spot and people taken into the river (Amravati), what would have been their state," he asked.

Pointing to former Minister V. Senthilnadar, who accompanied him, Mr. Hassan said, "Instead of asking how they came so

quickly that day, the police is that they did come. Had they not arrived at the right time, we would have lost more lives. We must thank them."

Commending Chief Minister M.A. Stalin's handling of the situation, he said, "The Chief Minister has shown exemplary leadership in a dignified manner. We are proud of it, and we should thank him for it."

When asked about AIADMK general secretary Edappadi K. Palaniswami's remark that the government must take responsibility, he said, "Any government should take responsibility, but what has happened is subjective; we should not comment

further."

Answering a question about the alleged lapses in the security arrangements at the venue, he said, "We should also see who is making such allegations. Don't take sides. If you have to take a side, take the people's side."

(He also lauded the role of the media in uncovering the facts.)

Hands over solatium

Later in the day, a press release from the MNM said Mr. Hassan handed over a compensation of ₹1 lakh each to the families of eight stampede victims. The release added that MNM would hand over the relief to the remaining 33 families on Tuesday.

IN BRIEF



Navy commissions its second ASW-class ship INS Androth

The Indian Navy commissioned INS Androth, the second Anti-Submarine Warfare Shallow Water Craft (ASW-SWC), at the Naval Dockyard in Visakhapatnam on Monday. The first ship to be commissioned in this category was INS Arzulu in June. The ceremony was presided over by Vice-Admiral Rajesh Pendharkar, Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Eastern Naval Command. Senior naval officers and representatives of Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers were present. The ship has a length of 77m and displaces 1,500 tonnes. It is designed to undertake anti-submarine operations in coastal and shallow waters. The vessel is equipped with advanced machinery and control systems.

Indian Army inaugurates tent homestays in Uttarakhand

In a unique initiative to promote sustainable tourism and enhance rural livelihoods, the Indian Army inaugurated a tent-based homestay facility on Monday in the scenic border village of Garbyang, Pithoragarh district, Uttarakhand. The inauguration ceremony was led by Lieutenant-General D.G. Misra, General Officer Commanding, North India area. "Under Operation Sadbhavana, we are striving for sustainable development in border villages. This project will not only promote tourism but also spur rural development," he said. The project aligns with the Centre's Village Village Programme, the Army said in a communication.

Deliberations continue on proposed nuclear Bill

Questions on private sector's role, radioactive waste disposal yet to be settled: Finance Minister said in Feb that govt. intends to amend Atomic Energy Act, Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage Act

Jacob Koshy
NEW DELHI

Deliberations within the government continue on bringing in new legislation to allow the private sector to operate nuclear plants in India with questions regarding management of nuclear waste and determining if private players can conduct core research into nuclear technologies still being heated out.

Drafts of the proposed new Bill were still being deliberated upon by an inter-governmental committee of experts as well as the Law Ministry though there was a "good chance" of it being introduced in the forthcoming Winter Session of Parliament, an official privy to the proceedings told *The Hindu* on condition of anonymity.

Currently, only Nuclear Power Corporation of India Ltd. (NPCIL), Bhavini Nabhikya Vidya Nigam Ltd. (BHAVINI), and NPCIL-NTPC joint venture Amarchand Vidya Nigam Limited (ASVNL) can build and operate nuclear power plants in the country.

In February, however,



Nuclear reform: Currently, only three PSUs can build and operate nuclear power plants in the country, it is noted

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said in her Budget speech that the government intended to amend two Acts — the Atomic Energy Act and the Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage Act — to enable private companies, including foreign companies, to form partnerships, and build and operate nuclear plants in India.

Despite the India-US nuclear deal of 2008 formally allowing sale of nuclear technologies to India, though with built-in periodic checks and scrutiny by the International Atomic Energy Agency, clauses in India's Atomic Energy Act and the Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage Act

(CLND) have been impediments since they impose practically unlimited liability on foreign suppliers of nuclear equipment in case of an accident.

Alignment of laws

"The effort is to align India's laws on liability with that of conventions such as the Convention on Supplementary Compensation for Nuclear Damage (CSC)," the official noted. "However, we also have to bring clarity on questions such as who will be responsible, whether it is the private sector or the government power plant operators, for safe disposal of nuclear waste as well as the reprocessing of spent nuclear

fuel. There is also discussion on enabling research and development of core nuclear technologies."

The government's drive to encourage greater private sector participation is with the larger objective of installing 100 GW of nuclear capacity by 2047. This is premised not only on importing foreign reactors but also developing Bharat Santhi Reactors (BSRs) and exploring partnerships with the private sector. BSRs are 220 MW Pressurized Heavy Water Reactors (PHWRs). These reactors are being upgraded to reduce land requirements, making them suitable for deployment near industries such as steel, aluminium, and metals units, serving as captive power plants to aid in decarbonisation efforts.

The plan involves private entities providing land, cooling water, and capital, while the NPCIL handles design, quality assurance, and operation and maintenance. This initiative aligns with India's commitment to achieving 500 GW of non-fossil fuel based energy generation and meeting 50% of requirements from renewable energy by 2030.

Conclave on Nov. 3 to showcase 'evolution' of Indian science

Jacob Koshy
NEW DELHI

The government's first-ever Emerging Science, Technology and Innovation Conclave (ESTIC), to be held in November, is meant to reflect the strides and "evolution" that India has made in science and technology over the years and is not a mere "upgrade" of the traditional Indian Science Congress. Science, Technology and Innovation Minister Jitendra Singh said on Monday.

As *The Hindu* first reported in September, the Department of Science and Technology (DST) was set to organise the first-ever ESTIC in lieu of the Indian Science Congress.

A spat between the DST and ISC organisers — the Kolkata-based Indian Science Congress Association that is now in the courts further — ended up being the southwester to the ISC, that was last held in its traditional format — with Prime Minister Narendra Modi in attendance — in Ludhiana in 2020.

"It would not be very polite to call the ESTIC as an upgraded ISC, but just as changes in technology over the years have seen the presentation formats, scientific themes and the manner of organisation evolve, similarly the ESTIC

too will reflect India's growing stature in science and technology and showcase achievements in technology, growth of start-ups and ambitions for the future," Mr. Jitendra Singh said at a press conference.

He said Mr. Modi would "likely" inaugurate ESTIC and every year the conclave would be held in different places outside Delhi. "We intend to give it a greater international flavour every year but that would require planning over 12 months. This year we commenced preparations a little late, but you will see it evolve, with greater international participation of Nobel Laureates and leading figures, in the coming years," the Minister added.

75 exhibition stalls

The inaugural ESTIC event will be held at the Bharat Mandapam here on November 3 and 4. All of the government scientific Ministries, ranging from atomic energy, space and information technology, will be involved in its organisation. According to the event website, it will have 75 thematic technical sessions, 75 exhibition stalls by 'deep tech' start-ups, Nobel Laureate Anudeep Ghosh (2003, Physics) is expected to make an appearance.

Fisheries sector hopes to beat U.S. curbs with sustainability label

A.M. Jeyaraj
NEW DELHI

About 10 Indian marine and saline fish and shrimp varieties are set to get the global Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) certification soon. The first batch is set to be submitted for the certification in 2020.

According to experts, the certification is likely to increase the revenue of the fisheries sector by 30% and help fishermen and traders find new markets other than the U.S. in the event of further trade restrictions due to the higher tariffs.

The certification will also help fishing communities begin ecologically sustainable fishing practices and ensure steady incomes.

