

# Daily Current Affairs





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**It's better to be a lion for a day than a sheep all your life.**

Elizabeth Kenny







# 122 dead as landslides flatten Wayanad villages

Mundakkai, Chooralmala and Attamala buried under debris

Swollen river changes course and floods neighbouring localities

Rescue teams and volunteers are struggling in knee-deep mud

Body parts recovered from Chaliyar river in distant Malappuram

The Hindu Bureau

WAYANAD/  
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

At least 122 persons were killed and 197 injured after multiple landslides flattened some three villages in Vythiri taluk of the hilly Wayanad district of Kerala early on Tuesday.

The death toll is expected to climb as more persons are feared dead. As many as 25 mangled body parts were recovered from the Chaliyar river near Pothukallu area in Malappuram district and four from Chooralmala in Wayanad.

The Kerala government declared a state of mourning on Tuesday and Wednesday.

Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan said an intense rescue effort involving State and Central forces was under way in the Mundakkai, Chooralmala and Attamala localities. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has announced an *ex gratia* payment of ₹2 lakh for the next of kin of the deceased and ₹50,000 for the injured.

The government has identified a waterlogged hillock 6 km from the vil-



**Wiped out:** A rescue operation under way in the Meppadi area of Wayanad in Kerala following the landslide on Tuesday. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

lages, which abutted the Iruvanipuzha river, as the origin of the landslides.

The first landslide occurred at 2 a.m. when the residents were asleep. The cascading wave of sodden mud, boulders, and uprooted trees measured at least two floors in height if the waterline visible on a multi-storey school building was anything to go by. Images showed a wide, muddy slash on the verdant, uninhabited hillside, where the mud had slid down to bury the villages

thousands of metres below. The second landslide occurred at 4.10 a.m.

The moving landmass roared over the devastated locality and plunged into the swollen river, changing its course and flooding neighbouring localities. "In the place of one river, there are two now," Mr. Vijayan told mediapersons in Thiruvananthapuram. The second landslide wiped out the Chooramala bridge across the Iruvanipuzha, cutting off the disaster site from search and rescue

teams. Hundreds of landslide survivors hunkered down in nearby hill resorts and schools, waiting for rescue workers to evacuate them to safer ground.

## 'Scale reduced'

He said revenue officials had reduced the scale of the disaster by evacuating several settlements around the hill, including the lone tribal settlement at Chembra. However, the landslide took an unexpected path.

The erased villages did

not fall under the government's disaster-prone zone. Mr. Vijayan said officials had identified 37 of the bodies retrieved by rescue workers from the expansive disaster site. The government has expedited forensic examination and autopsy to return the bodies to the relatives at the earliest. He said the rescue operation would continue into the night. Officials told *The Hindu* in Wayanad that several of the dead were plantation workers from West Bengal and north-

## Disaster zone

The villages in Wayanad that were hit by multiple landslides on Tuesday



## Heavy rain, landslips hit Karnataka

MANGALURU

Heavy rains and landslips were reported in many places in coastal Karnataka and south interior Karnataka on Tuesday. A massive landslide at Sakaleshpur in Hassan taluk on Monday night swept away a portion of the road that serves as an alternative to the Bengaluru-Mangaluru highway. The inflow into all major reservoirs has also been increasing. » PAGE 3

## Rain claims three lives in Coimbatore

COIMBATORE

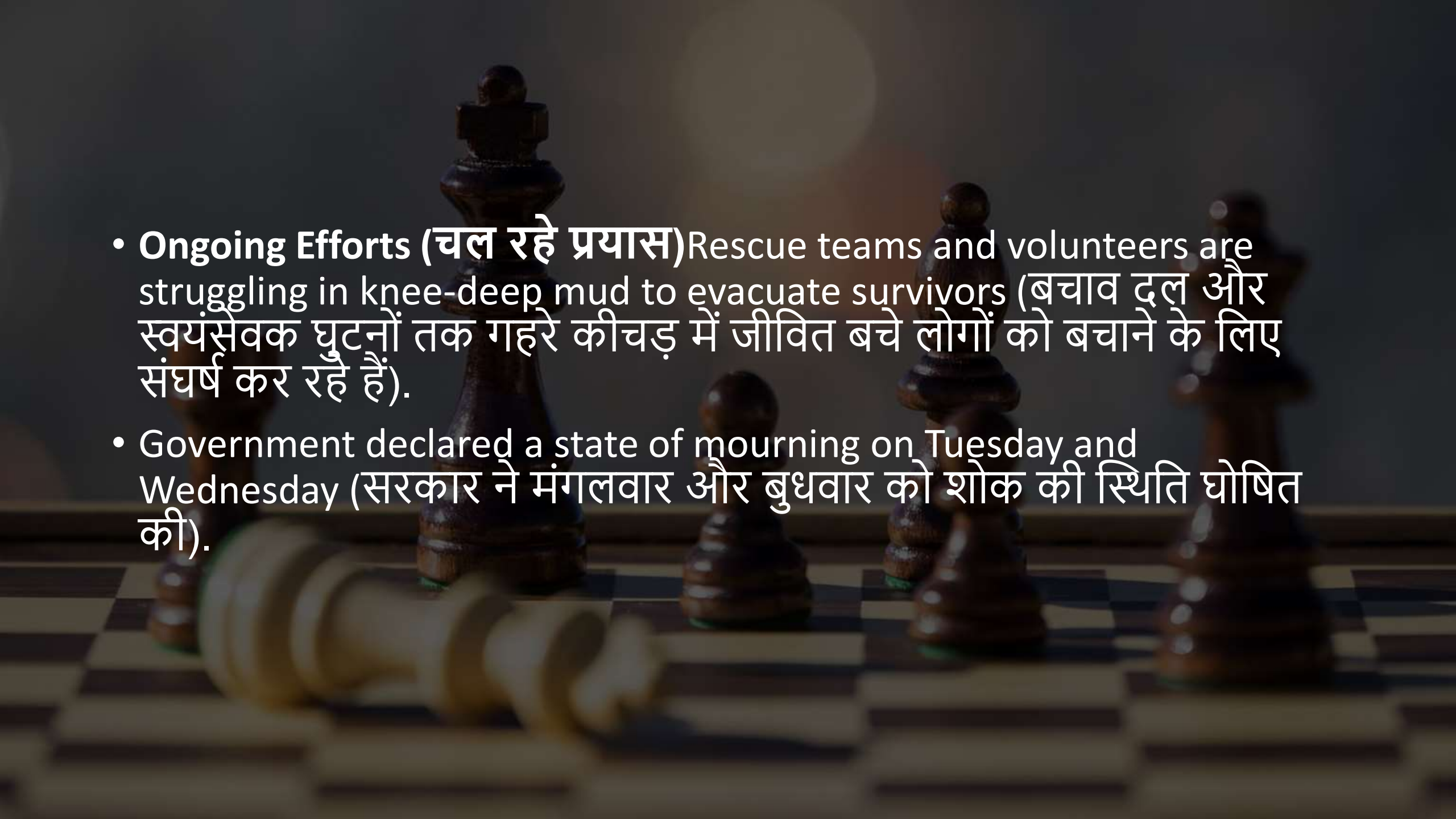
Three people have died in rain-related incidents in Coimbatore district of Tamil Nadu on Tuesday. A woman and her granddaughter died in a minor landslip near Valparai, while a man died after the wall of his house near Pollachi collapsed. Chief Minister M.K. Stalin condoled the deaths and announced a solatium of ₹3 lakh each to the next of kin of the deceased. » PAGE 3

MORE REPORTS

» PAGE 5

- **122 Dead and 197 Injured (122 मृत और 197 घायल)**

- At least 122 persons were killed and 197 injured after multiple landslides flattened villages in Wayanad district, Kerala (कई भूस्खलनों के कारण केरल के वायनाड जिले के गांवों के ध्वस्त होने से कम से कम 122 लोग मारे गए और 197 घायल हो गए).
- Villages affected: Mundakkai, Chooralmala, and Attamala (प्रभावित गांव: मुण्डक्कई, चोरालमला और अट्टामला).

- 
- **Ongoing Efforts (चल रहे प्रयास)** Rescue teams and volunteers are struggling in knee-deep mud to evacuate survivors (बचाव दल और स्वयंसेवक घुटनों तक गहरे कीचड़ में जीवित बचे लोगों को बचाने के लिए संघर्ष कर रहे हैं).
  - Government declared a state of mourning on Tuesday and Wednesday (सरकार ने मंगलवार और बुधवार को शोक की स्थिति घोषित की).

- **Compensation and Aid (मुआवजा और सहायता)** Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced ex gratia payment of ₹2 lakh for the next of kin of the deceased and ₹50,000 for the injured (प्रधानमंत्री नरेंद्र मोदी ने मृतकों के परिजनों के लिए ₹2 लाख और घायलों के लिए ₹50,000 की अनुग्रह राशि की घोषणा की).
- Government identified a waterlogged hillock 6 km from the villages as the origin of the landslides (सरकार ने गांवों से 6 किमी दूर एक जलमग्न पहाड़ी को भूस्खलन का स्रोत बताया).

### First Landslide (पहला भूस्खलन)

- Occurred at 2 a.m. when residents were asleep (रात 2 बजे हुआ जब निवासी सो रहे थे).
- Swept away a multi-storey school building (एक बहुमंजिला स्कूल भवन बहा ले गया).

### Second Landslide (दूसरा भूस्खलन)

- Occurred at 4.10 a.m. and caused the swollen river to change its course (सुबह 4.10 बजे हुआ और इसने swollen नदी को अपना मार्ग बदलने के लिए मजबूर किया).
- Flooded neighboring localities (पड़ोसी क्षेत्रों में बाढ़ आ गई).

# Manu makes it a pair, wins a bronze again in the company of Sarabjot

**Jonathan Selvaraj**  
PARIS

Manu Bhaker will go into Indian sporting legend as the first multiple medallist at an Olympic Games – winning a bronze medal in the 10m air pistol mixed team event on Tuesday, and the history books will also read that her accomplishment would not have been possible without a stellar supporting hand from her teammate Sarabjot Singh.

About 15 minutes into the bronze medal match at Chateauroux on Tuesday, Indian coach Munkhbayor Dorjsuren called a timeout.

In a few minutes' time, Manu would be standing on the podium alongside her teammate Sarabjot, having beaten South Korea 16-10. She would have a shiny bronze medal around her neck – her second of the Games. She would be clicking a selfie with the gold and silver medal winner and with her place in history secure. But in this timeout, she was standing to the left of the firing line trying to disguise as best she could just how bad things had gone: the digital scoreboard beamed 8.3 which was the poorest the 22-year-old had shot in her entire tournament thus far.

Mixed team events are conducted in a points format. A pair of shooters from each team takes one shot each – two points are awarded to the team that



**History-makers:** Manu Bhaker and Sarabjot Singh celebrate after winning bronze in 10m air pistol mixed team event at the Paris Olympics, in Chateauroux shooting range, on Tuesday. RITU RAJ KONWAR

has the higher total score. The first to 16 points wins.

On Tuesday morning at the finals range at Chateauroux, she was not just keeping India in the contest but well in front of a Korean pair that also included Oh Ye Jin, who had just won the women's individual title with a world record two days back.

## Brilliant start

After seven series, Manu had scored higher than Sarabjot in five and equal to him in the sixth. Largely thanks to her efforts, India had won five series to South Korea's two – leading 10 to 4.

While Manu was coming into the final, brimming with the confidence of having already won a medal, Sarabjot had missed out on

making the final of his individual event by the barest of margins.

But just when it looked that the Indians were going to coast to victory courtesy Manu, she slipped as badly as she could have, prompting the timeout. It was now Sarabjot's time to shine and shine he did.

He shot a 10.5 in his very next attempt – his highest score of the match. It propped up Manu's score of 10.0 – her second lowest of the competition so far and extended the lead over the Koreans. The Indians won the next series to open up a 14-6 lead before the Koreans closed the gap to make it 14-10.

