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DOUBLE ROLE
Kerala's everyday heritage heroes
Citizens pitch in to protect the State's diverse legacy, facing threat from modernisation, migration and natural disasters
MAGAZINE » PAGE 1



Misquoted, says Justice V. Srishananda of the Karnataka HC
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AAP leader Atishi sworn in as Delhi Chief Minister
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INSIDE
White House officials meet Sikh activists
WASHINGTON
White House officials met and assured Sikh activists that the U.S. government is committed to protecting Americans from any acts of transnational aggression on its soil. » PAGE 3
Typhoid shows resistance to some antibiotics
NEW DELHI
A report by the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) Antimicrobial Resistance Surveillance Network found diseases like pneumonia and typhoid showed resistance to certain antibiotics. » PAGE 8

Sri Lanka votes to pick a new President

Result to be out today; voter turnout in range of 75% to 80%, says election observer group | President Wickremesinghe seeks mandate to continue his project of reviving the country's battered economy | Rival candidates promise change, offer relief from the burden of govt.'s IMF-led reform programme

Meera Srinivasan
COLOMBO
Sri Lankans gave their mandate to the country's next leader in a peacefully held Presidential election on Saturday. The outcome of the critical election, expected on Sunday, is watched closely as the island nation navigates a challenging phase of economic recovery, following a crushing crisis two years ago. While an announcement of the official voter turnout is awaited, the People's Action for Free and Fair Elections, a local election observer group, said it was likely to be in the range of 75% to 80%. The



Battle of ballots: Election officials carrying ballot boxes to a counting centre in Jaffna on Saturday. REUTERS

parliamentary vote in 2022, sought a mandate to continue his project of reviving the country's battered economy. His main rivals from the Opposition, Sajith Premadasa and Anura Kumara

day at the College House, a more-than-a-century-old building of the University of Colombo. **'Honest President'** "Today will be the last time I am called upon to do my civic duty. I am voting for an honest President who will end corruption, because all the matters that put our economy [on the right track] will count for nothing if we are not honest and corruption-free," she said. Eliminating corruption has been a running theme for voters ahead of this election. It takes off from a program chart during the mass agitations of 2022, when citizens blamed the

"corrupt" political establishment for their misery and demanded a "system change" so the country could course-correct. Citizens contending with the enduring impact of the crisis are emphatic about the need for change at the country's helm. The country's economic woes have not ended, said Azar, a voter. "See the long lines of people waiting at the passport office [hoping to leave the country for jobs elsewhere]... It is clear that the problems are still there and there is no relief. We need a good leader to come and address our problems," he said, outside the mass agitations in Maradana, a Colombo suburb.

The Election Commission of Sri Lanka said counting of postal votes began on Saturday evening. A candidate needs to secure 50% plus one vote to be declared winner. If no candidate garners a majority, which is more likely in a three-cornered race, authorities will undertake a second round of counting, to determine the preferential votes secured by the top two candidates, and add it to their respective count. In Sri Lanka's preferential voting system, voters get to mark three candidates on the ballot indicating their order of preference.

A.P. govt. plans to 'purify' Tirumala temple: Naidu
HYDARABAD
Amid row over the preparation of Iddu prasadam, Andhra Pradesh CM N. Chandrababu Naidu on Saturday said that he was discussing with religious heads on how to purify the Tirumala temple. » PAGE 3

Returning to the sea
Team works: Fishermen pulling a large fishing net from the sea on the Kachavali beach in Thiruvananthapuram on Saturday. After a week-long break for the Onam festival, a majority of fishermen have returned to the sea. REUTERS/ISTOCKPHOTO

PM Modi meets Biden ahead of Quad summit

Sriram Lakshman
WILMINGTON

Prime Minister Narendra Modi met U.S. President Joe Biden for bilateral talks at the President's home in Wilmington, Delaware, on Saturday.

The meeting took place shortly after the Prime Minister arrived in the city for a summit-level meeting of the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad) with Mr. Biden, Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese and Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida. "The United States' partnership with India is stronger, closer, and more dynamic than any time in history," tweeted Mr. Biden. He also said that he was "struck" by Mr. Modi's ability to find new areas of cooperation.

The White House media pool and Indian travelling press did not have access to the bilateral talks, which the White House described as a "personal meeting". External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar, Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri and India's Ambassador to the U.S. Vinay Mohan Kowtra were present at the meeting from the Indian side. U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken, U.S. Ambassador to India Eric Garcera and that each country had its own approach to Beijing.

China, along with other countries, like DPRK (North Korea) will be discussed and the Summit's joint statement will contain "some of the strongest language" to date on the

'2 commanders killed in Israeli strike in Beirut'
BEIRUT
Lebanon's Hezbollah movement on Saturday said that two commanders in elite operations unit had been killed by an Israeli strike on Beirut. » PAGE 12

India invites foreign diplomats to J&K to see polls

Peerzada Ashiq Sahasani Haidari
SRINAGAR, NEW DELHI
Buoyed by peaceful polling and a higher voter turnout of 67% in the first phase of the Jammu & Kashmir election held on September 18, the External Affairs Ministry has invited a group of senior diplomats, mainly from the U.S., European and ASEAN embassies, to visit Kashmir "for a first-hand account of the ongoing election process in J&K", sources told The Hindu. Official sources said the Ministry extended invitations to nearly 20 diplomats of select embassies functioning in New Delhi, including of the U.S.,

France, Germany, Singapore, the Philippines and Malaysia. So far, 16 diplomats have accepted the invitation. They are expected to arrive in Kashmir on September 25, the day Srinagar is going to the polls. Officials called the embassies over the past week, asking them to nominate diplomats for a visit in the next few days before the second phase of polling to be held in Srinagar, Ganderbal and Budgam districts on September 26. A section of diplomats is likely to visit Kashmir before the third phase on October 1 as well, when Baramulla, Bandipora and Kupwara districts in north Kashmir will go to the polls.

during the G-20 Tourism meet in May 2023. In the run-up to the Assembly election last month, senior diplomats of Germany and the U.S. travelled to Srinagar and met a number of politicians including National Conference leader Omar Abdullah, Peoples' Conference chief Sajjad Lone, and a number of other mainstream politicians to assess the ground situation. While the Canadian High Commission has not been included in the latest invitation, sources said a team from the mission may travel to Jammu & Kashmir in the next week. "The Ministry did not respond to a request for information about the visits.

On the joint exercises by the coast guards of Quad members, the official said it was not to be seen as a red flag but consistent with the Quad's goal of "reinforcing peace and stability and the continuity of international law". The "Quad Cancer Moonshot" - a pet project of Mr. Biden, whose adult son died of cancer in 2015, will involve screening, vaccines and treatment, supported by donations from all four Quad partners, a senior administration official said. The summit will also announce that the Quad fellowship is officially being expanded to include students from South East Asian countries.