Fisheries Development Commissioner K. Mothumthi Raja told *The*



Affluent markets such as the European and Japanese markets are looking for sustainability certified seafood, it is noted

Hindu that the Union Government, under the Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY), would subsidise the certification process, which is done by third-party authors.

Mr. Raja said that global affluent markets, such as European and Japanese ones, are looking for sustainably sourced fish.

"Sustainability is part of our fisheries. Some of our

fish varieties may not immediately qualify for sustainable certifications, but many of the varieties are amenable to certification. Once we re-certify the fish, the advantages that we get include access to the best markets. It is a way of certifying the fish so that it gets a better price," he said.

Experts said the certification process is in its final stages and they are ad-

dressing the technical gaps, including stock assessments for shrimp, aquid, catfish and octopus, which are part of the varieties that await MSC certification.

It is primarily based on the Food and Agriculture Organisation's (FAO) Code of Conduct for Responsible Fishing and Guidelines for the Labelling of Fish and Fishery Products from Marine Capture Fisheries.

Advanced stages

Speaking recently at a technical session jointly hosted by the MSC and the Sustainable Seafood Network India (SSNI) and the Seafood Exporters Association of India (SEAI), MSC India head Ravi Sreenivas said the practised fisheries are in the advanced stages of assessment, ruling expectations of MSC certification in the near year.

Cough syrup deaths: 3 FDA officials suspended in M.P.

Mehul Malpani
CHHINDWARA

The Madhya Pradesh government on Monday suspended the Deputy Commissioner and two drug inspectors of the Food and Drugs Administration (FDA) in connection with the death of 14 children, allegedly after consuming a cough syrup adulterated with a toxic chemical.

Deputy Commissioner Shashil Kishor and drug inspectors Gaurav Sharma (Chhindwara) and Shant Kumar Jain (Jabalpur) were suspended, while Controller of District Muzrya was transferred following directions from Chief Minister Mohan Yadav after he held a high-level meeting, a government statement said.

Speaking to reporters, Mr. Yadav said that investigations have also been launched to find cough syrups made



The mother of a victim showing medical records to Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav on Monday. A.M. MALPANI

by two other manufacturers. "We will not tolerate any kind of negligence with respect to matters concerning human life," Mr. Yadav said.

The Chief Minister also visited various villages in Chhindwara district, and met with the families that lost their children.

State Congress president Jitu Patwar, visited Chhindwara as well. He demanded the removal of De-

puty Chief Minister Rajendra Shrivastava, who is also the Health Minister.

Mr. Patwar also demanded that a murder case be registered against the cough syrup manufacturer and senior officials of the health department.

The police have arrested Prasenjit Soni, a government paediatrician, who prescribed the Coldrif syrup to many of the deceased children.

'Coldrif' not supplied in Maharashtra

The Hindu Bureau
MUMBAI

The Maharashtra Food and Drug Administration (FDA) urged the public on Monday to immediately stop the sale and use of a specific batch of the Coldrif syrup, following reports of child deaths in Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan, allegedly linked to the medicine.

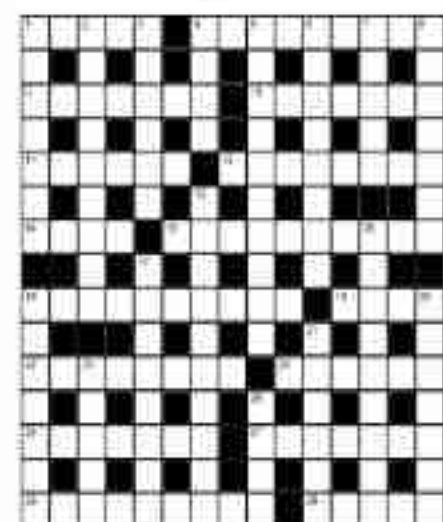
The appeal comes amid growing concerns over an adulterated batch of the syrup. The FDA had issued an advisory on Sunday, calling for the immediate suspension of sale, distribution, and use of the medicine.

Speaking to *The Hindu*, FDA joint Commissioner (Drugs) D.R. Chaturvedi said, "Our citizens are safe. We held a meeting with the Drug Control Authorities in Tamil Nadu... they confirmed that Coldrif cough syrups were not supplied in the State."

THE CROSSWORD + 14607

(set by Ganeshkoti)

To solve this puzzle online, go to <https://www.puzzles.org.uk>



- 1 Down: Search probing secrets about women serving the clergy (10)
- 2 Down: Child love (puzzled by several rugged knights) (10)
- 3 Down: Hugel but always about stock to an asset (4)
- 4 Down: "Get back" warning: popular Queen regains mother? (6)
- 5 Down: Overnight break through defence of exhausted headquarters, muffled cake weekly (10)
- 6 Down: Police officer claims victory after evicting General Electric employees (7)
- 7 Down: Tapdance ringer goes with celebratory song (11)
- 8 Down: Sips, in a strange voice, "Love agency makes up stuff about me" (8)
- 9 Down: Nish Olympic boxing champion (5)
- 10 Down:
 1. Age for inhibitor with Nuts of yellowish colour (7)
 2. On screen internet news? Bad movie, again? (3,4)
 3. Underneath making one small change to large, fragile device (4)
 4. Family point of history: American president (4)
 5. Prescription often, heavy gun (divided) (12)
 6. Fied bread, food, not fully kneaded, as that takes care of carbohydrates (8)
 7. Substantially via damage: guy is swelling in the U.S. (8)
 8. Ruins where rising right two steps and lowering changes nothing (3)
 9. Our Indian ways of beating (drives, etc.) beating India (5,6)
 10. Immense head-on hit: water by small fish (6,7)
 11. He isn't gonna hold regularly with finger injury (8)
 12. Two O on strongly coloured to enforce extremes of legislation by tomorrow (10)
 13. "Yes," admits Republican, "each liberal is wrong" (1)
 14. Noble lady's chest: neckling one shirt (4)
 15. Some radio: house (7,8), island flag (2)
 16. Rung female in stitches (4)

- 1 Across: Mild laughter flows by college, returns polite (8)
- 2 Across: Bundle new people into box for affordability (5)
- 3 Across: Flora DNA spliced: some particular jump? (7)
- 4 Across: Home: free or board: chicken (the wrong word) (4)
- 5 Across: "Select the first laptop, will" (the second) (5)
- 6 Across: Ponder: fine to require help: hope (8)
- 7 Across: What is misinterpreted as an outcome in Hindi? (10)

SUDOKU

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

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★☆☆☆

Solution to previous puzzle



Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

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

FAITH

Versatile Valmiki

When a hunter transformed himself through inner awakening and became Valmiki, it heralded the arrival of a moral guide for mankind in the form of Valmiki's Ramayana, detailing the life of Rama in verse form, said Ramal S. Ramakrishnan. After his transformation through meditation on Rama name, Valmiki built an ashram on the very same spot and lived the life of a hermit. When Narada arrived there, Valmiki asked him to name one human being with 16 sterling qualities. Narada told him about Rama, praising everything from his birth to his Parivratibhaktam.

His mind filled with Narada's discourse upon a man who had both compassion and renunciation, Valmiki went to the Tamasa river for a dip where a pair of curlews were singing when a hunter shot down the male bird, leaving the female in utter distress. Moved by the birds' plight, Valmiki cried, "May you know no rest for endless years since you killed one of the pair of curlews." Wondering what impelled him to curse, Valmiki decided to turn the verse into a shloka. At the same time, Brahma appeared in the ashram and endorsing the shloka, and commanded him to tell the world the story of Rama, a man devoted to dharma and possessed of the highest qualities and accomplishments. Brahma further assured the sage that "Whatever happened in public or in private to Rama and Sita, or the rakshasas would all be known to him, even the events hitherto unknown to Valmiki. Brahma further affirmed that nothing contained in his poem shall be falsified. He left after saying, "As long as the hills abide, so long shall the story of Rama be reputed in all the worlds."