Manu had another bad shot – shooting a 9.4. It should have been enough at most times to leave an

opening for the Koreans to push through. But they produced a bad series as well. All it needed was for Sarabjot to have another poor shot – on his scoresheet that seemed littered with them. But when it mattered most, he stepped up and shot a 10.2. It's not his best score but it's more than enough.

While he might have made the decisive blow, Sarabjot won't take credit for the win.

He will say how the match is a blur but how grateful he was that he and Manu had done enough. "I don't remember much of the match but I remember we both did what we needed to do," he says.

- 
- **Multiple Medallist at Olympic Games (ओलंपिक खेलों में कई पदक विजेता)**
  - Manu Bhaker wins a bronze medal in the 10m air pistol mixed team event, becoming the first multiple medallist at an Olympic Games (मनु भाकर ने 10 मीटर एयर पिस्टल मिश्रित टीम इवेंट में कांस्य पदक जीता, ओलंपिक खेलों में कई पदक जीतने वाली पहली भारतीय बन गई).
  - **Support from Sarabjot Singh (सरबजोत सिंह का समर्थन)** Sarabjot Singh played a crucial role in Manu's achievement (सरबजोत सिंह ने मनु की उपलब्धि में महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभाई).

## Initial Struggle and Timeout (प्रारंभिक संघर्ष और टाइमआउट)

Indian coach Munkhbayor Dorjsuren called a timeout when Manu was struggling (भारतीय कोच मुन्खबायोर डोरजसुरेन ने टाइमआउट लिया जब मनु संघर्ष कर रही थीं).



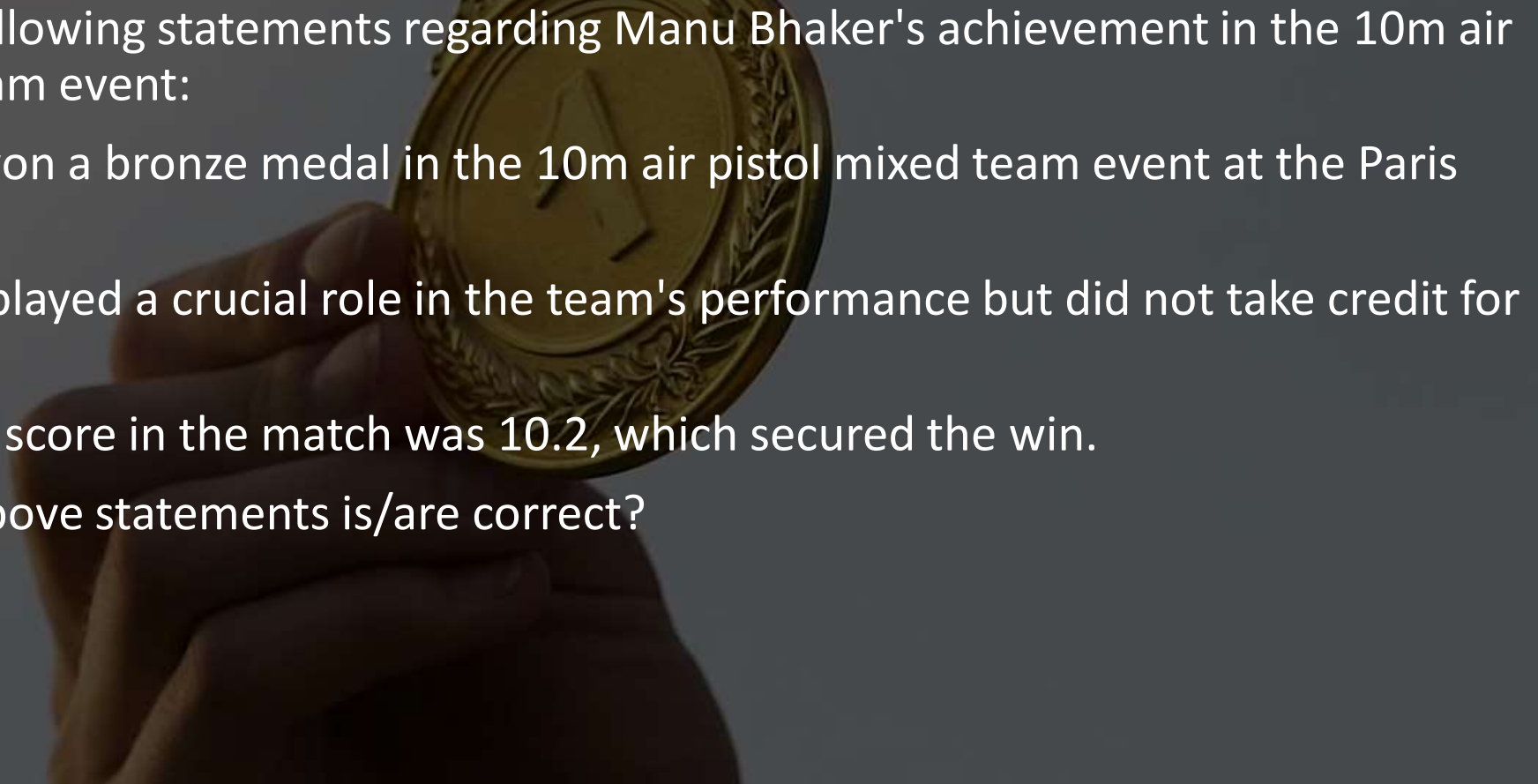
**Scores and Performance (स्कोर और प्रदर्शन)** Manu scored higher than Sarabjot initially but both were equal in the sixth series (मनु ने प्रारंभ में सरबजोत से अधिक अंक हासिल किए, लेकिन छठी श्रृंखला में दोनों बराबर थे).

The Koreans led 10-4 after five series but India closed the gap to 14-10 (कोरियाई टीम ने पांच श्रृंखलाओं के बाद 10-4 से बढ़त बनाई लेकिन भारत ने अंतर को 14-10 कर दिया).

# Medals table



	Country	G	S	B	T
1	Japan	7	2	4	13
2	China	6	6	2	14
3	Australia	6	4	0	10
4	France	5	8	4	17
5	Korea	5	3	3	11
6	USA	4	9	11	24
7	Great Britain	3	5	3	11
8	Italy	2	4	3	9
9	Canada	2	2	2	6
10	Hong Kong	2	0	1	3
<b>32</b>	<b>India</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>

- 
- A hand is holding a gold medal with a red ribbon. The medal is circular and features a central emblem, possibly a national flag or crest, surrounded by a laurel wreath. The background is a soft, out-of-focus grey.
- Consider the following statements regarding Manu Bhaker's achievement in the 10m air pistol mixed team event:
    1. Manu Bhaker won a bronze medal in the 10m air pistol mixed team event at the Paris Olympics.
    2. Sarabjot Singh played a crucial role in the team's performance but did not take credit for the win.
    3. Manu's highest score in the match was 10.2, which secured the win.
  - Which of the above statements is/are correct?
    - a) 1 and 2 only
    - b) 1 and 3 only
    - c) 2 and 3 only
    - d) 1, 2, and 3

IN BRIEF



National anthem to be made mandatory in all H.P. schools

With a stated objective of instilling a national spirit among students, the Himachal Pradesh government has decided to make national anthem mandatory during the morning assembly sessions in all schools of the State. Chief Minister Sukhvir Singh Sokhi on Tuesday said that the purpose behind the decision is to imbue a sense of patriotism among the younger generations fostering a spirit of unity and integrity thereby nurturing them into responsible citizens. "It has also been decided to unfurl the national flag daily in all the high and senior secondary schools," he said in Shimla.

New political party emerges in ethnic strife-hit Manipur

Ethnic strife-torn Manipur has a new political party. The Carol George Party (CGP) conceptualised two years ago, was launched in Manipur's capital Imphal on July 26. Yamben Laho, the CGP's president and former chairperson of Manipur Human Rights Commission, said the other leaders of the new party have neither been active members of any established political party nor contested any election. "We should be true to the party's name and be a beacon of hope for the people of Manipur," Mr. Laho said. While Meghraj Singh is the working president of the CGP, Ransam Raghunani is the general secretary.

On Maratha quota, Uddhav puts the ball in PM's court, promises party's support

Arunoobh Kashyap



Uddhav Thackeray (BJP) chief Uddhav Thackeray on Tuesday put the ball in Prime Minister Narendra Modi to do the balancing act on the contentious issue of providing reservation for the Maratha community. The Supreme Court's Constitution Bench had, in May 2023, struck down reservation separately provided to the Maratha community as it exceeded the 50% ceiling. On Monday, the apex court refused to stay a Patna High Court order quashing 10% caste-based reservation in Maharashtra. "They legislators should approach Prime Minister Modi and let him decide on the resolution. We will support whatever decision is taken by him," Mr. Thackeray said while referring to

U.P. House passes Bill to amend law against conversion

Punishment enhanced to 20 years or life term, any person can register FIR, Akhlesh says govt. diverting attention through communal politics

The Hindu Bureau LUCKNOW

The Uttar Pradesh Vidhan Sabha on Tuesday passed the Uttar Pradesh Prohibition of Unlawful Conversion of Religion (Amendment) Bill, 2024, making the law stricter by providing for a maximum punishment of life imprisonment for those found guilty of converting a woman by deceiving her and illegally converting her religion. The Bill says that if a person threatens, attacks, marries or promises to marry or conspires for it, or forces a woman, minor or anyone with the intention of conversion, then the crime will be placed in the most serious category. In such cases, there is a provision of 20 years' imprisonment or life imprisonment, as opposed to 10 years, and a fine of 250,000 earlier. Under the amended provisions, any person can register a first information report in conversion cases. Earlier, in the Uttar Pradesh



U.P. Finance Minister Suresh Khanna and Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath at the Assembly in Lucknow on Tuesday.

Prohibition of Unlawful Conversion of Religion Act, 2021, to give information or a complaint, the presence of the victim, her parents, or siblings was necessary. The new Bill provides that cases of unlawful conversion will not be heard by any court below the sessions court and along with this, the bill gives will not be considered without giving an opportunity to the public prosecutor. The Bill also makes all the crimes under the amended Act non-bailable. The Opposition attacked the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) government over the Bill. "What else they can do? They are not doing anything new. These people are trying to divert the attention of the people through communal politics," said the Samajwadi Party president Akhlesh Yadav while talking to reporters outside Parliament. "Fake cases will rise" Leader of Opposition in U.P. Mata Prasad Pandey expressed apprehensions that fake cases will rise and suggested adding a clause in which if the accused person is released, an FIR should be lodged against the policeman who lodged the FIR.

INDIA bloc leaders put up a united front at protest seeking Kejriwal's release

The Hindu Bureau NEW DELHI

Several senior INDIA bloc leaders visited Janta Manoir on Tuesday to lend support to the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP)'s protest against the incarceration of its national convener and Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal.



Arvind Yadav with Sumita Kejriwal and Bhagwant Mann during a protest at Janta Manoir in Delhi on Tuesday.

The Delhi CM was arrested on March 21 by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) in a money laundering case linked to the now-withdrawn excise policy and was granted bail by the Supreme Court. However, he is currently lodged in Tihar jail in connection with a separate case related to the liquor 'scam' being probed by the Central Bureau of Investigation. Those associated at Janta Manoir included Congress leader and MP Gautam Nath, Samajwadi Party chief and MP Akhlesh Yadav, National Congress Party (NCP) chief Bharat Pawar, Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam leader and MP Tiruchi S. Siva, Communist Party of India (Marxist) leader Bhanwar Lal Mehra, Communist Party of India leader B. Suresh, Sena (BJP) leader and MP Sanjay Raut, Rashtriya Ja-

Manoir has been sent to jail for making a policy. The Delhi government has not done anything wrong. It is the job of the state government to bring new policies," he said. Mr. Yechury said, "As soon as they felt that Kejriwal would come out (on bail) in the ED case, they got a fake ED case registered against him. Kejriwal's health is bad. He should be released as soon as possible," he said. "Protest against whom?" Attacking the Opposition, Delhi BJP chief Anand Sachdeva said, "One fails to understand against whom the INDIA Alliance organised the protest because the assistance on keeping Kejriwal in jail rests with the judiciary."