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"The United States' partnership with India is stronger, closer, and more dynamic than any time in history," tweeted Mr. Biden, who is in the final months of his presidency. Mr. Biden added that he was "struck" by Mr. Modi's ability to find new areas of cooperation.

The White House media pool and Indian travelling press did not have access to the bilateral talks, which the White House described as a "personal meeting".

External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar, Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri and India's Ambassador to the U.S. Vinay Mohan Kwatra were present at the meeting from the Indian side.

U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken, U.S. National Security Adviser Jake Sullivan and U.S. Ambassador to India Eric Garcetti were present from the U.S. side.

The flagship event of the day, the Quad Summit, which is being held at Mr. Biden's high school, is expected to announce new joint coast guard exercises, an initiative to combat cancer, and an expansion of



Prime Minister Narendra Modi with U.S. President Joe Biden at the latter's residence in Greenville, Delaware, on Saturday. ANI

the Quad fellowship.

China and Russia would be "critical priorities" in the bilateral meeting between Mr. Modi and Mr. Biden, U.S. National Security Adviser Jake Sullivan said on Saturday. "Countries like India should step up and support the principles of sovereignty and territorial integrity, and that every country everywhere should refrain from supplying inputs to Russia's war machine," he said, adding that Mr. Biden would hear from Mr. Modi about the Prime Minister's visit to Ukraine in August.

On China, Mr. Sullivan said the two leaders would discuss not just security but also technology and economic aspects of their dynamics with Beijing and try and coordinate approaches "to the extent that it makes sense for both countries".

However, Mr. Sullivan also said there would not be a "Quad approach" to China and that each country had its own approach to Beijing.

China, along with other countries, like DPRK (North Korea) will be discussed and the Summit's joint statement will contain "some of the strongest language" to date on the

South China Sea and with regard to North Korea, another senior U.S. administration official said.

The U.S. Coast Guard will welcome Indian, Australian and Japanese coast guards on board its vessel in the Indo-Pacific, with other countries then taking turns to host, as part of a new Quad initiative.

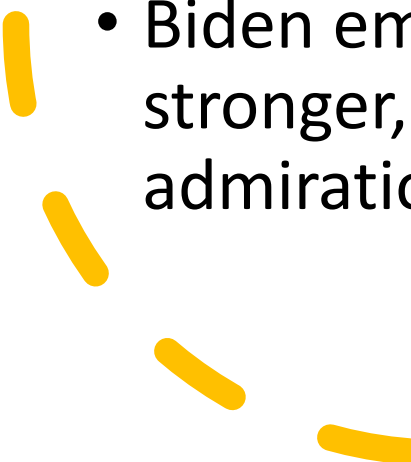
In the context of China, a senior Biden administration official emphasised that the Quad continues to be defined "as a partnership, not a military alliance of any kind".

On the joint exercises by the coast guards of Quad members, the official said it was not to be seen as a red flag but consistent with the Quad's goal of "reinforcing peace and stability and the continuity of international law".

The 'Quad Cancer Moonshot' - a pet project of Mr. Biden, whose adult son died of cancer in 2015, will involve screening, vaccines and treatment, supported by donations from all four Quad partners, a senior administration official said. The summit will also announce that the Quad fellowship is officially being expanded to include students from South East Asian countries.




- **Meeting Between Modi and Biden:**

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi met U.S. President Joe Biden in Wilmington, Delaware, for bilateral talks ahead of the Quad summit. This meeting is described as personal and focused on strengthening the India-U.S. partnership.
 - Biden emphasized that the relationship between the U.S. and India is stronger, closer, and more dynamic than ever. He expressed admiration for Modi's ability to identify new cooperation areas.
- 



- **Quad Summit Focus:**


- The Quad summit also includes leaders from Australia (Prime Minister Anthony Albanese) and Japan (Prime Minister Fumio Kishida).
 - Topics for the bilateral meeting included India's stance on Russia and China, especially regarding the ongoing Ukraine war and maintaining sovereignty and territorial integrity. The U.S. urged India to play a more significant role in supporting these principles.
- 

- **Key Priorities:**

- **China and Russia** were highlighted as critical priorities in the bilateral meeting. Jake Sullivan, U.S. National Security Adviser, stressed that countries should refrain from supporting Russia's war machine.
- China's relationship with India and the other Quad members, including discussions on the South China Sea and North Korea, were major topics of concern. There was an emphasis that the Quad is not intended as a military alliance but a partnership for reinforcing regional peace and stability.




- **Quad Initiatives:**

- The U.S. Coast Guard will collaborate with India, Australia, and Japan in joint exercises in the Indo-Pacific to combat piracy and expand maritime security.
 - The Quad fellowship program will be expanded to include students from Southeast Asia.
- 



1. Other Topics Discussed:

1. Health and Science Collaboration: A significant focus was on cancer research, a personal project of President Biden, after the loss of his son. The "Quad Cancer Moonshot" initiative will work on cancer screening, vaccines, and treatment, with funding from Quad members.



INDIA-US RELATIONSHIP OVERVIEW

The confluence of common factors like democratic values, Shared areas of Interests, Stand against terrorism makes India and US enjoy a comprehensive strategic partnership.



\$ 128.55 billion
Bilateral trade in
2022-23 (increase of
7.65% over 2021-22)



Largest Export destination
US is the major
export hub
for Indian goods.



3rd largest defence Supplier
US (~11%) is India's
3rd largest defence
supplier after
Russia (~45%)
and France (~29%)



\$28 billion
India maintains a
trade surplus with
the US

Defence ties



- ⊕ US recognized India as a **“Major Defence Partner”** in 2016.
- ⊕ US Defence agreements like
 - **Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Association (LEMOA), 2016**
 - **Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement (COMCASA), 2018**
 - Industrial Security Agreement 2019
 - **Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement (BECA) 2020** are signed with India
- ⊕ Bilateral military exercises like **Yudh Abhyaas, Vajra prahar, Malabar, RIMPAC etc.** are conducted between the two countries.



People to People ties

- ⊕ Indian diaspora in US is around 4.9 Million and they form the **second largest immigrant group** in US after the Mexicans



The Four Foundational Agreements

- **General Security of Military Information Agreement (GSOMIA)** - enables the sharing of military intelligence and requires each country to protect the others' classified information
- **Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Association (LEMOA)** - permits the military of either country to use the others' bases for re-supplying or carrying out repairs
- **Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement (COMCASA)** - enables the two countries to share secure communication and exchange information on approved equipment
- **Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement for Geo-spatial Cooperation (BECA)** - will allow India to use US geospatial maps to get pinpoint military accuracy

PM silent on crimes against women in BJP-ruled States'

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Congress on Saturday questioned the 'silence' of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah over the alleged sexual assault on an Army officer's fiancée in police custody in Odisha and other such incidents of crime against women in the BJP-ruled States.