SC to decide on securities transaction tax's constitutionality

Petition contends that the direct tax on securities transactions violates fundamental rights to equality and to trade or earn a livelihood

Krishnakumar Rajagopal
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court of India on Monday decided to examine a plea challenging the constitutional validity of the Securities Transaction Tax (STT), a direct tax levied on securities transactions through a listed stock exchange, as imposed under the Finance Act, 2004.

A Bench headed by justice J.B. Puriwala issued formal notice to the Union Government, through the Ministry of Finance, on the petition filed by Aseem Juneja, represented by advocate Siddhartha K. Garg, who contended that the STT violated fundamental rights to equality and to trade or earn a livelihood and the basic right to live with dignity.

The petition clarified that the challenge to the STT was not because the



The petition clarified it was not because the tax was currently high, but rather

it was paid on the same transaction," the plea submitted.

Secondly, Mr. Juneja contended that STT was the only tax in India which was imposed on the "sheer act of carrying out a provision and has to be paid irrespective of whether there is a profit made or not, which makes it almost punitive or deterrent in nature."

"Every tax in India is on the profit at the year-end but STT is applicable even if the stock market trader is operating in a loss. STT was introduced in 2004 to combat tax evasion in the stock market. This means that STT in stock market participants is what TDS is to salaried individuals. But the problem is that the TDS is refunded at the end of the year or adjusted with the income tax but no such provision is made for STT and the trader has to pay both," Mr. Juneja noted.

SC issues notice on plea for portal on financial holdings

Anuragika Bhattacharya
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday issued notices to the Union Government and several financial regulators on a public interest litigation petition seeking the creation of an integrated digital platform that would allow citizens to access information about all their financial holdings, whether operational, inactive, or unclaimed, across entities regulated by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI), and the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI).

A Bench of Justices Vikram Nath and Sandeep Mehta sought responses from the Union of India, the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, the RBI, SEBI, IRDAI, the National Savings Institute, the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO), and the Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA).

IHL acquires 100% stake in Sterling Bank

The Hindu Bureau
MUMBAI

Industrial International Holdings Ltd. (IHL), Mauritius has announced the acquisition of 100% stake in Sterling Bank, Bahamas.

The company said in a statement that it had earlier acquired 51% stake in September 2022, and has now completed the acquisition of the remaining 49% equity.

The acquisition was made through IHL's wholly owned subsidiary, IHL Capital, Mauritius. Sterling Bank will be renamed as 'IHL Bank & Trust Ltd.'

IHL, a Mauritius-based entity with a net worth of \$1.26 billion as of August 31, 2025, has a diversified investment portfolio across the Banking, Financial Services, Securities, and Insurance (BFSI) sectors. IHL is the promoter of Industrial Bank Ltd.

IN BRIEF



ONGC to invest ₹8,110 cr. on 172 onshore wells in AP

Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited (ONGC) is set to invest ₹8,110 crore for onshore development and production of oil and gas from 172 wells in eight PMU (petroleum mining units) blocks in Andhra Pradesh. A committee under the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change has recommended Environmental Clearance for the project in a meeting held last month. While recommending the EC, the committee directed the ONGC to comply with all the environmental protection measures and safeguards proposed in the documents submitted to the Ministry. —

India's services PMI eases to 60.9 in September

The growth of India's services sector eased in September from the recent high in August, as new business and activity expanded at slower rates, according to a private monthly survey released on Monday. The seasonally adjusted IHS Markit India Services PMI Business Activity Index fell to 60.9 in September, from a 15-year high of 62.1 in August, amid competitive conditions and cost-control measures. Notwithstanding the moderation, the September Services PMI Index was well above the neutral mark of 50 to signal another substantial uptick in output. —

Canara Robeco AMC set to raise ₹1,326 crore in IPO

Canara Robeco Asset Management Ltd. announced plans to raise ₹1,326 crore in initial public offering (IPO). The complete offer for sale of 40,854,357 equity shares by the promoter selling shareholders comprises 25,524,200 equity shares by Canara Bank and up to 23,330,157 equity shares by Orix Corporation Europe. The company has set a price band of ₹253 to ₹264 a share that is to be subscribed in lots of 50 equity shares and in multiples of 16, thereafter. Canara is selling a 10% stake in the IPO, while Robeco (Orix Corporation) is selling 12%.

Sonowal accords ceremonial welcome to 'Very Large Gas Carrier' Shivalik

V. Kamalakara Rao
VISHAKHAPATNAM

Union Minister of Ports, Shipping and Waterways Sarbananda Sonowal accorded a ceremonial welcome to the nation's first Very Large Gas Carrier (VLGC) Shivalik, at the Visakhapatnam port, on its maiden call to the nation on Monday.

Shivalik, recently inducted under the Indian flag by the Shipping Corporation of India (SCI) Ltd. on September 10, represents a significant leap in India's maritime and energy logistics capability.

Mr. Sonowal congratulated the SCI team and lauded the Visakhapatnam Port Authority (VPA) for facilitating the vessel's smooth handling during its inaugural LPG contingent operation, at the port's LPG terminal.

Other projects
Mr. Sonowal also inaugurated several developmental projects at Visakhapatnam Port Authority at Jagarala Conventions, Jagampuram.

These included the Operation & Maintenance of East Quay (EQ) IA Terminal, awarded to M/s Green Energy Resources with an investment of ₹130 crore.

The project includes deployment of two 120-tonne Harbour Mobile Cranes (HMCs) and connected infrastructure for a 5+ year period, enhancing capacity by 1 MMTDA.

The initiative is expected to generate around 150 jobs, reduce logistics costs, and strengthen Visakhapatnam Port's position as a key cargo hub on the East Coast.



Union Ports & Shipping Minister Sarbananda Sonowal flagging off VLGC Shivalik, VPM

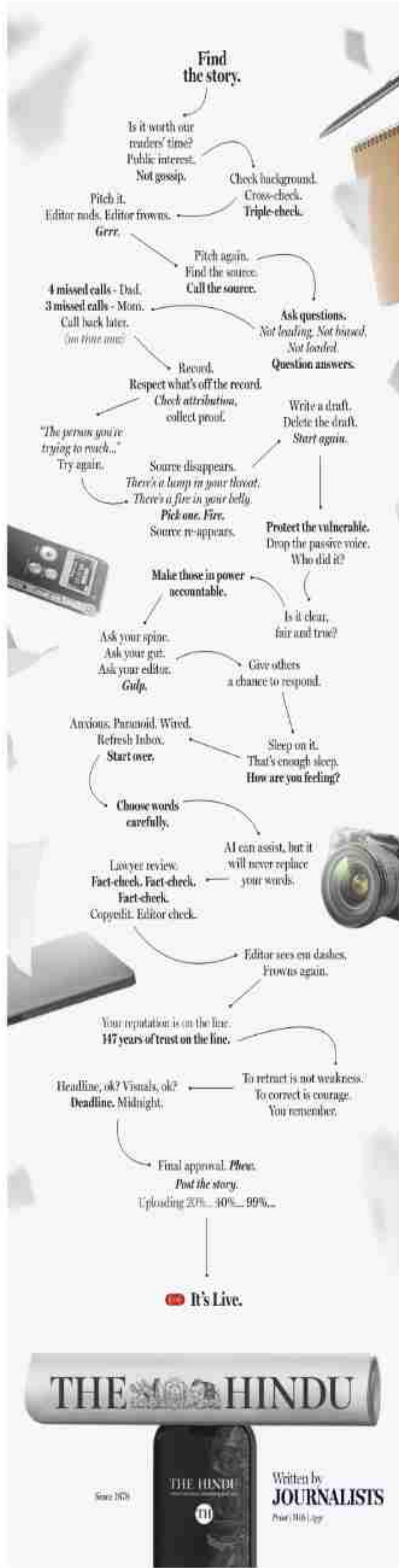
The Minister also inaugurated the Smart Video Surveillance Project, valued at ₹7.51 crore, executed by M/s Rastriya Corporation of India Ltd., Hyderabad. The initiative integrates AI/ML-based Video Analytics, IoT technologies, and an Integrated Command Control Centre (ICC) with the ports of O&N support.