Delhi effect: basements of six coaching centres in Bhopal sealed in crackdown

Meenal Malpani

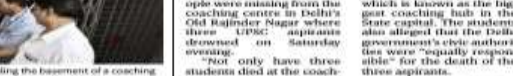


District administration staff are sealing the basement of a coaching centre in Bhopal's M.P. Nagar area on Tuesday.

Basements of at least six coaching centres that were found operational were sealed in Madhya Pradesh's Bhopal on Tuesday in a crackdown against illegal functioning in view of the death of three UPSC aspirants by drowning at an institute in Delhi. According to various officials, safety inspections were conducted at nine institutes in the city's M.P. Nagar area, known as a hub of coaching centres for competitive exams here. Sub-Divisional Magistrate (SDM), M.P. Nagar, Ashutosh Sharma told The Hindu that six of the nine institutes were found having operational setup in their basements. He also said that minor waterlogging was also found in the basement of

'10 students missing in Delhi coaching hub after flooding event'

Anasuya Tewary



Independent Lok Sabha MP Pappu Yadav on Tuesday alleged that 10 to 12 people were missing from the coaching centres in Delhi's Old Rajinder Nagar where three UPSC aspirants drowned on Saturday.

Not only have three students died at the coaching centre, but there is also a list of six missing students. I believe 10 to 12 people are missing and all attempts are being made to hide this fact," he said addressing Parliament's monsoon session. The Purwa MP asked what is the government's role in the country. "The government should bring in a law on this speedily," he said. Meanwhile, students

Patna DM forms team in response to Delhi incident

Patna

In response to the Delhi incident, Patna District Magistrate Chandan Singh formed a six-member investigation team and has directed officials to inspect the safety protocols in all coaching centres across the district, including registration status, compliance with building bylaws and availability of fire exits. The team has been asked to submit a report within 10 days.

68 schools in protected areas, reports Assam govt.

The Hindu Bureau GUWAHATI



One of the 68 schools set up illegally inside protected areas in Assam's Sonapat district. (APIC/ANANDHARAN)

A total of 68 primary schools have been set up in a wildlife sanctuary and an adjoining reserve forest in the Assam Forest Department has told the National Green Tribunal (NGT). Many of these schools in the Sonapat Wildlife Sanctuary and the Charaie Reserve Forest of north-central Assam's Sonapat district are covered by Scheduled Tribes (ST) and Other Backward Classes (OBC) children. The Centre's flagship programme for elementary education. In an affidavit on July 18, Assam's Principal Chief Conservator of Forests and Head of Forest Dept. Pradyumn Singh said Sonapat Wildlife Sanctuary and Charaie Reserve Forest are two of the five protected areas in the Patner National Park (also a tiger reserve) and Sonapat

Tribes, and backward classes. The forest area under encroachment works out to 68.32%. The Forest Department claimed it evicted the encroachers from 10,000 hectares of forest land. The encroached stretches include Satala Hills within the Bhalpur Reserve Forest, a critical habitat for wildlife covering 6,122 hectares. The department stated that the people who settled in the forestlands after migrating from other areas filed 23,028 claims under the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act of 2006. In three of the five protected areas, including Sonapat. The Forest Department has identified the presence of forest land titles to these settlers on the ground, saying that they encroached on forest land, destroying pristine wildlife habitats and further degrading the ecosystem by planning commercial crops." It stated, "The district land committee rejected all 4,157 claims from Sonapat Forest, the department said.

'Wild hamper education' The department, however, said removing the 68 schools set up inside Sonapat Reserve Forest and Charaie Reserve Forest "seriously impact the educational growth" of more than 3,000 children studying therein. It said the children, considering their age, should not be disturbed unless the families are opposed to the setting up of Sonapat and Charaie.

Cong. leader barred from Assembly session for 2 days

The Hindu Bureau JAIPUR

Veteran Congress leader and former Minister Shanti Dhawan was barred from the proceedings of the Rajasthan Legislative Assembly for two days after he tendered an apology for using "unparliamentary language" in the House last week. Assembly speaker Vasudev Devnani gave the ruling party the go-ahead for the ban after hearing his expression of regret. Mr. Dhawan had tried to raise a question against the presiding officer, Rajasthan's Chief Minister Suresh Chandra, and warned him against entering the House for the next two days. "You do not deserve to be a member of this House for the next four years because of your conduct. I am taking a blanket decision because of your apology and the request of the members of your party (Congress)," he said.

Earlier, he had heard the views and opinion of members, casting across party lines, on the matter. BJP MLA Shrichand Negi raised the issue during the debate on the request for granting the constituency in the Assembly. Mr. Dhawan ruled that Mr. Dhawan would be allowed to sit in the House, but he would not be permitted to participate in the next two days. "You do not deserve to

# U.P. House passes Bill to amend law against conversion

Punishment enhanced to 20 years or life term, any person can register FIR; Akhilesh says govt. diverting attention through communal politics

**The Hindu Bureau**  
LUCKNOW

**T**he Uttar Pradesh Vidhan Sabha on Tuesday passed the Uttar Pradesh Prohibition of Unlawful Conversion of Religion (Amendment) Bill, 2024, making the law stricter by providing for a maximum punishment of life imprisonment for those found guilty of marrying a woman by deceiving her and illegally converting her religion.

The Bill says that if a person threatens, attacks, marries or promises to marry or conspires for it, or traffics a woman, minor or anyone with the intention of conversion, then his crime will be placed in the most serious category. In such cases, there is a provision of 20 years' imprisonment or life imprisonment, as opposed to 10 years and a fine of ₹50,000 earlier. Under the amended provisions, any person can register a first information report in conversion cases.

Earlier, in the Uttar Pra-



U.P. Finance Minister Suresh Khanna and Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath at the Assembly in Lucknow on Tuesday. SANDEEP SAXENA

des Prohibition of Unlawful Conversion of Religion Act, 2021, to give information or a complaint, the presence of the victim, her parents, or siblings was necessary. The new Bill proposes that cases of unlawful conversion will not be heard by any court below the sessions court and along with this, the bail plea will not be considered without giving an opportunity to the public prosecutor. The Bill also makes all the crimes under the amended Act non-bailable.

The Opposition attacked the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) government over the Bill. "What

else they can do? They are not doing anything new. These people are trying to divert the attention of the people through communal politics," said the Samajwadi Party (SP) president Akhilesh Yadav while talking to reporters outside Parliament.

#### 'Fake cases will rise'

Leader of Opposition in U.P. Mata Prasad Pandey expressed apprehensions that fake cases will rise and suggested adding a clause in which if the accused person is released, an FIR should be lodged against the policemen who lodged the FIR.

IN BRIEF



In Iran, Gadhafi emphasises importance of Chabahar port

The port of Chabahar will help India connect with Afghanistan and Central Asia, Minister of Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari conveyed to the Iranian authorities on Tuesday...

Bar Councils cannot charge exorbitant enrolment fee: SC

The Supreme Court held in a judgment on Tuesday that State Bar Councils cannot demand exorbitant fee from law graduates for enrolment as advocates...

Uttarakhand told to decide on Patanjali products suspension

The Supreme Court on Tuesday asked the Uttarakhand government to decide on the suspension of 14 herbal products of Patanjali Ltd and report back in two weeks.

Punjab recorded 41 deaths due to H1N1 this year

OF THE 100 deaths due to influenza A (H1N1) recorded across India till June end, Punjab recorded the most at 41, followed by Gujarat at 27 and Haryana at 26...

Centre must respond on Pangong Lake issue: Cong.

The Hindu Bureau New Delhi

Questioning the Union government over reports that China has built a bridge connecting the north and south banks of the Pangong Lake in Ladakh...

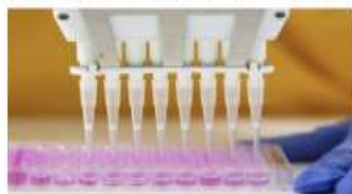
150% customs duty on lab chemicals alarms scientists

Important chemicals, reagents, and enzymes are vital to experimental research; many took to social media to point out that chemicals that usually cost ₹1 lakh would now cost ₹2.5 lakh

Jacob Koshy New Delhi

Three digits have crossed the country in a tiny budget document, made public earlier this week...

Imported chemicals, reagents, and enzymes come under the category of laboratory chemicals...



Rising customs: Most of the changes in customs duties for other items were in the range of 10% or 20%.

for Cellular and Molecular Biology (CCMB), who highlighted the issue on X. The issue sparked outrage on social media with scientists...

He said the director of a prominent lab affiliated with the Department of Atomic Energy, who declined to be identified, said "During COVID, we started to procure many more vital reagents and chemicals..."

Rajesh Gokhale, secretary, Department of Biotechnology, told The Hindu that the science minister had been aware of the issue...

while perturbed by the case, said it was likely that the minister was a misprint or that exemptions would be considered for chemicals custom duty increased from 10% to 150%...

IAS coaching centre blocked the drainage system: report

The Hindu Bureau New Delhi

Two reports were submitted to Delhi Chief Secretary Naresh Kumar on Tuesday about the blocking of the drainage system in the basement of a private coaching centre in Delhi on Saturday.

A report filed by an official of the Municipal Corporation of Delhi states that the coaching centre, Raaj's IAS study circle, at Old Rajinder Nagar had completely blocked the drainage system.

The District Magistrate has sought more time to complete the profile. The MCD official, in the report, said, "This coaching institute has completely blocked the drainage system, which has not taken additional safeguards to meet such type of eventuality..."

No Bill pending with Raj Bhavan, says Bengal Governor

Kolkata Bureau

Eight Bills are said to be pending. Six of them have been referred to the President of India and one Bill is in the queue. The other Bill, I asked the Principal Secretary concerned by letter and after some clarifications, the government in its wisdom decided not to do so..."

Asked about the increasing instances of confrontation between Governors and elected representatives in non-BP-governed States, the Governor said, "Constitutional provisions are to be respected even if it is inconvenient to the Government..."

border security Mr. Bose said allegations of demographic changes in the border areas, and the security is important for national security. There are border areas there are

allegations that the elected government of West Bengal is either not preventing it or abetting and abetting India, cannot afford anything that goes against the national security..."

stayed by the government, it should be kept in the bud," Mr. Bose said. On BJP State president Subhas Mahapatra's proposal to include north Bengal in the Northeast region, he said, "As Governor, I am not knee-jerk reactions in such matters, I do want to comment on the issue without studying..."

Crossword puzzle with clues and grid. Clues include: 1 Across: Perfect opinion by liberal (3), 2 Across: Outstanding number chart (7), 11 Down: Cabinet maker, former US President accommodating writer (8)

Sudoku puzzle with a 9x9 grid and a difficulty matrix below it. The difficulty matrix shows a grid of numbers representing the difficulty level of each cell.

FAITH Liberation, the way out. A short piece of text discussing faith and liberation, followed by a small grid or diagram.

# 150% customs duty on lab chemicals alarms scientists

Imported chemicals, reagents, and enzymes are vital to experimental research; many took to social media to point out that chemicals that usually cost ₹1 lakh would now cost ₹2.5 lakh

**Jacob Koshy**  
NEW DELHI

Three digits have thrown scientists across the country into a tizzy. Budget documents, made public earlier this week, show that the basic customs duty on laboratory chemicals, a critical component of research, has been hiked to 150% from the existing 10%.

Imported chemicals, reagents, and enzymes come under the category of laboratory chemicals and are vital to experimental research across nearly every domain of scientific research. Most of them are niche products and can be expensive.

The issue sparked outrage on social media with estimates by researchers that chemicals that usually cost ₹1 lakh would now cost ₹2.5 lakh.

The Customs Department defines laboratory chemicals as “all chemicals, organic or inorganic, whether or not chemically defined, imported in packings not exceeding 500 grams or 500 millilitres and which can be identified with reference to the purity, markings or other features to show them to be meant for use solely as laboratory chemicals”.

Santosh Chauhan, a scientist at the CSIR-Centre



**Raising concern:** Most of the changes in customs duties for other items were in the range of 10% or 15%. GETTYIMAGES

for Cellular and Molecular Biology (CCMB), who highlighted the issue on X, posted: “Please tell me this is a misprint...lab chemicals custom duty increased from 10% to 150%? How we do research and whether funding agencies will compensate by reducing expectations or providing more funds?”