Congress leader Ajoy Kumar, addressing a press conference along with the chairman of the All India Congress Committee's executive services department, Colonel Rohit Chaudhry (ret'd), referred to the article, 'Enough is enough', by President Droupadi Murmu on the rape and murder of a young doctor in the Kolkata incident. Now, we are asking how much is enough? — we ask Modi, when will you write an editorial in one of the major national dailies, saying 'enough is enough'?"

Mr. Kumar said that some men had misbe-



Ajoy Kumar

haved with the daughter of an Army Brigadier, but when she went to a 'model police station' to complain, she and her fiancée were brutally beaten up. A fake case was made and the victim and her companion were taken into custody.

Many such incidents have happened in the country, but not a single word has come out of the mouths of Narendra Modi and Amit Shah," the Congress leader said.

He also referred to the incident in Rajasthan in which an Army Brigadier was beaten up at a police station and the one in Manipur last year in which the wife of an Army jawan was disrobed.

He said, "Some time ago, President Droupadi Murmu had said 'enough is enough' in the wake of the Kolkata incident. Now, we are asking how much is enough? — we ask Modi, when will you write an editorial in one of the major national dailies, saying 'enough is enough'?"

Mr. Kumar said that some men had misbe-

White House officials meet Sikh activists before Modi's U.S. visit

This is the first time that National Security Council has held such a meeting; they were assured that U.S. govt. is committed to protecting Americans from acts of transnational aggression

Press Trust of India
WASHINGTON

White House officials have met a group of Sikh activists to assure them that the U.S. government is committed to protecting Americans from any acts of transnational aggression on its soil, a community leader has said.

The meeting comes ahead of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's three-day visit to the U.S. during which he will attend the Quad Summit in Delaware and address the "Summit of the Future" at the U.S. General Assembly in New York.

Held inside the White House complex on September 18, the meeting was attended by Pratul Singh of the American Sikh Caucus and other representatives from the Sikh Coalition and Sikh American Legal Defence Fund (SALDEF).



The meeting was attended by representatives of the Sikh Coalition and Sikh American Legal Defence Fund. REUTERS

"Yesterday we had the chance to thank senior federal government officials for saving the lives of Sikh Americans and for vigilance in protecting our community. We asked them to do more, and we will hold them to their assurances that they will," Mr. Singh, founder of the American Sikh Caucus Committee told PTI on Friday.

In a post on X, Mr. Singh

initiated by the White House. Congressman Adam Schiff early this week introduced the Transnational Repression Reporting Act of 2024 which would require the Attorney-General, in coordination with other relevant federal agencies, to report cases of transnational repression against people in the U.S.

"Through this Bill, Congress sends a strong message to our allies and adversaries that violating the constitutional rights of Americans will not be tolerated," SALDEF said.

Earlier this week, Khalilast Gursarwant Singh Panam filed a civil lawsuit against the Government of India and National Security Advisor Ajit Doval in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York to demand a summons in the case.

Air Marshal Amar Preet Singh to be next Air Force chief

Dinakar Peri
NEW DELHI

Air Marshal Amar Preet Singh has been appointed the next Chief of the Air Staff.

He is currently the Vice-Chief of the Indian Air Force (IAF). He will take over the top post on September 30, when the incumbent Air Chief Marshal V.R. Chaudhari retires.

The Government has appointed Air Marshal Amar Preet Singh present by serving as Vice Chief of the Air Staff, as the next Chief of the Air Staff, in the rank of Air Chief Marshal, with effect from the afternoon of September 30, 2024," the Defence Ministry said in a statement on Monday.

An alumnus of the National Defence Academy, the Defence Services Staff College, and the National Defence College, Air Marshal Singh was commissioned into the fighter stream of the IAF on December 21, 1984.

He is a qualified flying instructor and an expert test pilot with more than 5,000 hours of flying experience on a variety of



Air Marshal A.P. Singh will take over the top post on September 30.

fixed and rotary wing aircraft. Air Marshal Singh has commanded an operational fighter squadron and a frontline air base. As a test pilot, he led the MIG-29 upgrade project management team in Moscow, Russia.

He was also the project director (flight test) at the National Flight Test Centre looking after all flight testing of the light combat aircraft (Tejas).

He served as the Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief at the Central Air Command before taking over as the Vice-Chief on February 1, 2023.

The Air Marshal is a recipient of the Param Vishisth Seva Medal and the Ati Vishisth Seva Medal.

Pager blasts: Norway citizen having Kerala roots under scanner

E.M. Manoj
KALPETTA

The Special Branch (SB) of the Kerala Police initiated inquiries into Rinson Jose, a 37-year-old who left Wayanad for Norway a decade ago, following reports of his alleged involvement in the pager blasts that shook Kerala.

P.L. Shyju, Deputy Superintendent of Police, said officials visited Mr. Jose's house at Manjeri to collect information from his parents. They reported being unaware of the situation, adding that they had been unable to reach him by phone since the incident. Given that Mr. Jose is a foreign national, no legal action is being pursued against him, nor is he currently a target of any investigation in India, he said.

Reports indicated that Mr. Jose has been active within the Malayali com-



Rinson Jose

munity in Norway. His LinkedIn profile reveals that he has been employed with DN Media Group since 2022 and it describes him as an entrepreneur managing Nortalink, a company focused on IT services, consulting, procurement, and recruiting. Nortalink is reportedly viewed as a company associated with Nortalink.

On Friday, the police conducted ground checks to assess the financial situation of Mr. Jose's family.

Rahul defends remarks, says BJP spreading lies to stop him from speaking truth

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Breaking his silence on the controversy over his statements in the U.S., Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi on Saturday accused the BJP of spreading lies and trying to silence him from speaking the truth.

In a post on X, Mr. Gandhi shared a video clip, which runs for a minute and 50 seconds, and asked Sikhs whether anything wrong in what he had said and if India should not be a country where every Indian could practise his or her religion without fear.

"As usual, the BJP is resorting to lies to discredit what he said. He is desperate to silence me because they cannot stand the truth. But I will always speak up for the values that define India: our unity



Rahul Gandhi

in diversity, equality, and love," Mr. Gandhi added. In the clip, from a dinner event in Herndon, a Virginia suburb of Washington DC, Mr. Gandhi asks the name of a Sikh gentleman seated on the front row seat and then says, "First of all, you have to understand what the fight is about. The fight is not about politics. That is superficial."

"The fight is about whether or not people can decide what is going to happen?" his turban in India or he, as

a Sikh, is going to be allowed to wear a 'kada' in India. Or he, as a Sikh, is going to be able to go to a gurdwara. That's what the fight is about. And not just for him or for all religions," he added.

Mr. Gandhi then accused the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh of treating certain States, languages, religions, and communities as inferior to others.

He asserted that the fight was about what type of India one was going to have. "Are we going to have an India where people are allowed to believe what they want to believe, people are allowed to respect what they want to respect, say what they want to say? Or are we going to have an India where only a few limited people can decide what is going to happen?" he noted.