Designed to be implemented within 12 months, the project enhances port security, operational efficiency, and compliance while enabling real-time monitoring, asset tracking, and predictive analytics — making VPA a future-ready smart port.

Another major project inaugurated was the (A) Health Care System, implemented by M/s Transfinder Pvt. Ltd., Visakhapatnam, at a cost of ₹1 crore.

The project, to be completed in three months, enables digital access to health records for employees, pensioners, and dependents through QR/Aadhaar-linked smart health cards.

Visakhapatnam MP M. Sriharshvardhan accompanied Mr. Sonowal, among others.



MOSCOW

Ukraine drone strikes cut off power for thousands in Russia



Russian Defence Ministry on Monday said it had downed 252 Ukrainian drones overnight — one of the highest daily tolls since Russia launched its offensive in 2022. In the Belgorod border region, thousands were left without electricity. Ukraine has vowed to increase its strikes, especially on Russia's oil infrastructure.

LONDON

Jilly Cooper, British best-selling author of racy romance, dies at 88



British author Jilly Cooper, known for her chronicles of class and sex in Regency novels, including *Windsor* and *Widows*, has died, her agent and family said on Monday. She was 88. The author died on Sunday after a fall, according to a statement. Her son, Peter, said she was among those who paid tribute to the author.

DHAKA

Khaleda Zia's exiled son plans to return for Bangladesh elections



Bangladesh politician Tarique Rahman said on Monday he would return "soon" from 17 years of self-imposed exile to contest the first elections since a 2024 mass uprising. Mr. Rahman, 55, son of former premier Khaleda Zia, is the acting chairman of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party, as well as a prominent in the opposition party.

TEHRAN

Iran says it will not resume nuclear talks with Europeans at this stage



Iran does not plan to resume nuclear talks with European countries after they imposed sanctions, the foreign ministry said on Monday. Tehran, France and Germany negotiated in the 2015 deal, suspended sanctions on September 28. "We have no plans for negotiations at this stage," spokesman Ebrahim Raisi said.

Chaos in France as PM Lecornu quits a month after Macron appointed him

Lecornu earlier said conditions were no longer met to remain in office after failing to build a consensus in Parliament; the National Rally has urged Macron to call for snap elections or resign

Associated Press

France's new Prime Minister Sébastien Lecornu resigned less than 34 hours after naming his government and after less than a month in office, plunging the country into a deep political crisis and leaving President Emmanuel Macron with few options.



Outgoing French Minister Sébastien Lecornu, who resigned hours after naming cabinet, delivers his statement in Paris on Monday.

Macron held new talks with Mr. Lecornu in the evening and gave him two days to reach a plan for the country's "stability", the president's office said.

Mr. Lecornu responded that he agreed to hold final talks with political forces and that he would tell Mr. Macron on Wednesday evening "if it's possible or not, so that he can draw all the necessary conclusions."

Mr. Lecornu had replaced his predecessor, François Bayrou, in September to become France's fourth Prime Minister in barely a year during a prolonged period of political instability. French politics have been in disarray since Mr. Macron called snap elections last year that produced a deeply fragmented legislature and a political impasse.

India 'firm' on 'free and fair' election in Bangladesh: Misri

Kalid Misri, New Delhi

Bangladesh should hold the next general election "without delay" and that India is in favour of "free, fair, inclusive and participatory" election in the country, said Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri on Monday.



Vikram Misri

view of the interim government of Muhammad Yunus reflected on multiple occasions that the election would be held in February.

However, there have been questions about how inclusive would the election be as the Awami League, the party that governed Bangladesh between 2008 and 2024 remains banned, with its leader and former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina staying in India.

Bangladesh has been demanding the extradition of Mr. Hasina to face trial in the International Criminal Tribunal (ICTJ) for the killing of protesters in July-August 2024 when Mr. Hasina faced a student-led uprising that overthrew her government.

Medicine Nobel for scientists who demystified the immune system

Jacob Koehn, New Delhi

The annual Nobel Week — when the world's most prestigious prizes for scientific achievement are announced — kicked off on Monday with three scientists, two Americans and one Japanese, sharing the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine for unravelling tantalising aspects of the human immune system.



Key find: The trio were awarded for their fundamental discovery relating to peripheral immune tolerance.

They discovered that mice have a mutation in a gene that they named Foxp3. They also showed that mutations to the fox gene triggered a serious autoimmune disease, IFN-γ.

Two years after this, Mr. Sakaguchi was able to link these discoveries. He proved that the Foxp3 gene governs the development of the cells he identified in 1995. These cells, now known as "regulatory T cells", modulate other immune cells and ensure that our immune system tolerates our own tissues.

The immune discovery launched the field of peripheral tolerance, opening the development of medical treatments for cancer and autoimmune diseases. This may also lead to more successful transplantations. Several of these treatments are now undergoing clinical trials.

particularly vulnerable to autoimmune diseases. They had discovered that mice have a mutation in a gene that they named Foxp3. They also showed that mutations to the fox gene triggered a serious autoimmune disease, IFN-γ.

UN to probe human rights violations in Afghanistan

Agence France-Presse, GENEVA

The UN Human Rights Council decided on Monday to launch a probe into serious rights violations in Afghanistan, amid growing alarm over the Taliban's measures targeting women and girls.

The probe notably focuses on violations and abuses against women and girls

UN was adopted with out a vote in Geneva. "Four years since the Taliban takeover by force, the human rights situation has only deteriorated amid a deepening humanitarian crisis," said Denmark's ambassador Ib Petersen, introducing the resolution on behalf of the EU. The

scope of the probe notably includes violations and abuses against women and girls. The resolution "deplores the Taliban's institutionalisation of its system of discrimination, segregation, domination, disrespect for human dignity and exclusion of women and girls".

Hamas: Israel hold indirect talks on Gaza

Agence France-Presse, CAIRO

Delegations from Hamas and Israel on Monday began indirect talks in Egypt's Sharm El-Sheikh on ending the nearly two-year war in Gaza, Egyptian state-linked media said.