He also attached a picture of an email from Merck Life Sciences, a prominent supplier of specialty chemicals, that says rates of laboratory chemicals would now invite a 150% hike and those of ‘plastics’, a 25% hike from the existing 10%.

Several scientists to whom *The Hindu* spoke,

while perturbed by the rates, said it was likely that the number was a “misprint” or that exemptions would be made for chemicals specifically used for research and development. Heads of scientific organisations said that “matters were under flux” and that it would be some time before clarity could emerge.

## Misprint or not?

“This is quite a significant problem and we will be writing to the science secretaries for some clarification. It initially seemed like a misprint as most of the changes in customs duties for other items were in the range of 10% or 15% and this seemed like an out-

lier,” said the director of a prominent lab affiliated with the Department of Atomic Energy, who declined to be identified. “During COVID, we started to procure many more vital reagents and chemicals locally as the market dynamics changed. However, there are a vast number of chemicals that are necessary to research and must be imported because there aren’t Indian manufacturers.”

Rajesh Gokhale, Secretary, Department of Biotechnology, told *The Hindu* that the science Ministries were aware of the issue and “it would be solved”. He did not respond to queries on how these duties were imposed. Requests for clarification from the Department of Science and Technology were unanswered.

For several years now, publicly funded research and development organisations, which have a specific registration certificate from the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research, are exempt from customs duties. A notification on July 27 extended this until March 2029.

“There may be clarifications and exemptions, but it certainly hinders the ease of doing science,” said Binay Panda, Professor at Jawaharlal Nehru University.

## Customs Duty Hike (कस्टम ड्यूटी में वृद्धि)

### Increase to 150% (150% की वृद्धि)

- The customs duty on laboratory chemicals has been increased to 150% from the existing 10% (प्रयोगशाला रसायनों पर कस्टम ड्यूटी मौजूदा 10% से बढ़ाकर 150% कर दी गई है).



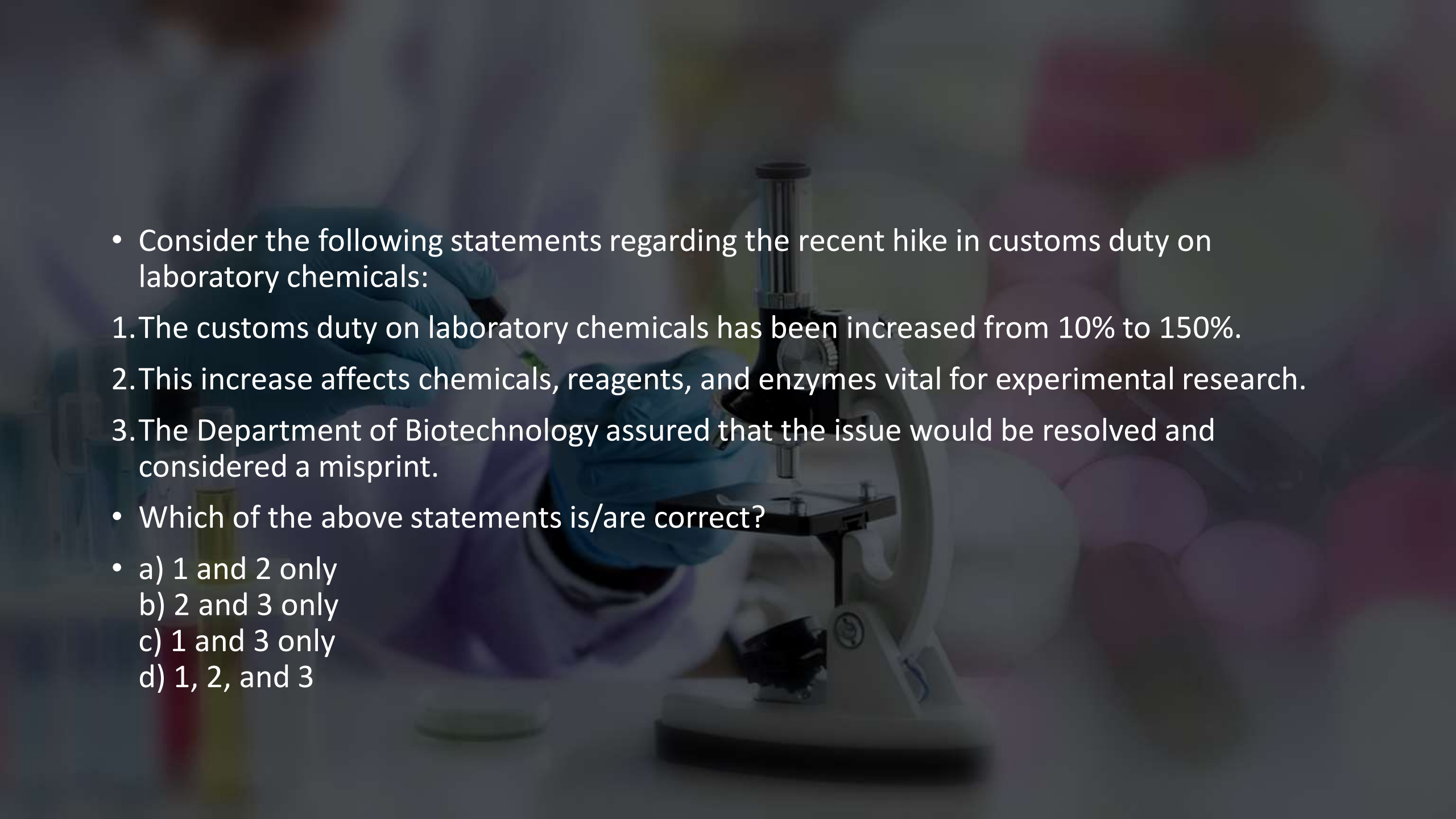
- **Impact on Research (शोध पर प्रभाव)** Imported chemicals, reagents, and enzymes vital for experimental research will now cost significantly more (आयातित रसायन, अभिकर्मक और एंजाइम जो प्रायोगिक अनुसंधान के लिए महत्वपूर्ण हैं, अब काफी महंगे हो जाएंगे).

- 
- Reactions from the Scientific Community (वैज्ञानिक समुदाय की प्रतिक्रियाएँ)
  - Social Media Outcry (सोशल मीडिया पर नाराजगी)
    - Researchers estimate that chemicals usually costing ₹1 lakh will now cost ₹2.5 lakh (शोधकर्ताओं का अनुमान है कि आमतौर पर ₹1 लाख में आने वाले रसायन अब ₹2.5 लाख में मिलेंगे).

- **Statements from Scientists (वैज्ञानिकों के बयान)** Rajesh Gokhale, Secretary, Department of Biotechnology, assured that the issue would be resolved (जैव प्रौद्योगिकी विभाग के सचिव, राजेश गोखले ने आश्वासन दिया कि समस्या का समाधान किया जाएगा).

- **Customs Department Definition (कस्टम विभाग की परिभाषा)**
- Laboratory chemicals include all chemicals imported in packages not exceeding 500 grams or 500 milliliters (प्रयोगशाला रसायन उन सभी रसायनों को शामिल करते हैं जो 500 ग्राम या 500 मिलीलीटर से अधिक के पैकेज में आयात नहीं किए जाते हैं).

- 
- **Possible Misprint (संभावित प्रिंट त्रुटि)** Several scientists believe the increase might be a misprint and expect clarifications or exemptions (कई वैज्ञानिकों का मानना है कि वृद्धि एक प्रिंट त्रुटि हो सकती है और स्पष्टीकरण या छूट की उम्मीद करते हैं).

- 
- Consider the following statements regarding the recent hike in customs duty on laboratory chemicals:
    1. The customs duty on laboratory chemicals has been increased from 10% to 150%.
    2. This increase affects chemicals, reagents, and enzymes vital for experimental research.
    3. The Department of Biotechnology assured that the issue would be resolved and considered a misprint.
  - Which of the above statements is/are correct?
    - a) 1 and 2 only
    - b) 2 and 3 only
    - c) 1 and 3 only
    - d) 1, 2, and 3



# State-wise representation at the Olympics

The tables are based on data gathered from World Athletics, the Indian Olympic Association, and the Paris 2024 Olympics website. All figures are presented as percentages. Only select States are depicted in these tables. Some States were excluded in certain tables because of a lack of contenders or because they had too few to be categorised by gender or sport



**Table 1 |** The State-wise share of Olympians across editions

State	2000	2004	2008	2012	2016	2020	2024
Haryana	4%	15%	16%	16%	18%	22%	21%
Punjab	15%	17%	9%	13%	9%	15%	16%
T.N.	13%	2%	4%	1%	4%	6%	10%
U.P.	6%	11%	5%	12%	6%	9%	8%
Andhra*	6%	2%	7%	4%	6%	4%	7%
Karnataka	6%	9%	9%	11%	9%	5%	6%
Delhi	4%		9%		1%	3%	4%
Kerala	13%	11%	9%	8%	11%	6%	4%
Maharashtra	8%	11%	5%	4%	6%	6%	4%
Gujarat					1%	2%	2%
M.P.	2%		2%		1%	3%	2%
Manipur	4%		4%	5%	5%	4%	2%
Odisha	6%	7%		4%	5%	3%	2%
Rajasthan	2%		7%	1%	2%	4%	2%
W.B.	4%	4%	7%	8%	5%	3%	2%

**Table 2 |** State-wise gender-split of Olympians

State	Female	Male
Manipur	71%	29%
Andhra*	61%	39%
Rajasthan	47%	53%
Haryana	44%	56%
W.B.	44%	56%
Maharashtra	41%	59%
Karnataka	41%	59%
Gujarat	40%	60%
Odisha	40%	60%
Kerala	38%	63%
U.P.	33%	67%
M.P.	25%	75%
T.N.	24%	76%
Punjab	20%	80%

**Table 3 |** Gender-wise split of Olympians across sports

Sport type	Female	Male
Judo	86%	14%
Weightlifting	67%	33%
Archery	58%	42%
Athletics	52%	48%
Badminton	52%	48%
Wrestling	46%	54%
Golf	45%	55%
Table tennis	44%	56%
Tennis	43%	57%
Shooting	39%	61%
Swimming	29%	71%
Boxing	24%	76%
Hockey	14%	86%
Rowing	10%	90%

**Table 4 |** Gender-wise split of Olympians across editions

Year	Female	Male
2000	37%	63%
2004	37%	63%
2008	43%	57%
2012	29%	71%
2016	48%	52%
2020	35%	65%
2024	40%	60%

*The share of women contenders was high in judo, weightlifting, and archery. Only the 2016 Olympics came very close to achieving gender parity*



**Table 5 |** The table shows the State-wise share of Olympians under each sport in the 2000 to 2024 period cumulatively. \*Andhra Pradesh refers to the undivided State

State	Archery	Athletics	Badminton	Boxing	Golf	Hockey	Judo	Rowing	Sailing	Shooting	Swimming	TT	Tennis	Weightlifting	Wrestling
Andhra Pradesh*	3%	3%	34%	3%		2%				3%		17	25	11%	
Assam	3%			12%											
Delhi	3%	2%	3%				14%			7%	7%	23			4%
Gujarat						1%					7%	11	4%		
Haryana	3%	13%	7%	58%	18%	14%	14%	10%		15%	7%		7%		88%
Jharkhand	27%			6%		1%									
Karnataka		8%	17%		36%	7%			14%	2%	50%	6	14%		
Kerala		26%	3%			4%					14%				
Maharashtra	6%	3%	21%		18%	6%		10%		11%	7%		11%		
Manipur	12%			6%		6%	43%							56%	
Odisha		3%				11%								11%	
Punjab		12%		3%	9%	30%	14%	20%	14%	21%					
Rajasthan		3%						30%		11%					
Tamil Nadu		7%				2%			71%	6%		17	18%	22%	
Uttar Pradesh	6%	9%	7%	9%	9%	10%	14%	20%		11%					8%
Uttarakhand		5%	3%					10%		2%					
West Bengal	18%	3%			9%	1%				3%		28	14%		

*R Amanda Miriam Fernandez, Mohammed Amjadh Shah M, Mohamed Anas Z and Thalamuthukumar T are interning with The Hindu Data team*

### Gold demand slips 5% on high prices



Regaining shape: The 5% cut in import duty on gold is expected to revive demand in July quarter, sources.