BJP says Rahul must retract statement as it is causing harm to Sikh community

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) on Saturday cited a joint statement of several Sikh and gurdwara management bodies urging Congress to retract the remarks made during the recent trip to the U.S. with respect to the community.

At a press conference, BJP leader Manjinder Singh Sirsa said representatives of Sikh and gurdwara management bodies, including Delhi Sikh Gurdwara Management Committee, Patna Saheb Gurdwara Committee, Jharkhand Central Board, West Bengal Central Board, and Kolkata Central Committee, met Minister of State for Home Affairs Nityanand Rai on the issue.

Stating that there was a lot of anger within the



Manjinder Singh Sirsa

community across the country over Mr. Gandhi's statement, he said similar statements were made by BJP's Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann over the decision of private hospitals not to provide cashless treatment to the Ayushman Bharat card holders as the State government had not cleared dues of ₹200 crore. He accused the government of incurring expenses of over ₹200 crore on the private planes for Aam Aadmi Party chief Arvind Kejriwal.

He said that there was a lot of anger within the

community in strengthening and securing the country and condemned those speaking ill of the community. Mr. Sirsa said Mr. Gandhi should withdraw his statement made in the U.S., as it was causing harm to the community. "I believe Rahul Gandhi will respect Sikh sentiments and retract his statement," he said.

"Cashless treatment" Mr. Sirsa also criticised the Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann over the decision of private hospitals not to provide cashless treatment to the Ayushman Bharat card holders as the State government had not cleared dues of ₹200 crore. He accused the government of incurring expenses of over ₹200 crore on the private planes for Aam Aadmi Party chief Arvind Kejriwal.

He said that there was a lot of anger within the

Andhra Pradesh government plans to 'purify' Tirumala temple: Naidu

V. Raghavendra
VIJAYAWADA

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu on Saturday suggested that the instructions given to the management of the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) to curtail cost led to the adulteration of ghee used in the preparation of the highly revered laddu prasadam during the previous YSR Congress Party rule. He insisted that his predecessor and YSRCP president Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy should give a plausible explanation for what had happened instead of attacking the present government with fall pretences.

"We are discussing with religious heads on how to purify the Tirumala temple, and will have the quality of the prasadam tested in all temples in the State,"



Naidu on Saturday suggested that the instructions given to the management of the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) to curtail cost led to the adulteration of ghee used in the preparation of the highly revered laddu prasadam during the previous YSR Congress Party rule. He insisted that his predecessor and YSRCP president Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy should give a plausible explanation for what had happened instead of attacking the present government with fall pretences.

He said, while stating that previous attempts to make laddus that matched the quality of the ones prepared for TTD, at the Ayodhya temple had failed.

Observations made during judicial proceedings quoted out-of-context: HC judge

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Referring to his remark, made while addressing a seven-judge bench during judicial proceedings, Justice V. Srikrishna said that his observations were unintentional and not meant to offend or any section of the society.

Stating that he would have clarified this point to blacklisted several comments if he was present in the court, he requested the officer-in-charge to convey his message to her as his name was not present in the hall.

Eight High Courts get new Chief Justices

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Centre notified the appointment of Chief Justices in eight High Courts on Saturday. These include the High Courts of Delhi, Himachal Pradesh, Kerala, Madras and Jharkhand.

The appointments came after the Supreme Court Collegium amended its July 11 recommendations.

He questioned how the price commodity could be obtained at just ₹320 a kg when the market rate is then government to go for reverse tendering.

"Soon after taking the reins earlier this year, I instructed the TTD's new Executive Officer (EO) to streamline the Tirumala temple administration and he (the EO) took various steps, including the improvement of the quality of the laddu prasadam, the temple's traditional sweet, and other ingredients of standard quality, and resumed purchasing Nandini ghee," Mr. Naidu said in a statement in the open court on Saturday afternoon in the presence of some of the office bearers of the Advocates' Subba Reddy said that Justice Srikrishna's judgments are excellent, but

hall, before commencement of regular judicial proceedings. Referring to his remark, made while addressing a seven-judge bench during judicial proceedings, Justice V. Srikrishna said that his observations were unintentional and not meant to offend or any section of the society.

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Air Marshal Amar Preet Singh to be next Air Force chief

Dinakar Peri
NEW DELHI

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An alumnus of the National Defence Academy, the Defence Services Staff College, and the National Defence College, Air Marshal Singh was commissioned into the fighter stream of the IAF on December 21, 1984.

He is a qualified flying instructor and an experimental test pilot with more than 5,000 hours of flying experience on a variety of



Air Marshal A.P. Singh will take over the top post on September 30.

fixed and rotary wing aircraft.

Air Marshal Singh has commanded an operational fighter squadron and a frontline air base. As a test pilot, he led the MiG-29 upgrade project management team in Moscow, Russia.

He was also the project director (flight test) at the National Flight Test Centre looking after the flight testing of the light combat aircraft (Tejas).

He served as the Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief at the Central Air Command before taking over as the Vice-Chief on February 1, 2023.


The Air Marshal is a recipient of the Param Vishisht Seva Medal and the Ati Vishisht Seva Medal.

Appointment Announcement:

Air Marshal Amar Preet Singh has been appointed as the next Chief of the Air Staff of the Indian Air Force (IAF). He will assume the role on **September 30, 2024**, following the retirement of Air Chief Marshal **V.R. Chaudhari**.



- **Current Role:**

- Air Marshal A.P. Singh is currently serving as the **Vice Chief of the Air Staff**. The Government of India confirmed his elevation to the top post in a statement issued by the Defence Ministry.
- 

Background and Experience:

Education: Singh is an alumnus of prestigious military institutions, including the **National Defence Academy (NDA)**, **Defence Services Staff College**, and **National Defence College**.

Commission and Flying Experience: He was commissioned into the fighter stream of the IAF in **December 1984** and is a qualified flying instructor. He has over **5,000 flying hours** on various fixed and rotary-wing aircraft.

Test Pilot Experience: Singh is also an **experimental test pilot**, having led significant projects, including the **MiG-29 upgrade** in Moscow and the flight testing of the **Tejas light combat aircraft**.

Career Highlights:

Commanded an operational fighter squadron and a frontline airbase.

Led the **MiG-29 upgrade project** in Moscow, Russia.

Served as the **Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief of the Central Air Command** before becoming the Vice Chief on **February 1, 2023**.

A hand holding a gold medal with a laurel wreath border. The medal is circular and has a decorative border. The background is a light, neutral color.

- **Awards:**

- Air Marshal A.P. Singh has been awarded the **Param Vishisht Seva Medal** and the **Ati Vishisht Seva Medal** for his distinguished service.

IN BRIEF

At UN summit, India calls for shift to sustainable living

Adopting sustainable lifestyles could tackle many challenges posed by climate change and global success is more likely with affordable solutions, India said at the United Nations "Summit of the Future" in New York. Addressing the summit on Friday, Leela Nandan, secretary in the Union Environment Ministry, said climate change discussions often focus solely on emission reductions, but "we are more likely to succeed if we offer affordable solutions, not simply impose decisions". The summit brings together leaders, policymakers and other stakeholders to discuss global challenges and strengthen multilateral cooperation to tackle emerging threats.