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ANGHRA UNIVERSITY
VIRAKHAPATHAN
TENDER NOTICE
Tender for the construction of 34.000 sqm of the new building for the Department of Health and Family Welfare, Virakhapathan, Angkor Wat, Cambodia. The tender is open for 30 days from the date of publication of the advertisement in the newspaper. For details visit: www.angkoruniversity.com

ALL INDIA INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL SCIENCES
Tender for the construction of 34.000 sqm of the new building for the Department of Health and Family Welfare, Virakhapathan, Angkor Wat, Cambodia. The tender is open for 30 days from the date of publication of the advertisement in the newspaper. For details visit: www.angkoruniversity.com

INLAND WATERWAYS AUTHORITY OF INDIA
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RE - TENDER NOTICE
Development of Marine Park, Ponnani, Malappuram, Kerala
Tender for the construction of 34.000 sqm of the new building for the Department of Health and Family Welfare, Virakhapathan, Angkor Wat, Cambodia. The tender is open for 30 days from the date of publication of the advertisement in the newspaper. For details visit: www.angkoruniversity.com

Sport

PURPLE PATCH

Brits slams her fifth ton in 2025, most by a player in a calendar year



South Africa's Tazmin Brits, who recorded an 85-ball 101 against New Zealand in the Women's ODI World Cup on Monday, now holds the record for most ODI hundreds (five) in a calendar year, going past South West Indies' tally of four. The Indian opener had scored four tons in a year earlier (2019, 2020).

DYNAMIC Duo

Brits-Luus' 159-run stand the highest for SA in World Cups



Tazmin Brits' 159-run stand with Laura du Preez is her fifth century partnership in ODIs (this year, the most for South Africa in a calendar year). It is also South Africa's highest for any wicket in World Cups, bettering Marizanne Kapp and Dane van Niekerk's earlier 128-run stand for the debut wicket against Pakistan (2018, 2019).

APLOMB

We want to play our A-game against England: Sultana



"We want to play our A-game. Our win against Pakistan has given us a bit of confidence. In Colombia, it was a different surface but we played our best and won the match. We want to play the same way against England," Bangladesh skipper Nigar Sultana Joty said on Tuesday ahead of the match against England in Colombia.

THRILLING WIN

Dabang Delhi completes the double over Pink Panthers



Dabang Delhi remained at the top of the PWG T20 table with a 29-26 win over Jaipur Pink Panthers in Chennai on Monday. Dabang had a high five, while Delhi (10th) slipped to sixth with eight points for Delhi in the second match. Jaipur finished last (17th) with 15-28. Sunday's results: Bengaluru Bulls to Tamil Thalasani 33-28.

Mlaba, Brits and Luus star as South Africa outplays New Zealand

The spinner's four for helps the Proteas bowl out the White Ferns for 210; the opener and the No. 3's big partnership makes it a stroll in the park



On a high: Mlaba's spell and Brits' hundred powered South Africa to a thrumping win. (2/1) HANU

ODI WORLD CUP

Amrutha yelamuri
MUMBAI

South Africa showed that the shelling at the hands of England was an exception, not the norm, with a dominant 10-wicket win against New Zealand in a Women's ODI World Cup league fixture at the Haka Stadium here on Monday.

Tazmin Brits (101, 85, 154, 106) and Laura Luus (83, 111, 114, 108, 106) carried an unbroken after losing skipper Laura Wolvaardt early in the 232-run chase. After her trademark early shakiness, the only hint of nerves Brits showed was as she cleared the three-figure milestone, pulling off a new 'archer' celebration when the job was done.

While Lea Tuohimäki managed to hit Brits' woodwork in the 32nd over and

temper the siege in the fifth, the Luus calmly helped the side get off the mark in the standings with almost 10 overs to spare. Most importantly, though, the win has done a world of good to South Africa's Net Run Rate, which has gone from -3.73 to -4.00.

Brits became only the third South African to score an ODI World Cup century after Linda Grever and Marizanne Kapp. She is also the fastest to seven hundreds in the format (41 innings), bettering Australian legend Meg Lanning's tally (40).

Earlier, opting to bat, the Proteas got off to a blistering start, with Kapp removing the hosts' early shakiness, the only hint of nerves Brits showed was as she cleared the three-figure milestone, pulling off a new 'archer' celebration when the job was done.

While Lea Tuohimäki managed to hit Brits' woodwork in the 32nd over and

an innings in the tournament. After Amelia Kerr succumbed to pressure, the ease of anchoring the White Ferns innings fell on the experienced shoulders of Sophie Devine again.

Meanwhile, Chloe Tryon claimed her 100th international scalp, removing a struggling Georgia Plimmer, which meant an incoming Brooke Lanning was tasked with hosting her side's closing scoring rate.

However, once Nonkululeko Mkhize removed Lanning, the lower middle-order hid like a pack of cards, seven wickets fell for just 44 runs, which eventually contributed to the White Ferns suffering a second defeat on the trot.

The scores: New Zealand 210 in 47.5 overs (Sophie Devine 85, Brooke Lanning 40, Nonkululeko Mkhize 4/40) and South Africa 232 in 40.5 overs (Tazmin Brits 101, Laura Luus 106).

Team: New Zealand: Polli Simons, Tazmin Brits, Laura Luus, Nonkululeko Mkhize, Sophie Devine, Amelia Kerr, Georgia Plimmer, Brooke Lanning, Lea Tuohimäki, Chloe Tryon.

Kranti — the new revolution in Indian women's cricket



Rising star: Kranti has scalped 19 ODI wickets in just nine games, once making her international debut at the same stadium. (2/1) HANU

Gayatri
COCHIN

Some 'life-changing full circle' stories are incredibly special.

Kranti Kapadia made her debut at the R. Premadasa Stadium here in May, in the final of a Tri-Series against Sri Lanka, which also featured South Africa. She won wickets but showed promise.

Five months later, the 25-year-old now has 19 ODI wickets in just nine games, has earned the faith of the third rank over other experienced players, and has also shown courage with the bat. All this against quality opposition — like England

and Australia.

She once again put on a show with a match-winning performance against Pakistan in the Women's ODI World Cup at the same venue where she debuted.

Her village — Chavara in Madhya Pradesh — set up a screen on the ground she used to play to as a kid to watch along as Kranti took three crucial wickets (Gulistan, Alia Rana and Natália Pervak) to derail Pakistan's chase and set up India's 40-run triumph.

"When I came in for my second spell, the captain wanted to remove the slip because the ball was old. I insisted on keeping the slip as I had a feeling I could draw out a wicket. That's exactly what happened. I had that faith," she said.

Kranti started with the bat too, smacking two quick boundaries to maintain the tempo for Rishu Ghosh, who helped India jump its score up to 347.

"Rishu was telling me that if the ball is in my range, I should go for it, or at least rotate strike with a single. Only a few overs were left, but they kept bowling in my zone... so I hit them for four."

"Even the ball I got out to, I thought I could send it to the keeper. I hope I can keep contributing with the bat in future matches too," she said with a wide smile.

Upbeat Bangladesh faces a stern test against England

Rudolf Saha
GUWAHATI



Charm: Some heat: England will look to sustain the momentum. (2/1) HANU

England will face Bangladesh for only the second time in ODIs when the two sides meet in the Women's ODI World Cup at the Barapada Stadium here on Tuesday.

The first time the teams played each other in the format was in the 2002 World Cup in New Zealand. With a 100-run win, England had booked its place in the semifinals of that edition.

While a lack of history between the teams means no possibility of drawing inferences, a look into their wins in the ongoing tournament points to victories earned in similar fashion.

Both matches were low-scoring affairs as England and Bangladesh bundled out their opponents for paltry totals before chasing them down without much hassle.

In England's 10-wicket demolition job of South Africa — set up by the spin

ners of Lucy Smith, Charlie Dean, and Sophie Ecclestone — opener Tazmin Brits and Amy Jones chased down 70 runs in 44.1 overs.

For Bangladesh, too, the Akter trio of Warun, Ruma, and Natália bowled masterly spells to restrict Pakistan to 129, which was chased down in 31.1 overs, thanks to Rubya Haider's maiden ODI fifty.