Suresh P. Iyengar  
MUMBAI

Gold demand in the second quarter of 2024 was down 5% to 160 tonnes, owing to high prices. In value terms it was up 14% to ₹3,450 crore, according to the World Gold Council report released on Tuesday. Jewellery demand decreased 17% to 106 tonnes, while investments increased 46% to 43 tonnes. Despite high prices, gold recycling was down 39% to 23 tonnes. Imports rose 9% to 197 tonnes. The average quarterly price was up at \$2,338 an ounce (\$1,976). Domestic gold price rose to ₹62,700 per 10 gm (₹52,192 excluding import duty and GST).

**Controlled buying**  
Rachin Jain, Regional CEO, India, World Gold Council, said domestic gold demand softened slightly due to record high gold prices impacting affordability and purchases. Jewellery demand dipped on the back of high prices, the general election, and a severe heatwave. While festivals, such as Akshaya Tritiya and Gudh Padwa provided a temporary boost, record prices continued to dampen consumer sentiment, he added.

The limited recycling indicates limited distress selling, highlighting gold's enduring role as a store of value in India, he said. Looking ahead, the 5% cut in import duty on gold is expected to revive demand in the July quarter, ahead of the festival season beginning September and the copious monsoon, he added. WGC retains its forecast for full-year demand at 700-750 tonnes. (The writer is with The Hindu Businessline)

## So far, global earnings are just good enough to feel disappointing

Earnings have come in about as expected—but after the strong run by world equity markets, about as expected seems like a disappointment, higher interest rates that are pinching consumer spending, and underperformance in China's economy are hitting the bottom lines of U.S. and EU firms

NEWS ANALYSIS

Business  
BENGALURU/LONDON

Companies worldwide are lowering full-year sales and profit guidance as higher interest rates and weakness in China's economy hurt global consumer sentiment, taking the shine off earnings growth in the latest quarter.

A number of high-profile companies have underwhelmed investors, including McDonald's, automakers Nissan and Tesla, and consumer giants Nestle and Diageo. With roughly 40% of U.S. and European companies reporting results, earnings have come in about as expected—but after the strong run by world equity markets, about as expected seems like a disappointment.

"A very mixed season so far in terms of results," said Brian Mulrooney, chief portfolio manager at Zacks Investment Management. "We're starting to see the pressure that the higher-for-longer interest rate environment is putting on companies and their ability to continue to drive earnings and revenue growth."

The earnings season from the globe's tech giants, including Apple, Microsoft and



High expectations: Shares are under increasing pressure to keep up with rising expectations, sources.

Samsung Electronics, Japan's Toyota Motor, oil giants Exxon Mobil and Shell and European retailers L'Oréal and Adidas.

Global companies have zeroed in on two issues hitting their bottom lines: higher interest rates that are pinching consumer spending, and underperformance in China's economy, the second-largest in the world.

McDonald's reported its first drop in sales worldwide in 13 quarters, citing weakness in China's economy. Companies included Unilever, Visa and Aston Martin also noted weakness in China, and analysts have warned that demand in the Asian giant is unlikely to reverse while a protracted property



Investor expectations are so high they may be hard to meet, and in the interim, the stock price may not rise as much.

BY ANANDAN K. BHASKAR

downside and job insecurity weigh on consumers.

"The Chinese... are not willing to spend because they are afraid about the future," said Stefan Guenther, head of research at Deutsche Bank. "The weakness of the big regions, or at least the most far behind expectation," he said.

season has nonetheless spooked the market on signs of consumer stress," Bank of America analysts said in a research note.

Nestle and Unilever both reported first-half sales growth below expectations. Companies in the euro zone's two largest economies are growing more pessimistic, raising concerns over the bloc's sluggish recovery.

"There is value-seeking behavior among consumers. There is pressure, especially at the low-income range," Nestle CEO Mark Schneider said.

Auto companies are facing difficulties in the United States, where high inventories and logistical issues hurt profits of Ford Motor, Stellantis and Nissan. EV leader Tesla disappointed investors with its results, and many will see the company as far overvalued with EV sales slowing.

Investor expectations are so high they may be hard to meet, and in the interim, the stock price may not rise as much," said analyst Lee Min-hwan at Niko Investment & Securities.

Asian chipmakers have turned more bullish about demand outlook as they benefit from the global AI boom that has helped it weather the tapering off of pandemic-led electronics demand.

"AI is so hot, right now everybody, all my customers, want to put AI functionality into their devices," TSMC Chairman and CEO C.C. Wei said at an earnings conference, adding AI demand rose more than two or three years ago. Shares of the have gained 56% so far in 2024.

Despite upbeat forecasts, shares of major Asian chipmakers are under pressure to keep up with rising expectations. That's evident as well in the performance of AI leader Nvidia, whose value surged past \$3 trillion earlier this year before pulling back in the summer.

Investor expectations are so high they may be hard to meet, and in the interim, the stock price may not rise as much," said analyst Lee Min-hwan at Niko Investment & Securities.

### For a piece of market



Aston gambit: A Buddha statue is seen during a media tour of the new two-storey, 24,000-square-foot Sotheby's office at Landmark Chatter in the Central district of Hong Kong. Three of the world's top auction houses are racing to expand in Hong Kong, eager to woo young Asian buyers even as the global art market retreats from pandemic-era highs. In the span of two months, Sotheby's, Christie's and Bonhams will each see the completion of a new Hong Kong regional headquarters in the southern Chinese city.

## Ethiopia receives IMF relief after easing forex curls

Business  
ADDIS ABABA

Cash-strapped Ethiopia eased foreign exchange curbs on Monday as part of a broad economic reform package as the International Monetary Fund approved a loan to the African nation seeking a multibillion-dollar bailout.

The value of the local currency, the birr, plunged by around 30% after the move by the country's central bank.

The reform introduces a competitive market-based determination of the exchange rate and addresses a long-standing distortion within the Ethiopian economy. The National Bank of Ethiopia (NBE) said in a statement.

Africa's second most populous country is pinning its hopes on a rescue package of at least \$16.5 billion from external lenders including the IMF, but negotiations have been long and fraught.

The International Monetary Fund's board on Monday approved a four-year loan programme worth around \$2.4 billion to support the reforms, with around \$1 billion immediately disbursed.

"This a landmark moment for Ethiopia" and the loan is a testament to the country's "strong commitment to transformative reforms", IMF Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva said in a statement.

Analysts had said the IMF was demanding several reforms of Ethiopia's state-controlled economy, including floating the currency and to unlock the funding.

Buttered in recent years by several armed conflicts, the Covid-19 pandemic and climate shocks, the African country has about \$20 billion of external debt and is grappling with a high inflation at around 30% and a shortage of foreign cur-

## United States overtakes UAE as India's second largest LNG supplier

Business  
NEW DELHI

The U.S. displaced the UAE to emerge as India's second largest supplier of liquefied natural gas (LNG) in 2023, according to a report by the U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA). LNG is emerging as a substitute fuel in the transition towards green energy.

Analysts attributed the development to weakening LNG prices in international markets as well as India's proximity, via the Cape of Good Hope, to U.S. LNG cargoes, compared to North Asia. The U.S. also emerged as the world's largest LNG exporter in 2023.

According to the world LNG report 2024 by International Gas Union (IGU), re-



UAE's share rose from 2.6 mt in 2019 to 3.32 mt in 2020, shipped to 2.59 mt in 2022 and again rose to 2.65 mt last year.

leased earlier this month, the U.S. supplied India 1.8 mt LNG in 2023, up from 1.3 mt in 2022. The share of the U.S. declined to 2.46 mt in 2023. The share of

UAE's share rose from 2.6 mt in 2019 to 3.32 mt in 2020, shipped to 2.59 mt in 2022 and again rose to 2.65 mt last year.

Qatar remained India's largest LNG supplier for five years running (2019-2023). India's LNG imports in 2023, however, were about 15% higher year-on-year at 89 mt.

With India at close proximity via the Cape of Good Hope for U.S. LNG cargoes, analysts said in North Asia, sellers were more incentivised to sell volumes to India to save freight costs.

The U.S. LNG exports were about 15% higher year-on-year at 89 mt. With India at close proximity via the Cape of Good Hope for U.S. LNG cargoes, analysts said in North Asia, sellers were more incentivised to sell volumes to India to save freight costs.

both African nations has been declining since 2021.

Kenneth Foo, Associate Editorial Director at S&P Global Commodity Insights, said the U.S. was the debut exporter in the global LNG market in 2023, overtaking Qatar and Australia with strong growth in liquefaction capacity due to investments made several years ago.

Total U.S. LNG exports were about 15% higher year-on-year at 89 mt. With India at close proximity via the Cape of Good Hope for U.S. LNG cargoes, analysts said in North Asia, sellers were more incentivised to sell volumes to India to save freight costs.

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# United States overtakes UAE as India's second largest LNG supplier

**Rishi Ranjan Kala**

NEW DELHI

The U.S. displaced the UAE to emerge as India's second largest supplier of liquefied natural gas (LNG) in 2023, accounting for 3.09 million tonne (mt). LNG is emerging as a substitute fuel in the transition towards green energy.

Analysts attributed the development to weakening LNG prices in international markets as well as India's proximity, via the Cape of Good Hope, to U.S. LNG cargoes compared to North Asia. The U.S. also emerged as the world's largest LNG exporter in 2023.

According to the world LNG report 2024 by International Gas Union (IG), re-



leased earlier this month, the U.S. supplied India 1.8 mt LNG in the pre-pandemic period (2019) and the quantity increased to 3.86 mt in 2021.

## **Trade dynamics**

India, the fourth largest LNG importer, scaled back in 2022 owing to rising prices and shipments from the U.S. declined to 2.16 mt. On the other hand, the

UAE's share rose from 2.6 mt in 2019 to 3.32 mt in 2020, slipped to 2.59 mt in 2022 and again rose to 2.85 mt last year.

Qatar remained India's largest LNG supplier for five years running (2019-2023); cargoes topped 10 mt, barring in 2019 when it stood at 9.7 mt. In 2023, shipments from Qatar rose to a high of 10.92 mt.

Another notable development during this period is the decline in the share of African nations in India's LNG imports. According to IGU data, Nigeria and Angola, which supplied 2.7 mt and 2.9 mt LNG, respectively, to India pre-pandemic (2019), saw their cargoes shrink to 0.73 mt each in 2023. The share of

both African nations has been declining since 2021.

Kenneth Foo, Associate Editorial Director at S&P Global Commodity Insights, said the U.S. was the standout exporter in the global LNG market in 2023, overtaking Qatar and Australia with strong growth in liquefaction capacity due to investments made several years ago.

Total U.S. LNG exports were about 15% higher year-on-year at 89 mt. "With India at closer proximity via the Cape of Good Hope for U.S. LNG cargoes, compared to North Asia, sellers were more incentivised to sell volumes to India to save freight costs."

*(The writer is with The Hindu businessline)*

# How Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) is made



## 1. Cleaned

Natural gas is cleaned of impurities

## 2. Liquefied

Becomes liquid after being cooled to approx -160C

## 3. Transported

Easier and safer to move (takes up 600 times less space)



## Reduce oil Import bill:



A switch to Liquefied Natural Gas from diesel (10 percent of new diesel vehicles switched to LNG by 2032) could result in the reduction in oil import bill by \$1.5 billion by the year 2032



## Reduce tank-to-wheel emissions



## Air pollution:



The HDV sector alone **contributes up to 66 percent** of the particulate matter from the road transport sector, therefore switching to Liquefied Natural Gas will improve air pollution in cities.