Find lasting peace in Manipur through talks, says Kiren Rijiju

Union Minister Kiren Rijiju requested the people of ethnic violence-hit Manipur on Saturday to shun arms and come to the negotiation table to find a lasting solution in the State. Addressing the North East Students' Festival organised by "My Home India", a non-governmental organisation, he said, "I urge brothers and sisters of Kukli and Meitei communities, the Government of India is ready to make every effort, but you will have to give up arms. There can be no solution if you pick up arms. Solution can be found only through talks. Come what may, you cannot fight. Talk to each other, come to the negotiation table, only then can we have peace."

Massive protests in NIT-Patna after student found dead

A second-year B.Tech. student at the National Institute of Technology (NIT), Patna, was found dead in the girls' hostel on Friday. Fellow students first informed the Principal about the incident and later staged a protest, raising slogans on the campus late into the night. Superintendent of Police Sharat K.S. said the incident took place on the night of September 20. The protesting students alleged that neither the police nor the college administration had given any information regarding the incident and that an attempt was made to cover it up. (Those in mental distress can dial 1800-599-0019 for support.)

'Backdoor' appointment of Nagaland constables quashed

The Kohima Bench of the Gauhati High Court has quashed the appointment of 335 Nagaland police constables recruited without advertisement from January 2018 to October 2019. Settling aside their recruitment, Justice Devanish Baruah issued an order on Friday asking the Nagaland government to initiate a fresh recruitment process and ensure transparency and adherence to legal protocols. A group of indigenous unemployed youth "possessing requisite qualifications and eligibility" filed several petitions in 2022 challenging the recruitment of these constables after learning through a Right to Information (RTI) application that 205 out of 1,140 constables were appointed through open recruitment.

SUDOKU

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

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

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

Settle land disputes, prevent Nawada-like violence: Nitish

After 34 houses of Dalits were torched, Bihar CM calls for quick completion of land survey; he says murders over property form a significant chunk of killings recorded by the SCRB in the State

Amil Bihelari
PATNA



Glimmer of hope: The State government has given a compensation of ₹1 lakh each to the Dalit families whose houses were gutted in Nawada district of Bihar. PTI

Days after 34 houses belonging to the Dalit community were set ablaze over a land dispute in Nawada district, Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar said here on Saturday that the number of killings over land had been coming down in the State from 60% of all murders recorded by the State Crime Records Bureau as of March to 46.69% at present.

"This is a good thing. The work of land survey and settlement should be completed speedily so that the incidents of crime related to land disputes can be eliminated. The administration and the police should keep a close watch on anti-social elements soon. Mr. Kumar said at a high-level review meeting of the Home Department at his official residence.

"The police have an important role in maintaining law and order, and recruitment to the vacant posts as soon as possible will help in maintaining law and order," he said.

Mr. Kumar said women had been given 35% reser-

vation in the State police since 2013, and the number of women personnel had reached nearly 30,000.

Enforcement of law and order was a top priority of the government, he said. "Do not show any negligence in tackling crime, be it night patrolling. To make night and foot patrolling more effective, senior officials should visit the areas and do surprise inspections. Everyone should work with full dedication to maintain law and order. Strict action will be taken against police per-

sonnel who show negligence in work. Speed up the crime investigation work and complete it on time so that the culprits can be taken against the culprits soon," he said.

Principal Secretary S. Siddharth, Arvind Kumar Chaudhary and other officials were present. Leader of the Opposition in the Bihar Assembly Tejashwi Yadav has been attacking Mr. Kumar over the law-and-order situation for the past one month. After the recent incident, Mr. Yadav said there is a "jungle raj" in Bihar.

ICGA Foundation launches country's first comprehensive cancer genomics repository

Jacob Koshy
NEW DELHI

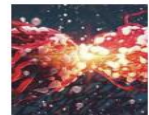
In a step towards improving the understanding of genetic variations of cancer in the Indian population, the Indian Cancer Genome Atlas (ICGA) Foundation has launched a repository of information on multiple aspects of cancer.

"The portal will be the first in India to offer data that includes DNA, RNA, and protein profiles of breast cancer patients, integrated with clinical outcomes," Suresha Dhuip Chief Operating Officer, ICGA Foundation, said.

"Historically, cancer treatments in India have

been based on Western data sets. However, cancers in Indian patients can differ significantly at the molecular level," Sheldar Mande, former Director-General of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) and associated with the initiative, said. "Creating a repository of this sort and openly sharing this data, will empower researchers, clinicians, and innovators to collaborate, explore new frontiers, and drive transformative breakthroughs in cancer treatment."

Currently, the platform consists of data from 50 breast cancer patients, with plans to expand to over 500 patients in the com-



ICGA expects researchers to use the data to give India-centric insights into cancer. ISTOCK

monwealth. The data was freely accessible to the global research community, which promotes "ethical sharing and collaboration" in cancer research. In the years ahead, the ICGA expects publications and analysis

by independent researchers who use this data, which has been a remarkable repository of the genetic information of cancer and of global importance. However, for a similar Indian initiative to succeed, you not only have to create a system of incentives for institutions to share their data but also have an ecosystem of diagnostic companies, hospitals, drug companies that are investing in asking specific research questions to use the available data," a senior genomics researcher familiar with the inception of the ICGA told *The Hindu*.

Breast cancer, in 2020, surpassed lung cancer as the leading cause of global cancer incidence.

'Typhoid, pneumonia, UTIs show resistance to certain antibiotics'

Hindu Shajan Perappadan
NEW DELHI

Drug-resistant and difficult-to-treat urinary tract infections (UTI), blood stream infections, pneumonia and typhoid are among the diseases showing resistance to commonly used antibiotics, says a report published recently by the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) Antimicrobial Resistance Surveillance Network (AMRSN).

The data collected by the network provide trends and patterns of antimicrobial resistance (AMR) in six key pathogenic groups in the country, along with insights on key mechanisms of resistance prevalent in different pathogenic groups using genomics and whole genome sequencing. This is the seventh detailed report from the ICMR-AMRSN and presents data from January 1 to December 31, 2023.

Gram-negative bacilli, which can cause infections in the body, remain the most isolated pathogens from the most clinically relevant samples, including blood, urine, and respiratory tract samples. In the Outpatient Department, *Escherichia coli*



The data provide patterns of antimicrobial resistance in six pathogenic groups in India.

bacillus was most isolated (30.74%), followed by *Klebsiella pneumoniae* (13.63%), *Staphylococcus aureus* (12.15%), *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* (12.06%), and *Enterococcus faecalis* (4.41%).

Among in-patients or in the ward, again *Escherichia coli* bacillus was the most isolated (22.79%), followed by *Klebsiella pneumoniae* (16.21%) and *A. baumannii* (11.87%). In the intensive care unit, *A. baumannii* bacillus was most isolated (23.74%), followed by *Klebsiella pneumoniae* (20.88%) and *E. coli* (13.1%).