England's middle-order is yet to get a hit in the series, but the presence of skipper Nat Sciver-Brunt and Sophie Dunkley, who

scored in that 2002 match, only reinforces the side's batting strength.

For the Tigrises, the lack of batting depth already puts them on the back foot against the four-time champion.

Past the top five, which includes captain Nigar Sultana Joty, there's no player who can threaten with the willow.

Having already played in the spin-friendly Bangladesh conditions once, the advantage will be with England even before the first ball.

Dean wary of Tigresses' bowling

Rudolf Saha
GUWAHATI

England spinner Charlie Dean is ready to face the "different kind of challenge" Bangladesh can pose during the Women's ODI World Cup fixture at the Barapada Stadium on Tuesday.

The 24-year-old off-break bowler said the Tigrises pose what it takes to trouble the four-time champion.

"Bangladesh's bowling attack is, I think, ranked number one in terms of the economy that they've managed to achieve in the last 10 months. So, it's nothing to be sniffed at. Bangladesh has Marufa Akter, with that big leg, bowling early on and then a lot of different spinners. We're not taking Bangladesh lightly at all. We'll try to make them play the big shots and restrict the scoring. I think it would be a different kind of challenge," Dean said on Monday.

England had thrumped South Africa by 10 wickets at the same venue. However,

Today's match

England vs Bangladesh

Guwahati, 2pm

Head-to-head record

Match 2

England 1 Bangladesh 0

in World Cup

Match 1

England 1 Bangladesh 0

1 OF THE 2021 SPORTS TESTS

Time ripe for Rahul to reap the fruits of labour at home

Vibek Krishnan
NEW DELHI

Of the many avatars that K.L. Rahul has donned in his decade-long international career, he seems at his most comfortable in his present position: as opening batter and senior batsman of a young Indian Test team. His case was clear-cut in his debut exhibition against the West Indies in the first Test at Ahmedabad last week as the 33-year-old celebrated his 10th Test hundred with a raised bat and a kiss of the helmet.

He has scored runs against far more hostile bowling attacks in much more demanding conditions, as title contenders in 40 Tests away from home

cently. But the time against the West Indies is significant for the very reason that there was a sense of inevitability about the way he went about his business.

That it was just his second three-figure score in 25 Tests and 33 innings at home encapsulates Rahul's rising career. It gives the impression that his game against spin isn't quite as robust, but it is worth noting that his home average of 41.03 is significantly better than his overseas of 33.84 outside India.

Old numbers have never done justice to Rahul's credentials. But since the loss of England in June, it appears as though the figures are finally aligning with the abundant ability

I needed to make that mental switch to enjoy getting and getting hundreds with strokes and runs.

that Rahul has always possessed. At the end of a gripping five-Test dual versus England, Rahul was India's second-highest run-getter, behind Shubman Gill, with 522 runs at an average of 31.2. During the tour, he shed light on how mental coaches had enhanced his reaction time.

Having gone through the grind for many years, the new judge for Rahul's hit his books in the home season and basked his overall average of 36. He

seems in the mood to do so before his run in the first Test against West Indies, he also amassed an unbeaten 70 for India-A against Australia A in a successful run chase of 412.

"When you travel abroad and play in varying, swinging conditions, there's a lot of challenge doing that," Rahul told the official broadcaster in Ahmedabad. "And when we come back home, you need to dig in and need to get your runs with strokes. I needed to make that mental switch to enjoy doing that, enjoy grinding and getting hundreds with strokes and runs. That's the only difference I can see. And probably that's why I wasn't doing that well when I played at home."



Doughty ends: The hundred in Ahmedabad was Rahul's second home figure score in 25 Tests and 33 innings in India. (2/1) HANU

Milan, Juventus fail to break the deadlock

LEGO LEAGUES

Agencies
TITAN

AC Milan's Christian Pulisic missed a penalty and his side had to settle for a 0-0 draw away to Juventus on Sunday, denying the visitors a return to the top of the Serie A standings.

After Napoli and AS Roma, along with Inter Milan, all remained even over the weekend, the pressure was on Milan and Juventus to keep place at the top, leading to a cagey game where Pulisic's error proved costly.

Milan has 13 points, third in the standings and

two points behind leaders Napoli and Roma, while Juventus is a further point back in fifth, behind Inter on goal difference.

In La Liga, Atletico Madrid stumbled to a 1-1 draw at Celta Vigo, playing more than half the game with 10 men. French defender Clement Lenglet was sent off in the 40th minute. Diego Simeone's side is fifth, eight points behind leader Real Madrid and also behind second-placed Barcelona.

Top scorers: La Liga: Espanyol 1 (Cesc 10), Real Madrid 1 (Cesc 10), Atletico 1 (Cesc 10). Serie A: Celta Vigo 1 (Pulisic 10), Celta Vigo 1 (Pulisic 10), Celta Vigo 1 (Pulisic 10). Serie A: Celta Vigo 1 (Pulisic 10), Celta Vigo 1 (Pulisic 10).



ALL PHOTO: SRI KUNAW PICTUREMA

When the going gets tough, Satwik-Chirag get going

The journey hasn't been smooth for SatChi as they have had to deal with personal issues and injuries this season; the return of Tan Kim has given them renewed hope

K. Keerthivasan

Looking forward to his second World badminton championships medal at the Adidas Arena in Paris this August, the crack Indian men's doubles pair of SatwikChirag Ranikireddy and Chirag Shetty was up against a formidable opponent in Aaron Chia and Soh Wooi Yik of Malaysia in the quarterfinals.

The Malaysians who had won gold in the 2021 edition of the Worlds, had a 16-7 BWF record going into the last eight clash against the Indians. Moreover, SatChi, as the Indian pair is referred to, had lost to Aaron Chia in the semifinals of two earlier tournaments — Singapore Open (May-June 2020) and China Open (July).

The odds were heavily stacked against SatChi.

The Indians proved equal to the task, pulling off a victory in straight games. A huge victory it indeed was. As the saying goes, "when the going gets tough, the tough get going."

"Yeah, I think it was quite an important victory. I think beating the Malaysians at the same arena where we lost to them a year back at the (2021 Paris) Olympics was special. To come out there and beat them when they were the higher ranked pair (third seed) felt great. And, they have been playing with really good badminton," said Chirag, in *The Hindu* in a virtual interview.

Though SatChi lost in the semifinals of the Paris Worlds to Kim Won Ho and Seo Seung-jae of Korea, who went on to win the championships, the bronze medal provided the much-needed boost as they later reached two back-to-back finals of the Hong Kong Open and China Masters and reach the BWF World ranking of six.

However, the journey this season hasn't been smooth for the Indians for they had to deal with personal issues and injuries. While Satwik had his father early this year while dealing with back issues, Chirag, too, had a few niggles.

Satwik said, "After the 2024 Paris Olympics defeat (the pair lost in the quarterfinals to Aaron Chia and Soh Wooi Yik), yeah, it was tough for us to digest. To come out of that, it took us a little time. I was having a back issue back then. I couldn't figure out what went wrong and what was happening really because I was doing everything perfectly. After two days



of practice, again, I was hurting back issues. So, I couldn't figure it out at that time. But I figured it out later. In January, Chirag had a few niggles. I thought we had sorted out things, my father passed away in February 2025. It was tough times. And in the All England Open in March, we had injuries. From then on, it was like always we were getting better, but something or the other happened that stopped us. As we have said many times, injuries and setbacks are part and parcel of the game. We have to handle them."

Mental recovery

To come out with all guns blazing with so much on their mind and win a second World championship bronze and enter two back-to-back BWF World Tour finals

requires strong mental strength and fortitude, and SatChi showed that they have them in plenty.