- **Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG)**

- Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) is a natural gas composed of mainly methane,  $\text{CH}_4$ , with some mixture of ethane,  $\text{C}_2\text{H}_6$  which has been cooled down to liquid form for ease and safety of non-pressurized storage or transport.
- **Process:** The natural gas is **condensed into a liquid form** at close to atmospheric pressure by **cooling it to approximately  $-162\text{ }^\circ\text{C}$  ( $-260\text{ }^\circ\text{F}$ )**
- **Nature:** It is odourless, colourless, non-toxic and non-corrosive.

- **Punishment Enhancement (सजा में वृद्धि)** Maximum punishment of life imprisonment for marrying a woman by deceiving her into conversion (धोखे से धर्म परिवर्तन कर शादी करने पर उम्रकैद की अधिकतम सजा).
- For threatening, attacking, marrying, or conspiring to marry a woman with the intent of conversion, 20 years' imprisonment (धर्म परिवर्तन के इरादे से महिला पर धमकी, हमला, शादी करने या साजिश रचने पर 20 साल की सजा).

- **FIR and Complaint Provisions (एफआईआर और शिकायत प्रावधान)**
- Any person can register a first information report in conversion cases (किसी भी व्यक्ति को धर्मांतरण मामलों में प्राथमिकी दर्ज करने का अधिकार).



## Key Provisions of the Bill (विधेयक के मुख्य प्रावधान)

### Information Requirement (सूचना की आवश्यकता)

- Presence of the victim, their parents, or siblings necessary for information or complaint (सूचना या शिकायत के लिए पीड़िता, उनके माता-पिता या भाई-बहन की उपस्थिति आवश्यक).

- **Jurisdiction and Bail (अधिकार क्षेत्र और जमानत)** Cases of unlawful conversion will not be heard by any court below the sessions court (अवैध धर्मांतरण के मामलों की सुनवाई किसी भी सेशन कोर्ट से नीचे के न्यायालय में नहीं होगी).
- Bail plea will not be considered without giving an opportunity to the public prosecutor (जन अभियोजक को मौका दिए बिना जमानत याचिका पर विचार नहीं किया जाएगा).
- Crimes under the amended Act are non-bailable (संशोधित अधिनियम के तहत अपराध गैर-जमानती हैं).

## Diversion of Attention (ध्यान भटकाना)

Opposition claims the government is trying to divert attention through communal politics (विपक्ष का दावा है कि सरकार सांप्रदायिक राजनीति के माध्यम से ध्यान भटकाने की कोशिश कर रही है).

- **Fake Cases Concerns (फर्जी मामलों की चिंता)**
  - Concerns that fake cases will rise and a clause should be added to lodge an FIR against the policemen if the accused is released (चिंता है कि फर्जी मामले बढ़ेंगे और यदि आरोपी रिहा होता है तो पुलिसकर्मियों के खिलाफ एफआईआर दर्ज करने के लिए एक खंड जोड़ा जाना चाहिए).

- Consider the following statements regarding the Uttar Pradesh Prohibition of Unlawful Conversion of Religion (Amendment) Bill, 2024:

1. The maximum punishment under the bill is life imprisonment.

2. Any person can register a first information report in conversion cases.

3. Cases of unlawful conversion will be heard by any court, including below the sessions court.

- Which of the above statements is/are correct?

- a) 1 and 2 only
- b) 2 and 3 only
- c) 1 and 3 only
- d) 1, 2, and 3

**SOUTHEAST**

**Third child dies, five critically ill following mass stabbing in U.K.**



A third child died on Tuesday and five others remained critically injured after a knife attack on a Taylor Swift-themed dance event in Southampton near Liverpool. The seven-year-old girl died in hospital early on Tuesday, while the two victims at the “Spinnaker” stabbing spree Monday were also girls, aged 14 and seven. AP

**MANILA**

**U.S. to provide \$500-mln military funding to Philippines; Blinken**



The U.S. will provide \$500 million in military funding to the Philippines, U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken said on Tuesday, as Washington boosts ties with Manila in the face of China's growing assertiveness. Blinken was in Manila with U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin as part of an Asia Pacific tour. AP

**WASHINGTON**

**William Calley, Vietnam-era U.S. war criminal, dead at 80**



William Calley, senior, a former U.S. Army lieutenant who became the only member found guilty of war crimes over the My Lai massacre in Vietnam, has died at age 80. The Washington Post said Calley died on April 28 in Gainesville, Fla. but his death had not been publicized until a recent public records search. AP

**TEHRAN**

**Reformist Masoud Pezeshkian sworn in as ninth President of Iran**



Iranian reformist Masoud Pezeshkian was sworn in at parliament on Tuesday as the country's ninth President at a ceremony attended by foreign dignitaries. The move comes two days after Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei officially endorsed Pezeshkian. He is expected to unveil his government in two weeks. AP

# Protests spread in Venezuela, opposition alleges vote fraud

Rivals say their candidate Edmundo Gonzalez has more than twice as many votes as Maduro after studying 73% of the ballots; President attributes the acts of violence to the extreme right

**CARACAS**

**P**rotests and uprisings of Venezuela's President Nicolas Maduro rallied on Tuesday as protesters and clashes spread after a weekend election was awarded to the long-ruling socialist despite opposition claims of a landslide victory.

Heightened instability in the South American oil-producing nation has brought divided international reaction.



Shimmering rage: A demonstrator runs past security forces during protests in Puerto La Cruz in Venezuela on Monday. REUTERS

sales had more than twice as many votes as Mr. Maduro in the election, had no credibility and was mulling more sanctions, while China and Russia congratulated him.

Protests began after the election board declared on Monday that Mr. Maduro had won a third term with 83% of votes to extend his "Chavista" movement's quarter-century rule.

The opposition, which considers the election biased in the pockets of a dictatorial government, said the 73% of votes tallies to which it has access showed its candidate Edmundo Gon-

**T**he armed forces have long supported him and there were no signs generalism were breaking from the government.

In Coro, capital of Falcón state, protesters cheered and danced when they tore down a statue depicting former President Hugo Chavez, Mr. Maduro's mentor who ruled from 1999-2013.

A local monitoring group, the Venezuelan Conflict Observatory, said it had registered 187 protests in 20 states by 4 p.m. on Monday with "numerous acts of repression and violence" carried out by paramilitary groups and security forces.

**Two dead**

At least two persons were killed in connection with the vote count protests, one in the border state of Tachira and another in Maracay.

Venezuelan opposition leader Maria Corina Machado, who was barred from running in the poll but has spearheaded the campaign for Gonzalez, called for marches on Tuesday.

# Rajapaksa's party decides against backing Ranil in presidential elections

**MUSKA SRIJAYAWARDANA**

**COLOMBO**

**T**he Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna (SLFP), or People's Front — led by the once-powerful Rajapaksa clan which was deposed from power in 2022 — has said it will not back President Ranil Wickremesinghe in the presidential polls in September.

The decision, announced after the party's central committee's meeting on Monday, marks the withdrawal of the Rajapaksa support to Mr. Wickremesinghe, two years after they helped him rise to the country's most powerful office. He replaced former President Gotabaya Rajapaksa, who resigned in June 2022, in the wake of a strike uprising that blamed him chiefly for the country's dramatic economic crash.



The Rajapaksa's political party met on Monday to discuss the strategy ahead of Sri Lanka's presidential polls. AP/WIDEWORLD

2022, Mr. Wickremesinghe won an urgent parliamentary vote with the SLFP's support, and has since relied on it to pass several legislations.

While Mr. Wickremesinghe earned praise from some for taking over the country's leadership at a critical time, and "stabilizing" its battered economy, his dependence on aid and association with the Rajapaksa have drawn criticism.

In November 2023, Sri Lanka's Supreme Court ruled that the Rajapaksa brothers (Mr. Mahinda, Mr. Gotabaya and Mr. Basil), along with other top officials in their government from 2009 to 2022 "demonstrably contributed to" the country's devastating economic crisis and violated "public trust," but they

found no wrongdoing.

On their party's political decision, SLFP General Secretary Jagara Kariyawasam said Mr. Wickremesinghe's policies were not agreeable to members.

"For instance, our party has a position on whether and how to go about privatizing national assets. But the President does not care about national assets or the underprivileged people of this country," he told The Hindu on Tuesday.

Asked about the candidate the party would field, Mr. Kariyawasam said: "That decision has not been taken as yet," amid wide speculation that a non-Rajapaksa may be nominated for the first time.

Meanwhile, some SLFP members, especially those part of Mr. Wickre-

singhe's Cabinet, are expected to stay with him in the coming election, signaling a split in the SLFP.

Naval Rajapaksa, son of former President Mahinda Rajapaksa and the party's national organizer, has blamed Mr. Wickremesinghe for dividing the party that backed him over the last two years.

**UNP's ally**

For now, this leaves Mr. Wickremesinghe with what remains of his UNP — its breakaway faction, the mammoth Jana Rakawogaya (JRP or United People's Force), in the main opposition party — a faction of the SLFP, and certain other backers, including from parties representing the island nation's minority Tamils, Muslims, and Malakchola (the country's Tamil).

Contesting this election as an independent candidate, Mr. Wickremesinghe still has at least two strong challengers in Leader of Opposition Nalini Perumalaa, and Amara Kumara Dissanayake, who leads the opposition National People's Power (NPP) alliance.

In a media alliance on Tuesday evening, the President's office and legislators, of the 228-member House, pledged their support to him.

# Taliban disavows Afghan diplomatic missions abroad

**Associated Press**

**ISLAMABAD**

The Taliban on Tuesday disavowed many Afghan diplomatic missions overseas, saying it will not honor passports, visas and other documents issued by diplomats associated with Afghanistan's former Western-backed administration.

It is the Taliban's latest attempt to seize control of diplomatic missions since returning to power in 2021.

Many of their leaders are under sanctions and the country recognizes them as Afghanistan's legitimate ruler.

UN is still held by the form or government that was led by Ashraf Ghani.

**Multiple countries**

In a statement posted to the social media platform X, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs said that documents issued by relations in London, Berlin, Belgium, Bonn, Switzerland, Austria, France, Italy, Greece, Poland, Australia, Sweden, Canada and Norway are no longer accepted and the ministry "bears no responsibility" for those documents.

These documents affect include passports, visa stickers, checks and endorsements.

**Ethiopia's sorrow**



A woman waits as her husband and relative dig the ground in search of her missing son at the site of the Gen landfill in last week, following heavy rain that buried people in both zone in northern Ethiopia. REUTERS

# Day of mourning in Bangladesh as more than 200 killed in unrest

**Associated Press**

**DHAKA**

Bangladesh observed a day of mourning on Tuesday in memory of more than 200 people killed in recent weeks during violence that evolved from student protests over the country's quota system for government jobs.

After weeks of peaceful protests by students looking to change the system —

which reserved 30% of government jobs for relatives of veterans and those who were raped during the war of independence against British rule in 1971 — erupted on July 15 when activists of a student wing of the ruling party attacked demonstrators.

Security officials opened fire, using tear gas and rubber bullets to try to quell the violence.

The quota protesters

posed the most serious challenge to Bangladesh's government since Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina won a fourth consecutive term in January elections that the main opposition groups boycotted.

The ruling Awami League party and opposition Bangladesh Nationalist Party have often accused each other of fueling political chaos and violence, most recently ahead

of the country's national election, which was marred by a crackdown on several opposition figures.

**Black badges**

Government officials — including those at the Bangladesh Secretariat, the top office controlling most of the country's ministries and bureaucracy — wore black badges on Tuesday to mourn those killed as the country crawls back to

normalcy with the strict curfew being relaxed in recent days. Authorities also asked all mosques, temples and other religious institutions to organize special prayers Tuesday for the dead.

**Toll rose sharply**

House Minister Asaduzzaman Khan put the overall death toll at 150, while the country's leading daily, Prothom Alo, said 211 people

were killed since July 16. Thousands have been injured.

Media reports said about 10,000 people have been arrested over the past two weeks in relation to clashes at protests and other attacks on state properties.

Rights groups have called for an end to arbitrary arrests, and critics accused the government of using excessive force to tamp down the fighting.