Twenty-one regional centres from various parts of the country, in both the public and private sectors, participated in the surveillance.

Rahul speaks to parents of deceased E&Y professional

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Speaking with the parents of Anna Sebastian Perayil, a 26-year-old executive at Ernst & Young who died from alleged extreme work pressure, Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi on Saturday said he would fight for the cause of improving working conditions for the millions of professionals in India.

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) also took suo moto notice of media reports of the young professional's death and asked for a report from the Union Labour Ministry within four weeks.

Mr. Gandhi spoke with the parents of Anna on a video call arranged by All India Professionals' Congress chairperson Praveen Chakravarty, who visited their home in Kochi.

A statement issued by the AIPC said the Congress leader offered his sympathies to the parents at Anna's sudden death, and lauded the family's courage and selflessness to speak up at this extremely difficult moment about this issue in the larger interest of improving working conditions for the millions of professionals in India. "Assuring them that he will fight for this cause in his capacity as the Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Gandhi also instructed the AIPC chief to create an awareness movement in Anna's memory for all working professionals in India.

"Following Gandhi's instructions, AIPC will announce a helpline soon to collect information from corporate professionals about issues related to work stress and toxic work culture. Post which, AIPC will seek to come up with draft guidelines for better working conditions for professionals in the corporate sector," the AIPC statement said.

After 42 days of protest, doctors get back to work

The Hindu Bureau
KOLKATA

Junior doctors partially resumed work in government hospitals in West Bengal on Saturday morning after 42 days of protests following the rape and murder of a 31-year-old doctor at S.G. Kar Medical College and Hospital (SGKMCH) in Kolkata on August 9.

They have returned only to emergency duties and not inpatient or outpatient departments. A protesting postgraduate trainee doctor at Medical College, Kolkata, Dr. Gauti Seth, who completed 24 hours of Emergency duty on Saturday morning, said that going back to work was filled with mixed feelings and that she felt dissociated for the first few hours since she returned to work after 42 days.

Dr. Seth said that the doctors are now looking out for each other more than before.

No territory lost to China recently, says Ladakh lieutenant-governor

Dinakar Peri
LEH

Whatever loss of territory that occurred along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in Ladakh occurred during the 1962 war or around that period, and "no loss is happening now", the Lieutenant-Governor (LG) of Ladakh, Brigadier B.D. Mishra (Retd), said on Saturday.

He said the Agniveers are proving "very effective" and anybody who is making propaganda of the many disadvantages of this Agnipath project are "not in national interest" and bordering on "anti-national". "I find that military preparation is very good and as far as Union Territory administration is concerned, what comes to infrastructure, we are developing roads and all the proposals which come to me, from Border Roads Organisation (BRO), are sanctioned without delay," he told presspersons on the



Lieutenant-Governor of Ladakh Brigadier B.D. Mishra (Retd) speaking at a symposium on Saturday. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

sidelines of the Himech symposium that concluded on Saturday. Rejecting the "rumor-mongering" of "territory has gone, he said, "I have been over the places, whatever territory has been lost, we have around that period that territory is with the adversary. But no losses have taken place now because we are very much determined and China knows that we will defend to the last man

and last bullet". Since May 2020, India and China have been engaged in a standoff in eastern Ladakh after Chinese People's Liberation Army made ingress at seven locations, which resulted in a bloody clash at Galwan in May 2020. China has undertaken disengagement at five locations since after a series of talks at the corps Commander level but disengagement from the Agniveers and Dornchok has been stuck for the last two

years. With the upcoming BRICS summit next month, there has been buzz of a possible movement on this.

To a question on the demand by Ladakhis for separate statehood, he said there is no such situation which "no loss is happening now", the Lieutenant-Governor (LG) of Ladakh, Brigadier B.D. Mishra said, and when they go out they will be very competent people, who are developing work stress and toxic work culture. Post which, AIPC will seek to come up with draft guidelines for better working conditions for professionals in the corporate sector," the AIPC statement said.

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‘Typhoid, pneumonia, UTIs show resistance to certain antibiotics’

Bindu Shajan Perappadan

NEW DELHI

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Twenty-one regional centres from various parts of the country, in both the public and private sectors, participated in the surveillance.

Antibiotic Resistance:

Diseases such as **urinary tract infections (UTIs)**, **bloodstream infections**, **pneumonia**, and **typhoid** are showing increasing resistance to commonly used antibiotics.

The study presents data from the **ICMR's Antimicrobial Resistance Surveillance Network (AMRSN)** and highlights resistance trends in six key pathogenic groups from January 1 to December 31, 2023.

For in-patients, **Escherichia coli** was also the most commonly isolated pathogen (22.75%), followed by **Klebsiella pneumoniae** (16.21%) and **Acinetobacter baumannii** (11.87%).

In the intensive care unit (ICU), **Acinetobacter baumannii** was the most isolated pathogen (23.74%), followed by **Klebsiella pneumoniae** (20.88%) and **Escherichia coli** (13.11%).



- **Surveillance and Participation:**

- The data were collected from **21 regional centers** across the country, representing both public and private healthcare sectors.
- These findings emphasize the growing challenge of managing infections as pathogens continue to evolve and develop resistance to existing treatments.

Anti-Microbial Resistance

CAUSES OF ANTIBIOTIC RESISTANCE



Over-prescribing of antibiotics



Patients not taking antibiotics as prescribed



Unnecessary antibiotics used in agriculture



Poor infection control in hospitals and clinics



Poor hygiene and sanitation practices



Lack of rapid laboratory tests

Consequences of AMR

Greater number of AMR deaths (currently 5mn per year)



Routine treatment becomes riskier to perform

Economic loss



Steps taken

India

- **Chennai declaration (2012):** It promotes antibiotic stewardship
- **Red-line campaign**
- **National action plan on AMR (2017-21)**

Global

- **EU:** ban on preventive mass medication in animals using antibiotics or other drugs.
- **UN:** One Health Approach
- **WHO:** AWaRe Classification of antibiotics

TEHRAN

Iran unveils new drone, ballistic missile amid rising tensions



Iran unveiled a new ballistic missile and an upgraded one-way attack drone at a military parade on Saturday, amid soaring regional tensions and allegations of arming Russia. The solid fuel Jihad missile has an operational range of 1,000 km while the Shahed 136B drone has an operational range of 4,000 km. AP

KYIV

Arms depot in northwest Russia on fire after Ukrainian drone strike



A blaze tore through a Russian arms depot deep inside the country, triggering explosions and the closure of a major highway, after Ukraine overnight launched over 100 drones at Russia and occupied Crimea. The depot was just kilometres from another that was struck by Ukrainian drones on Wednesday, which caused a huge fire. AP

NAIROBI

Kenyan court rules that Meta can be sued over moderator sackings



A Kenyan court has ruled that U.S. social media giant Meta can be sued over poor working conditions and lay-offs, paving the way for a legal battle in the East African nation. The Nairobi Court of Appeal ruled on Friday concerns the sacking of content moderators for Facebook by Sama, a Meta contractor. AFP

PHNOM PENH

Cambodia is no longer part of border development deal



Cambodia has withdrawn from a regional economic development deal with Vietnam and Laos, Prime Minister Hun Manet said, in a surprise concession to critics concerned about the kingdom losing territory to its neighbours. The 25-year-old CVU-DA agreement has been the focus of criticism and overseas protests recently. AFP

At least 22 killed in Israeli attack on a Gaza school

Associated Press
DEIR AL-BALAH

An Israeli strike on a school in northern Gaza on Saturday killed at least 22 people, according to the Gaza Health Ministry, while the Israeli Army said it targeted a Hamas command center in what used to be a school.