At the same time, they knew what they have achieved this season so far — the pair is yet to win a World Tour title — is way below their potential but given the circumstances a great result.

Chirag put it best when he said, "I think it's not been the most ideal year, but I think whatever we've been through, both personally and professionally, I think with all the injuries and stuff, I think we've been able to play much better than our expectations. I think a lot of people will say that 'you have to keep playing tough' because we've done that in the past, won titles. It's very easy to make a judgment, but I think what we've gone through and to come out the way we have, I think in that aspect, it's been a really good year, but still a little needs to be won. And as always, we are always hungry to go out there and win a title. I think it will eventually come."

All said and done, the semifinals of the Paris World championships against the Chinese pair of Chen Fei Yung and Liu Yi showed the Indians need to address a few things moving forward.

In the third and final game, after Chirag's serve was broken for the first point of the game, Liu took charge with his flick serves. The 22-year-old won eight straight points with his flick serve, making it difficult for the Indians to return them. From there on, SatChi couldn't make a comeback.

Full credit

Chirag gave full credit for the Chinese for the way used the flick serves. "I think in the third game especially, they started flicking us quite a bit. We didn't expect them to do that because in the first two games, they didn't really do that as often. And we were trying to be on the shuttle as possible to take it high because they were serving quite well in the front court as well. I think we could have taken a different approach where we were not dwelling so much on receiving it well. I think credit to them that they could mix it up that way."

The re-entry of Korea's Tan Kim has given them renewed hope as coach has made SatChi feel secure. Tan's first stint with the Indian doubles team was from 2015 to 2019 and his second stint began in December 2024.

SatChi have adjusted to his style after being with Spanish Mathias Boe for nearly two years till the 2024 Paris Olympics.

"We were playing in European style with Mathias. It was a little different from Tan. Mathias wanted us to play longer sessions. Tan wanted us to have less training time on court but more intense. We three are on the right page. Tan was the one who made Chirag and I play together. When he came back, we felt very comfortable," said Satwik.

SatChi have won matches against all the top world ranked players, but against the reigning World champion Korean pair of Kim Won Ho and Seo Seung-jae, they are yet to script a win.

Satwik said right now the Koreans are the ones to beat.

"Obviously, right now, I think Kim Won and Seo are playing more consistently and a lot more confidently. They are very ready on the court and they don't panic so easily. They have that confidence and their body language seems like they have all the control over the court. That comes with over the confidence like how we had when we were world number one," said Satwik. "I still think anyone can beat anyone on any given day."

SatChi have a lot of goals left. First, they want to do well in the BWF World Tour finals, a tournament they have played only once (in 2021, Tokyo) in the last eight editions and, of course, retain the No.1 crown.

Chirag said, "Although we've been in the World's top eight for almost 7-8 years now, we have managed to play World Tour Finals once. This year, we really wanted to qualify. We are in a good place right now to qualify. We want to go as deep as possible into the tournament."

Satwik said having lost the World No.1, they are eager to retain the tag. "That is there. We want to take it again," he said.

The 2025 season has taught SatChi how to manage their mind and play with injuries and get optimum results. There are a quite few BWF Tournaments left like the Denmark Open (Oct. 14 to 19) and French Open (Oct. 21 to 26) and World Tour Finals (December 7 to 21 in Hangzhou).

The way the Indians have performed against numerous odds this season, a positive end to a tough, difficult and trying season will, definitely, be an icing on the cake.

THE GIST

The 2025 season has taught SatChi how to manage their mind and play with injuries and get optimum results. There are a quite few BWF Tournaments left.

SatChi have a lot of goals left. First, they want to do well in the BWF World Tour finals, a tournament they have played only once (in 2021, Tokyo) in the last eight editions and, of course, retain the No.1 crown.

SCIENCE

'Global South scientists can bypass red tape by thinking, working together'

Bureaucratic delays, outdated procurement rules, and chronic underfunding are all hallmarks of doing science in India but according to Sammy Wambua from Pwani University in Kenya, there are reasons to be optimistic and to believe creativity and solidarity can keep research ticking

Rishika Pandkar

Bureaucratic red tape, limited funding, and expensive equipment often conspire to make scientific research in the Global South an uphill task. Yet researchers continue to find creative ways to keep going.

At a plenary lecture during the Student Conference on Conservation Science in Bengaluru in September, Sammy Wambua, a conservation genomics scientist from Pwani University in Kenya, outlined how scientists in resource-constrained settings improvise and collaborate around bureaucratic and other hurdles.

The meeting, hosted by the Indian Institute of Science, brought together early career scientists from India and some other countries. In his talk, 'Navigating Conservation Genomics in East Africa: A Personal Journey, Practical Lessons, and a Vision for Equitable Science,' Dr. Wambua sketched out the obstacles that researchers in Kenya face and offered lessons that might resonate in India, where young scientists contend with comparable challenges.

A kind of 'ajugua'

Among other points, he said that the most daunting barrier isn't scientific but bureaucratic. Multiple overlapping policies, opaque approval processes, and inhibitory oral directives often leave researchers stranded, and their experiments often at dead ends.

"When you run into hindrances with anything bureaucratic and try to get an explanation, you don't get a satisfactory one," he said. "It tells you immediately that the bureaucrats are not guided by anything that is written."

The Indian experience echoes this. Wildlife biologists often wait months for permits to enter protected areas, with no updates from the forest department. Conservationist Tarsh Thakazhara, who attended Dr. Wambua's lecture, recalled how one of his permits to work with elephants was delayed for eight months until he sat in the forest department office for four days. Such experiences are part of what he called *ajugua* – the quintessentially Indian habit of developing quick fixes to navigate roadblocks.

Even when laws formally allow exceptions, such as buying certain enzymes from a single source because only one supplier exists, oral directives can override them. In India, procurement rules often impose rigid "lowest price" norms even for highly specific reagents, necessitating a different set of rules to procure niche materials. Earlier this year, in fact, the Union Ministry of Finance eased some of these constraints by raising the direct purchase limit from ₹1 lakh to ₹2 lakh and allowing vice-chancellors to approve vendors of up to ₹200 crore ideally, Dr. Wambua said, government offices should function like service providers that communicate application status clearly and proactively. Researchers in both Kenya and India instead face long silences until they make time and follow up.

Collaborations as bridges

He also argued that collaboration could provide another way around such hurdles. For example, international projects typically require hundreds of



A row of DNA sequencing machines. According to accounts from researchers in government-funded institutions, Indian public universities often face protracted procurement cycles, sometimes exceeding six months. [DOI: 10.1016/j.sbs.2020.100000](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbs.2020.100000)

understanding (MoUs) that are approved by the respective governments – but which often languish in ministries for years. Instead, he said, he and his colleagues use provisional 'Frameworks of Collaboration' that allow them to begin work while formal MoUs are still being processed.

"We apply for the MoUs to be approved, and in the meantime we can get started," he said, emphasising that the approach is legal and pragmatic.

Funding shortfalls are the other major obstacle. Dr. Wambua described how his students' applications for postgraduate scholarships were repeatedly rejected. But partnerships with conservation organisations sometimes yielded both science and support. He recalled proposing coral genotyping projects with the condition that the budget be raised to cover students' fees and stipends, in effect linking building capacity to research priorities.

In India as well, many funding delays have threatened the sustainability of both students and research projects. Reports from Centrally funded universities have admitted errors in disbursing fellowships. Typically, the Ministry approves scholars' claims but forces them to wait for months to receive their stipends, pushing them to take on teaching work and sometimes even personal loans.