# Israel targets senior Hezbollah leader in Beirut air strike

**Reuters**

**JERUSALEM/BEIRUT**

An Israeli air strike targeted a senior Hezbollah commander in Beirut's southern suburbs late on Tuesday in what the Israeli military said was retaliation for a cross-border rocket strike three days before that killed 12 children and teenagers.

A loud blast was heard and a plume of smoke could be seen rising above the southern suburb — a stronghold of the Iran-backed Lebanese armed group Hezbollah — at around 7:40 p.m. (2200 EST).

**Fate unclear**

A senior Lebanese security source said a senior Hezbollah commander had been the target of the air strike and his fate remained unclear.

Lebanon's state-run national news agency said an Israeli air strike had targeted the area around Hezbollah's Shura Council in the Harat Hreik neighborhood of the capital Beirut.

Beirut has been on edge for days ahead of an anticipated Israeli attack in retaliation for the rocket strike on the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights on Saturday that killed the 12 young-

**The attack is in response to the strike on Golan Heights that killed 12 children**

sters in a football field in a Druze village.

Hezbollah has denied involvement in that attack.

**More rocket fire**

In a statement, the Israeli military said it had conducted "a targeted strike in Beirut on the commander responsible for the murder of the children in Majdal Shams and the killing of numerous additional Israeli civilians." Details would follow.

Earlier on Tuesday, more rocket fire from southern Lebanon killed a civilian in a kibbutz in northern Israel, media said.

Shortly before the explosion in north Beirut, the Israeli military said 15 projectiles had been fired across the Lebanese border within the 48 hours, with impacts in Beirut and the surrounding region. No injuries were reported.

**TEHRAN**

## Reformist Masoud Pezeshkian sworn in as ninth President of Iran



AP

Iranian reformist Masoud Pezeshkian was sworn in at parliament on Tuesday as the country's ninth President at a ceremony attended by foreign dignitaries. The move comes two days after Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei officially endorsed Pezeshkian. He is expected to unveil his government in two weeks. AFP

₹2 LAKH EX-GRATIA ANNOUNCED
Landslides in Kerala
leave over 100 dead,
many still trapped



PAIRS WITH SARABJOT SINGH
Manu fires again, wins
2nd shooting medal
in mixed team event



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NEW DELHI, WEDNESDAY, JULY 31, 2024

FINANCIAL EXPRESS

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IN THE NEWS

BANKS GET 90 DAYS TO ADOPT WILFUL DEFAULTER NORMS

The RBI has given 90 days to banks to comply with its final wilful defaulter guidelines mandating lenders to identify wilful defaulters in NPA accounts with over ₹25 lakh dues, reports Piyush Shukla.

CRICKET BOARD IN INITIAL SETTLEMENT TALKS WITH BYJU'S

BCCI CEO PUNEJIA told the National Company Law Appellate Tribunal that it is in initial settlement talks with Byju's, reports Anand Hussain.

RCAP: IHHL SEEKS COMPLIANCE BEFORE PAYMENT

IHHL HAS TOLD THE HCILT it was ready to make payment as per the RCAP resolution plan, but certain pre-approved conditions are set to be fulfilled, reports Piyush Shukla.

EXPLAINER Why banks need a higher liquidity cover

Why banks need a higher liquidity cover

7-POINT PLAN TO PROTECT RETAIL INVESTORS Sebi cracks down on F&O frenzy

AKSHATA GORDE Mumbai, July 30

THE CAPITAL MARKETS regulator on Tuesday proposed several measures to rein in excessive speculation in the futures & options (F&O) market. The seven measures include a larger minimum contract value of ₹20 lakh, a limit on weekly options contracts to a single benchmark, upfront premium payments, and a smaller number of strike prices.

A consultation paper released on Tuesday, comes following serious concerns that investors are staking their family savings to derivatives trades. The Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) has estimated the losses from such trades in FY 24 at an alarming ₹12,000 crore. Market participants and other stakeholders have until August 30 to submit their suggestions on the proposals.

Sebi chairperson Madhabi Puri Buch said F&O volumes in the last three to four years had multiplied by a factor which was unimag- inable. "In the past we felt there was no need for regulatory interventions because we were dealing with the return issue...but today we feel it has become a major issue," Buch said. She was speaking at an event organised by the National Stock Exchange (NSE).

The national turnover in the derivatives segment hit \$6 trillion in early February. The surge in F&O volumes to levels that are the highest in the world — the result of a retail frenzy — has compelled the government as well as the regulator to raise the barriers. The government, in the Union Budget for 2024-25, hiked the securities transaction tax on F&O trades. Sebi observed in the consultation paper that the increase in the minimum con- tract size would result in "reverse selection

THE PROPOSALS

- Raise minimum lot size to ₹15-20L, initially and to ₹20-30 L after 6 months.
● Limit weekly equity to one benchmark index per stock.
● Mandate upfront collection of options premiums from buyers.
● Remove calendar spread benefit on expiry day.
● Raise extreme loss margins for equity day by 5% & 3% for day before expiry.
● Limit options strikes, stream line strike interval.
● Monitor position limits on an intra-day basis.
● Madhabi Puri Buch, Sebi chairperson

tion of such risk bearing products". The regulator has proposed an increase in the minimum contract size in a phased man- ner, from ₹15-20 lakh initially and to ₹20-30 lakh after six months. The prevailing mini- mum contract size of ₹5-10 lakh for deriva- tive contracts was last fixed in 2015.

Continued on Page 8

Global funds eyeing us, don't miss this 'golden chance': PM Allocation to states robust, Opposition misleading: FM



Prime Minister Narendra Modi at a CII event in New Delhi on Tuesday

FE BUREAU New Delhi, July 30

CALLING INDIA'S PRIVATE sector a strong contender for realising the vision of Viksit Bharat, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday said the world is looking to invest in India and domestic industry should not miss the golden opportunity. Addressing a post-Budget event organ- ized by industry body CII, Modi said that world investors are the main driving force behind India's growth story. He said India's politics, commitment, determina- tion, decisions, and treatments are becoming the basis of global progress.

"Today, the whole world is looking at India and your investors across the world are keen to come to India. World leaders are filled with positivity for India. This is the golden chance for the Indian industry and we should not lose this opportunity," Modi said. The government is highly focused on skill development and employment based in mind industry 4.0 standards, the Prime Minister added.

Continued on Page 8

FE BUREAU New Delhi, July 30

FINANCE MINISTER NIRMALA Sithara- man on Tuesday strongly rebuffed the charge that the Centre is cutting down on fiscal transfers to states, especially to the ones ruled by Opposition parties, saying that budgetary allocation to all states con- tinued are estimated to rise substantially in FY 25. "The dues to the states are being transferred on time," she said.

Assuring the leaders of some states of making "misleading" statements, she said that the Budget for FY 25 has allocated ₹2.2-₹1 trillion to all states, which is 27.3% higher than the Budget Estimate of FY 24. The allocation includes devolution of taxes, grants and special assistance, and funds under centrally sponsored schemes, and central sector schemes.

In her Budget speech, presented on July 23, Sitharaman had only mentioned ten

FE BUREAU New Delhi, July 30

HIRMALA SITHARAMAN, FINANCE MINISTER LACK OF TRANSPARENCY IN BUDGET NUMBERS WAS THERE DURING UPA RULE, NOT IN THE NDA GOVT

states by name — Bihar and Andhra Pradesh, ruled by BJP allies Janta Dal (United) and Jharkhand Party, respectively.

Continued on Page 8

No rethink on Chinese FDI: Goyal

FE BUREAU New Delhi, July 30

THE GOVERNMENT IS NOT looking at a review of the policy on foreign direct investment (FDI) from China through the recent Economic Survey backed a more open approach to capital inflows from the neighbouring country to revive domestic manufacturing amid jobs.

"There is no rethinking at present to sup- port Chinese investments in the country," commerce and industry minister Piyush Goyal said on Tuesday in the first categori- cal statement on this from a senior govern- ment functionary. In 2020, the government made its approval mandatory for FDI from countries that share land borders with India.

REPORT, PAGE 8

Advertisement for Vietnam Airlines featuring a large image of the aircraft and a group of staff members. Text includes: Vietnam Airlines REACH FURTHER, Vietnam Airlines is honoured to welcome H.E. Mr. Pham Minh Chinh - Prime Minister of Vietnam, As the national carrier, we are proud to enhance the air connectivity between Vietnam and India.

# Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam Campaign



- The Ministry of Defence will undertake a massive 15 lakh trees plantation drive across the country on the occasion of 78th Independence Day ceremony on 15th August 2024.
- The plantation drive is part of the 'Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam' campaign, to be conducted through the three Services, Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), Defence PSUs, Controller General Defence Accounts (CGDA), National Cadet Corps (NCC), Sainik Schools, and Ordnance factories.

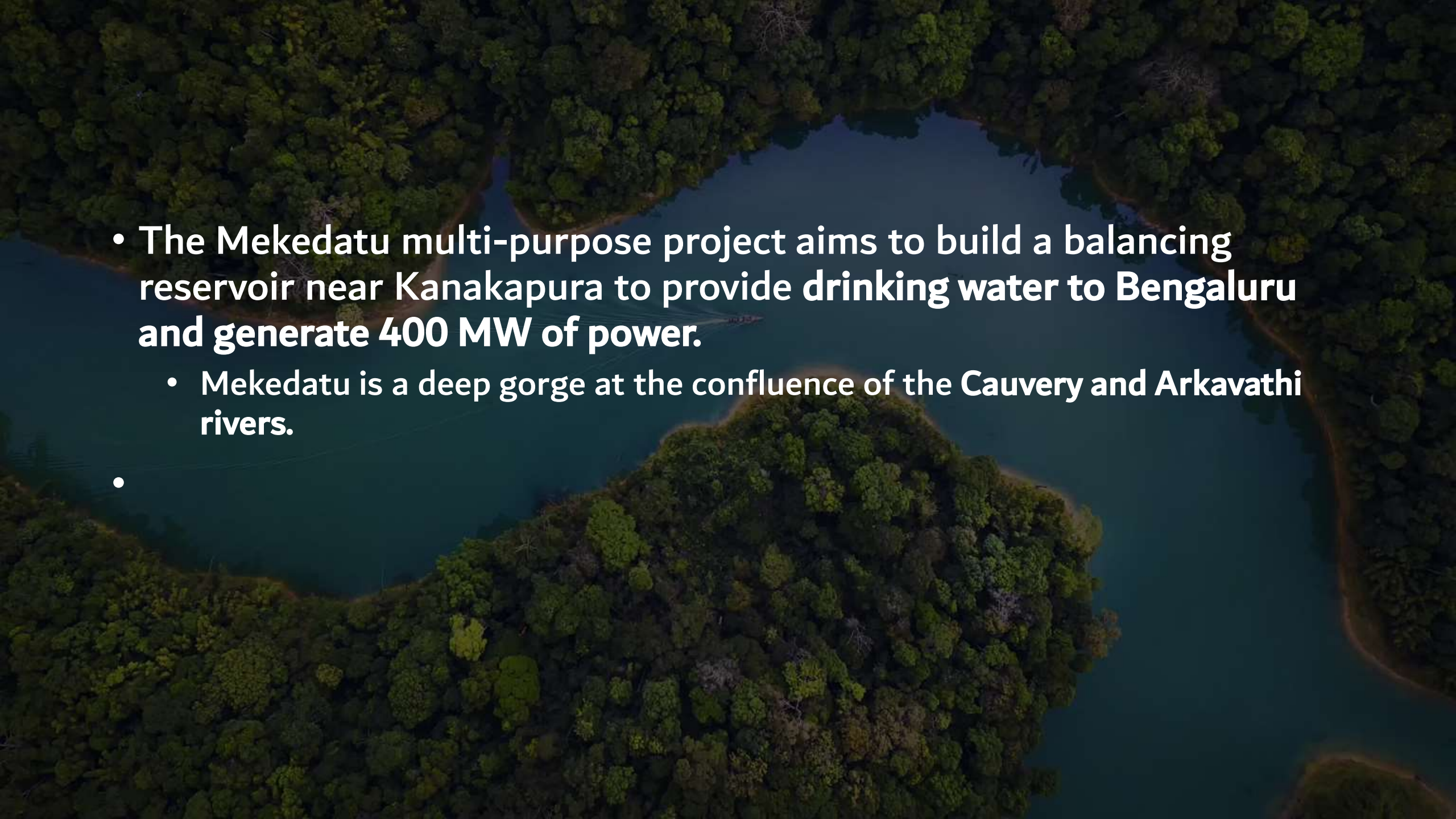
- The Prime Minister launched the 'Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam' campaign on World Environment Day 2024, urging all to plant a tree as a tribute to mothers.