Another 30 were wounded in the strike on the school in the Zeitoun area of Gaza City, the Ministry said in a statement. Most of the casualties were women and children, it said.

The Israeli Army said earlier on Saturday it struck Hamas' "command and control center, which was embedded inside a compound that previously served" as a school. It said steps were taken to limit harming civilians, including the use of precise munitions and aerial surveillance.

Since the outbreak of the Israel-Hamas war, the Israeli Army has struck a number of schools, packed with tens of thousands of Palestinians driven from their homes by Israeli offensives and evacuation orders. The conflict has left 90% of Palestinians in Gaza displaced, according to figures from the United Nations.

Earlier this month, an Israeli strike hit a school in the Nuseirat refugee camp, killing 14.

In July, Israeli airstrikes hit a girls' school in Deir al-Balah, killing at least 30 people sheltering inside. Israel's military said it targeted a Hamas command centre used to direct attacks against its troops and store weapons.

Also on Saturday, the Gaza Health Ministry said five of its workers were killed and five others injured by Israeli fire that struck the ministry's war-torn houses in Mushah area.

Two commanders killed in Israel's Beirut hit: Hezbollah

Three children were among the 37 people killed in Israel's air strike on Friday, the militant group said it targeted seven military positions in northern Israel and the occupied Golan with rockets

Agence France-Presse
BEIRUT

Lebanon's Hezbollah movement, which has been exchanging fire with Israel for months, on Saturday announced that two commanders of its elite operations unit had been killed by an Israeli strike on Beirut, which authorities said left 37 people dead.

Health Minister Firas Abiad said three children were also killed in Friday's strike on an underground meeting room. Israel said the strike killed the head of Hezbollah's elite Radwan Force.



Early sear: A child wears a headscarf during a funeral for the three Hezbollah members killed in Israeli strikes on Beirut, critics say.

Abraham Aqil, and several other commanders. The military said on Saturday it was again hitting targets "belonging to the

seven military positions in northern Israel and the annexed Golan Heights with rockets.

Mr. Abiad, Lebanon's Health Minister, said emergency services worked "through the night" to recover victims from the Beirut strike, adding that "a residential building collapsed on top of occupants".

Hezbollah said a second senior commander, Ahmed Mahmud Wahabi, was also killed on Friday. It said he headed the group's operations against Israel from the onset of the Gaza war in October until the start of this year.

U.S. lawmakers announce bipartisan Quad caucus

Sriram Lakshman
WILMINGTON, DELAWARE

A bipartisan group of U.S. Senators and members of the U.S. House of Representatives on Friday announced the formation of a caucus to promote the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad), a group comprising India, the U.S., Australia and Japan, on the eve of a summit-level meeting of the group's leaders in Wilmington in the U.S. State of Delaware.

The caucus was launched on Friday by Democrat Representative Amri Bera, ranking member of the House Foreign Affairs Indo-Pacific Subcommittee, Representative Bob Wittman (Republican) and Tammy Duckworth (Democrat) and Pete

It was essential for the U.S. to strengthen its relationship with Quad countries, said Rep. Amri Bera

Ricketts (Republican), who are both members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

It was essential for the U.S. to strengthen its relationship with Quad countries, Mr. Bera said, given the growing importance of the Indo-Pacific region.

"Malign aggression" Mr. Bera said, referring to China, Mr. Ricketts said groups like Quad were the "greatest strength against coercion and malign aggression" in the world. The White House had

said China would be an important part of the agenda when U.S. President Joe Biden hosts Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida and Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese for talks on Saturday.

"Here for long haul" "Together, we're sending a strong message to our allies and partners — and our competitors — that the United States is here for the long haul," Ms. Duckworth said in a statement to mark the launch of the congressional caucus.

The Quad has been supported across administrations. It was revived at the Foreign Minister level during the Donald Trump presidency.

New Zealand pilot is freed by Indonesia rebels after 19 months

Agence France-Presse
TIMIKA

New Zealand pilot Phillip Mehrtens has been released from captivity by rebels in Indonesia's restive Papua region and is in good health despite the 19-month ordeal, Indonesian and New Zealand authorities said on Saturday.

Mr. Mehrtens, 38, was working for Indonesian airline Susi Air when he was snatched by rebels from the West Papua National Liberation Army (TPNPB) insurgent group at Papua's Nduga airport on February 7 last year.

"Today I have been freed. I am very happy that shortly I will be able to go home and meet my family," Mr. Mehrtens told reporters earlier in Timika, speaking in Indonesian.

White blanket



Snow covering the town of Warden in South Africa's Free State province on Saturday. Unusually heavy snowfall caused major disruption on South Africa's roads with people still stranded at midday after spending the night stuck in their vehicles. AFP

Imran Khan's party holds massive rally in Lahore



Pakistan's jailed former Prime Minister Imran Khan's party on Saturday managed to hold a massive power show here as the police switched off the lights and milt system following the expiry of the 6 p.m. deadline. The much-hyped rally by the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) was held on the outskirts of the city in a cattle market.

This was the first rally by the PTI that was allowed to be held after the May 9, 2023 incidents in which the party supporters attacked military installations in the wake of Mr. Khan's arrest.

Earlier in a post on X, Mr. Khan had urged the nation to come out for the Lahore jalsa (rally).

No go-ahead so far from U.K., U.S. to use long-range missiles, says Zelenskyy

Agence France-Presse
KYIV

The U.S. and Britain have not authorised Ukraine to use long-range missiles on targets inside Russia possibly fearing an "escalation", President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said.

Russian President Vladimir Putin has warned that using long-range weapons into Russia would signify that NATO countries were at war with Moscow.

"Neither America nor the United Kingdom gave us permission to use these weapons on the territory of Russia, on any targets, at any distance," Mr. Zelenskyy told reporters late on Friday.

"I think they are worried about an escalation (of

hostilities)," he said. The weapons are supplied by Ukraine's Western allies.

Increased aid Mr. Zelenskyy also said Ukraine's allies had increased their military support to the Ukrainian army, which is struggling to stop the advance of Russian forces in the east of their country.