Collaborative arrangements such as agreements between Indian and foreign labs (e.g., to split research work) are often



When you run into bureaucracy and try to get an explanation, you don't get a satisfactory one. It tells you that they are not guided by anything written

SAMMY WAMBUA
Pwani University Kenya

(the only way to bridge the gap in the end).

Dr. Wambua also highlighted how rapidly evolving technology makes expensive investments more risky. For instance, buying a DNA sequencing machine might cost tens of lakhs of rupees – only for the model to become obsolete within months. Instead, he said, scientists can ship samples abroad at minimal cost to be processed using state-of-the-art facilities.

"It helps to have friends in labs in different countries," he said.

"We cannot stop working because there is no money. If you have a PhD, the least you can do is think."

'Find ways to work together'

According to accounts from researchers in government-funded institutions, Indian public universities often face protracted procurement cycles, sometimes exceeding six months. Delayed delivery of key compatibility issues further erode value and within that timeframe, the DNA sequencer may have been rendered unnecessary or irrelevant.

Underlying Dr. Wambua's overarching message was a call for more South-South collaborations. Countries in Africa and Asia face similar constraints and stand to gain by pooling resources and sharing research priorities rather than labouring alone, often to ineffectual ends.

"We should be more intentional in seeing our strengths and finding ways to work together," he said, urging scientists to reimagine collaboration beyond the traditional North-South model.

One particular indicator of this is India's record of publications in the agricultural sciences. One recent analysis by Central University of Tamil Nadu and Ramapo Hindi University researchers underscored how much international collaboration shapes visibility. In 2014-2021, scientists were found to have co-authored almost 2,100 papers with institutions in the UK, shooting more than 22,000 citations. Ultimately, the analysis showed collaborations with more institutions were also more impactful.

For young researchers in India hawking in Bengaluru, the pointers would have been unmistakable. Bureaucratic delays, outdated procurement rules, and chronic underfunding are all hallmarks of doing science in India. However, Dr. Wambua's account also carried a note of optimism and that creativity and solidarity can keep science alive even in the toughest environments.

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Frederick Gamble, Derrick Camaroux and David Melanges with a prototype of their kirigami-patterned plastic parachute. DOI: 10.1016/j.sbs.2020.100000

Kirigami parachutes land on target

Vandevan Mukundh

Parachutes safely deliver people, cargo, and humanitarian aid. Yet conventional parachutes are expensive to make and fragile. They are also complex to assemble and require skilled labour, limiting their availability for rapid or low-cost deployment. Finally, when released into the air, traditional parachutes tend to drift sideways and miss their intended targets, which can be a serious drawback in contexts such as flood or medicine drops in disaster zones.

In a new study in *Nature*, researchers from Polytechnique Montreal in Canada and the Institut Polytechnique de Paris in France looked for inspiration in kirigami, the Japanese art of cutting paper to create complex forms. Engineers have recently adopted kirigami principles to design flexible materials that can stretch, twist, and morph into new shapes. The researchers asked whether kirigami cuts in thin circular sheets could similarly transform an ordinary disc into a simple, stable parachute. Because if this is possible, parachutes can be fabricated by cutting a single sheet with lasers, eliminating assembly while imposing natural aerodynamic control.

By harnessing flow-induced reconfiguration – a phenomenon seen in leaves and seeds – the team aimed to design parachutes that wouldn't only slow descent but also fall reliably near a target, independent of the initial release angle.

The researchers cut closed-loop kirigami patterns into Mylar discs and tested their behaviour in freefall experiments and in wind tunnels. They also compared designs with and without ribs, tracked their deformation, drag, and stability, and validated results using a custom simulation framework called Flow-Induced Reconfiguration Model (FIRM). Finally, they built scale prototypes that they tested by dropping

The study showed that stability and control can be 'programmed' into thin sheets by cutting them in particular ways, without having to assemble them further

from drums in the real world.

Their experiments revealed two distinct modes of deformation. Discs without ribs or with certain patterns collapsed into a cylindrical shape that tumbled unpredictably. They also found a specific closed-loop design that elongated along the fall axis, producing a stable, nearly vertical descent. Wind tunnel data showed that this geometry would be aerodynamically stable even at higher speeds.

Importantly, these kirigami parachutes fell close to their targets, unlike conventional parachutes prone to lateral drift. At a sufficiently low load-to-area ratio, their terminal velocities also matched conventional designs. The outdoor tests confirmed that a sub-meter kirigami parachute could safely deliver a water bottle from a drone.

The study thus showed that stability and control can be 'programmed' into thin sheets by cutting them in particular ways, without having to assemble them further. According to the study, this is promising for humanitarian aid drops, where reliable landing near a target reduces waste and ensures aid reaches people quickly. The approach also slashes manufacturing complexity.

Beyond aid delivery, kirigami parachutes may benefit drone logistics, space payload return, and environmental sensing devices, where cost, weight, and simplicity are all crucial. The study also extends scientists' knowledge of how flow and structure interact. The paper's authors wrote that future work could refine the performance of these parachutes by covering the ribs with stretchable membranes, reducing porosity, and exploring more intricate cut patterns to 'programme' the entire falling path.

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For feedback and suggestions for 'Science', please write to scienceth@hindu.co.in with the subject 'Daily page'

THE SCIENCE QUIZ

Not exactly terra firma

Vandevan Mukundh

QUESTION 1
According to the French scientist Pierre de Coubertin, it's a fall when fragmented chunks of soil move freely under the influence of gravity, a slide when they move along an inclined surface, and a _____ when the movement involves rotating away from a vertical surface. Fill in the blank.

QUESTION 2
Sometimes a mass of fine sand or silt or ground permeable rock becomes saturated with water and can start moving, either seeping downhill in a viscous slush, surging in speed between a downhill creep and a mudflow. What is this phenomenon called?

QUESTION 3
When a volcano erupts explosively, the pressure can blast magma into fine particles of ash and pumice. If the eruptive column rising into the air becomes too dense or heavy to support momentum, it can collapse and send a surge of material racing downhill. This surge is made of superheated gas mixed with volcanic debris, and is called what?

QUESTION 4
At 10.15 pm on July 9, 1958, a magnitude 7.3 earthquake struck Lituya Bay off the coast of Alaska, triggering a powerful mudball on the steep slopes of Lituya Glacier near the bay's head. This event displaced some 70 million cubic metres of rock and ice into the water below, creating the tallest _____ recorded to date. Fill in the blank.

QUESTION 5

One way to prevent a landslide on a slope is to prevent water from accumulating there. And one way to do this in turn is to build a GASP – a strong concrete structure half-filled with permeable gravel and fit with drain pipes. What does GASP stand for?

Answers to September 25 quiz:
1. 20th century US project that left Black web contaminated – **Ans: Tuskegee syphilis project**
2. Half-donor who experienced an twin – **Ans: Josef Mengele**
3. Double-helix discoverer who joined scientific sector – **Ans: James D. Watson**
4. Soviet agreement who rejected Manhattan project – **Ans: Trofim Lysenko**
5. Japanese jet that performed fatal experiments in Manchuria – **Ans: Unit 731**
Visual: Luc Montagnier
First contact: **Ans: Shoenichen**, **Ans: Trower**, **Ans: Sushir Thapa**, **Ans: Latta**, **Ans: Nasser**



Visual: Name the landslide-like event depicted here. Its name comes from the French and Latin for 'to slip downhill.' <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbs.2020.100000>

Please send in your answers to scienceth@hindu.co.in