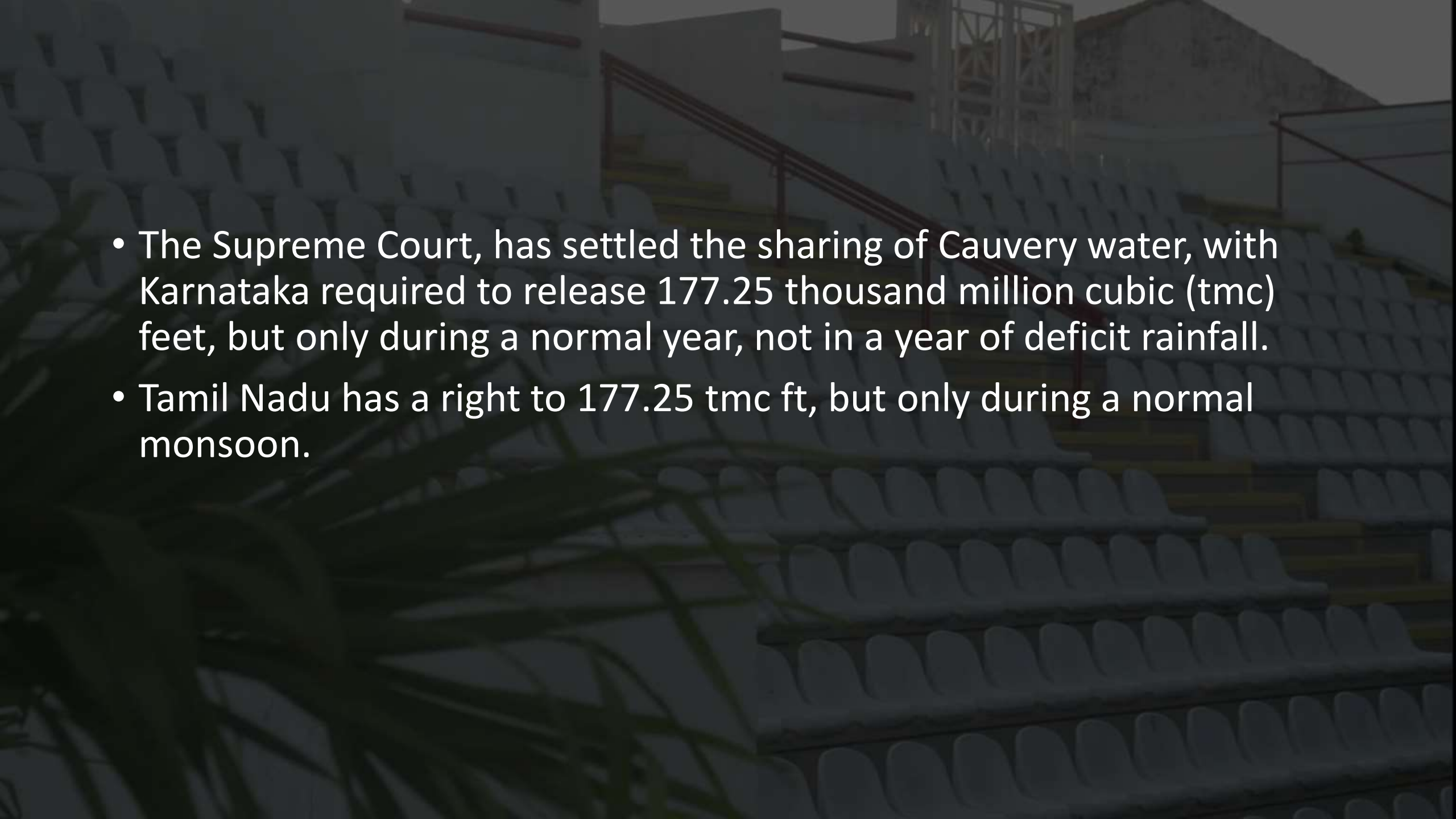
The image features a dark grey background with a faint, starry sky pattern of small black dots. Overlaid on this is a complex network diagram. The nodes are represented by circles of various colors: red, green, blue, orange, pink, and black. These nodes are interconnected by a dense web of thin, dark grey lines. The network is most concentrated in the center and right side of the frame, with some nodes having multiple connections, suggesting a highly interconnected system. The overall aesthetic is technical and data-driven.

# Mekedatu Project

- Karnataka Chief Minister(CM) has highlighted the Mekedatu balancing reservoir project as a key solution to address water-sharing issues with Tamil Nadu during monsoon distress years, asserting that the project would benefit both states, particularly in times of water scarcity.

- 
- An aerial photograph showing a river winding through a dense, lush green forest. The river is dark blue and flows from the top center towards the bottom right. The forest is thick with trees, and the overall scene is serene and natural.
- **The Mokedatu multi-purpose project aims to build a balancing reservoir near Kanakapura to provide drinking water to Bengaluru and generate 400 MW of power.**
    - Mokedatu is a deep gorge at the confluence of the Cauvery and Arkavathi rivers.

-

- 
- The Supreme Court, has settled the sharing of Cauvery water, with Karnataka required to release 177.25 thousand million cubic (tmc) feet, but only during a normal year, not in a year of deficit rainfall.
  - Tamil Nadu has a right to 177.25 tmc ft, but only during a normal monsoon.

- **Karnataka Chief Minister(CM) emphasises that the Mekedatu reservoir will help meet Bengaluru's drinking water needs and enable Karnataka to release water to Tamil Nadu during a distress year, as 65 tmc ft of water can be impounded, which would otherwise end up in the sea**

# MEKEDATU PROJECT

KARNATAKA

- Mekedatu is **Rs 9,000-cr** project proposed at Ontigondlu in Karnataka.

- Project site is at confluence of Cauvery & its tributary Arkavathi.

- Reservoir aimed at ensuring **drinking water** to Bengaluru & adjacent areas.

- Project also envisioned to generate **400 MW** of power.



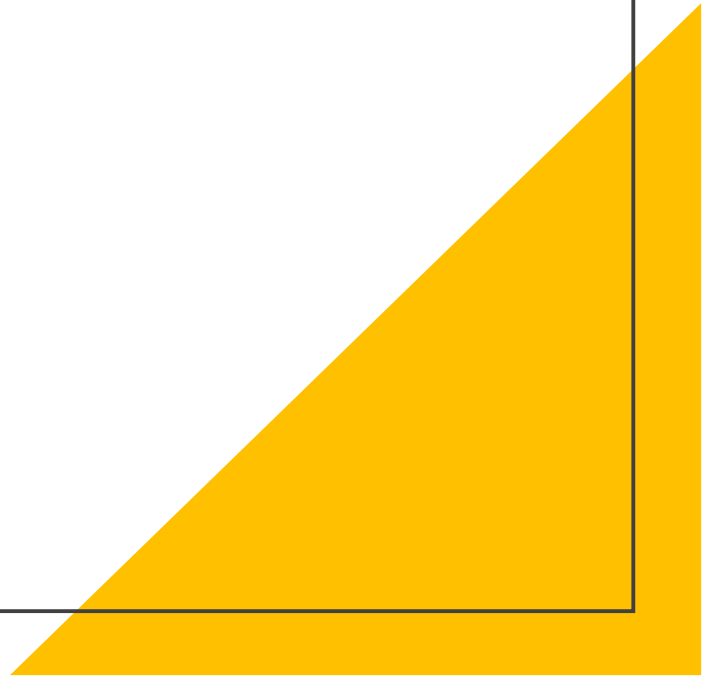
Cauvery river near Makedatu



MAP NOT TO SCALE



**India's Steel Production To  
Surpass 300 Million Tonnes By  
2030**



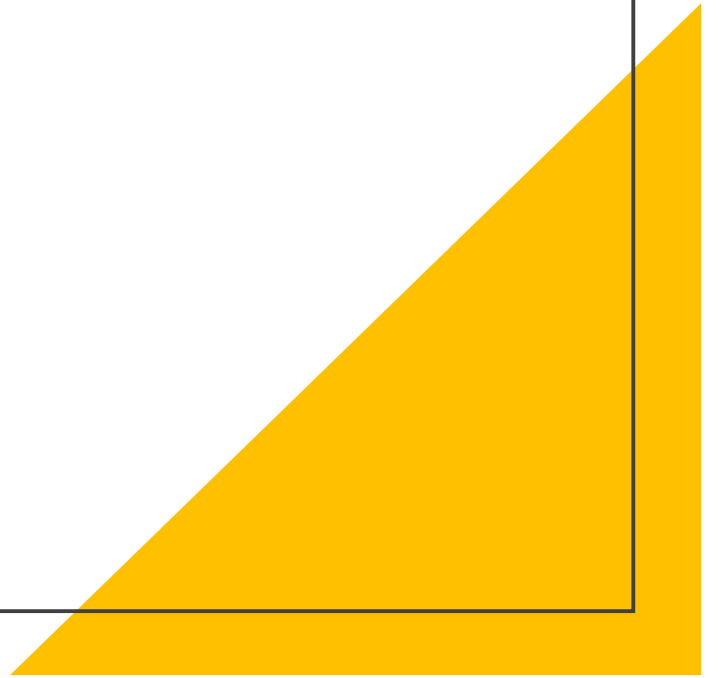
- 
- Steel production in India, driven by robust demand for government infrastructure projects, is projected to surpass 300 million tonnes (MT) by 2030.
  - **Status**
  - India currently ranks as the World's 2nd Largest Producer of Crude Steel, surpassing Japan in 2018
    - Current steel demand remains strong with an infrastructure push from the government and expects a growth of about 10 percent.

- **Initiatives**

- The Union Minister of Steel and Heavy Industries launched **SIMS 2.0 portal**, the upgraded Steel Import Monitoring System, to provide actionable intelligence to stakeholders for effective decision-making and strategic planning.
- **National Steel Policy 2017 (NSP 2017)**: India aims to achieve a crude steel capacity of 300 MTPA and a crude steel demand/production of 255 MTPA by 2030-31.

- **The Union Budget for 2024-25** gives India's steel industry several reasons to cheer, including import duty cuts on several raw materials and indirect benefits from increased spending on infrastructure and affordable housing.

# Oropouche Fever



- Recently, **Brazil** has reported the first-ever deaths from **Oropouche Fever**, a **mosquito-borne disease** with symptoms **similar to dengue**.
- **About the Oropouche Fever**
- It is caused by the **Oropouche virus**, which belongs to the **Orthobunyavirus genus**. It was **first detected in Trinidad and Tobago** back in 1955



**Transmission:** The Oropouche virus primarily spreads through the bite of a tiny insect called the **Culicoides Paraensis Midge**.

These minuscule midges are **stealthy and efficient carriers of this virus**.

However, **there's no evidence of human-to-human transmission**.



**Symptoms:** Symptoms are eerily similar to dengue—*think fever, chills, muscle pain, and joint discomfort*.

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# Word of the day

## **Haptic:**

of or relating to the sense of touch

---

**Synonyms:** tactile, tactual

---

**Usage:** *Some virtual worlds provide auditory and haptic experiences.*

---

**Pronunciation:** [bit.ly/hapticpro](https://bit.ly/hapticpro)

---

**International Phonetic Alphabet:** /'hæptɪk/

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# CURRENT AFFAIRS COURSE

- ✓ UPDATED CURRENT AFFAIRS (2023+2024)|
- ✓ COMPLETE NOTES(PDF)

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A group of people are clapping in a dimly lit room. The focus is on the hands and forearms of several individuals, some in the foreground and some blurred in the background. The lighting is soft and focused on the clapping action. An orange horizontal bar is located in the top left corner of the image.

Thank you  
guys.

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