"(Aid) accelerated in September. We are glad. We can feel the difference," he said.

Delays in the supply of weapons due to political divisions between allies left Ukraine short of supplies early this year, he said.

His Army has fewer men and weapons than the Russian forces it has been fighting since Moscow launched a full-fledged invasion of Ukraine in February 2022.



Delays in the supply of weapons due to political divisions between allies left Ukraine short of supplies early this year, he said.

Mr. Zelenskyy dismissed a peace plan put forward in spring by China and Brazil as too nebulous. "I don't think it was a concrete plan. I don't see any specific action or stages in it, just generalised procedures," he said on

Friday evening. "Generalisations always hide something," he told reporters.

China and Brazil had promoted the idea of an international peace conference acceptable to both Russia and Ukraine, in which both sides would participate equally and all options would be on the table.

Russia-China ties Beijing and Moscow have close ties which have strengthened since the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

The U.S. alleges that while China does not supply weapons to Russia directly, it helps Moscow increase domestic production of missiles, missiles, and

itary drone and tanks. Mr. Zelenskyy hopes to propose his so-called "victory plan" to end the war when he meets President Joe Biden in the U.S. next week.

The plan is designed for decisions that will have to happen from October to December... We would like that very much. Then we believe that the plan will work," he had said earlier.

The Ukrainian leader also said he would meet Donald Trump probably on September 26 or 27.

Trump's stance Mr. Trump, who was U.S. President between 2017 and 2021, has been very critical of the billions of dollars Washington has provided to Kyiv in aid and

has claimed he can help end the war within 24 hours without ever explaining how.

Iran on Saturday meanwhile unveiled a new ballistic missile and an upgraded one-way attack drone, amid soaring regional tensions and allegations of arming Russia.

Iran stands accused by Western governments of supplying both drones and missiles to Russia for use in its war with Ukraine, a charge it has repeatedly denied.

Britain, France, Germany and the United States slapped new sanctions on Iran earlier this month, and that it had been producing ballistic missiles for Russia's war effort in Ukraine.

Russia, China begin naval exercises in Sea of Japan

Reuters
MOSCOW

Russia and China started naval exercises in the sea of Japan on Saturday, Russian news agencies cited the Russian Pacific Fleet as saying.

"A joint detachment of warships of the Pacific Fleet and Chinese Navy set out from Vladivostok to conduct the joint Russian-Chinese 'Beibu/Interactio

on 2024" naval exercises," the RIA news agency quoted the Pacific Fleet.

The exercises will include anti-aircraft and anti-submarine weapons.

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Reuters

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HANDLE WITH CARE
Gill's lucky willow and the bat-pant celebrations with Pant



Gill revealed that he asked Pant not to do the bat-pant celebrations too harshly during their partnership. "I was hitting his not out because I was playing with a bat I had played against England, which was quite old. He was hitting my bat hard, and I told him I was trying to save it. If he didn't mind it, he would say, 'let's do it again'."

BIG GLOVES, BIG BATS
Pant draws level with Dhoni for most tons by an Indian 'keeper'



Rishabh Pant, who slammed his sixth Test century, drew level with former skipper M.S. Dhoni for most tons by an Indian wicket-keeper. The 25-year-old achieved this feat on the third day of the first Test against Bangladesh in Chennai on his comeback to Test cricket after nearly two years following a life-threatening accident in Dec. 2022.

DOUBLE DELIGHT
Ashwin goes past Kumble in fourth innings scalps, equals Walsh's tally



R. Ashwin overtook Anil Kumble for most wickets in the fourth innings of a Test for India. The off-spinner, who has scalped, went past the leg-spinner who had 94. His tally of 514 wickets helped Ashwin draw level with Courtney Walsh as the eighth highest wicket-taker in the longest format.

CRUCIAL
Ashley's knock sets up Australia's win over England



Australia was indebted to Alex Carey as it beat England by 68 runs in the second ODI at Headingley on Saturday to top 2 for the first time in a five-match series. The scores: Australia 270 in 84.4 overs (Marsh 60, Carey 74, Carr 3/75) bt England 202 in 40.2 overs (Jamie Smith 49, Starc 3/56). Tests: England; Pant; Carey.

Bangladesh has a mountain to climb after the Gill-Pant show

While the India No. 3 scores an unbeaten hundred, the wicketkeeper-batter makes an incredible return to the Test fold with his sixth century; chasing a mammoth target of 515, Najmul's team reaches 158 for four; Ashwin takes three wickets

BANGLADESHI IN INDIA

K.C. Vijaya Kumar
CHENNAI

India maintained its incremental progress in the first Test with Shubman Gill and Rishabh Pant setting the base for an inevitable triumph. As close on the third day here at the M.A. Chidambaram Stadium, chasing a gargantuan 515, Bangladesh scored 158 for four in the second innings. The visitor commenced the second essay on a brisk note through openers Zakir Hasan and Shadman Islam. The former kept finding the ropes and Bangladesh remained unscathed at tea. However, after the caffeine break, the cookie began to crumble as Jasprit Bumrah drew an edge from Zakir and Yashavi Jaiswal dove low to pluck a fine catch.



Calling the shots: Gill and Pant's alliance deflated the Bangladesh bowlers. R. RAGU

Later, R. Ashwin scalped Shadman, who found an agile Gill at short mid-wicket. Skipper Najmul Shanto danced down the wicket twice and smote Ashwin. The wily spinner, thought, kept India in the hunt, knocking back Mominul Haque's stumps and accounting for Miraz Khan. And then the skies darkened, a Saturday sunset and most probably a triumphant Sunday awaits India. Earlier in the morning under overcast conditions following overnight rain, India resumed its second innings at 81 for three. A weekend crowd trooped in mostly attired in Virat or Rohit jerseys, while some wore shirts featuring the city's eternal favourite Dhoni.

Bangladesh opened with spin as Mehdi Hasan Miraz wheeled his arm over. Pant pulled a four, Gill hoisted two sixes and the first session's cruise-mode was truly on. In one instance, Pant lost his grip but still went through with a one-handed six. The two batters ensured that India kept soaring. Their respective fifties

SCOREBOARD

INDIA — 1st innings
376 in 93.2 overs
BANGLADESH — 1st innings
149 in 47.1 overs
Yashavi Jaiswal c Litton b Nahid 10 (2/76, 2w), Rohit Sharma c Zakir b Taslim 35 (6/60, 3w), Najmul Hassan Shanto (batting) 51 (6/60, 4w, 3w), Mominul Haque b Ashwin 13 (2/6, 3w), Mushfiqur Rahim c Rahul b Ashwin 13 (1/26, 2w), Shikib Al Hasan (batting) 5 (2/46); Extras (b-4, w-1); Total (for four wks, dead, in 64 overs): 287.
FALL OF WICKETS
1-15 (Rohit), 2-28 (Litton), 3-67 (Kohli), 19-21, 4-234 (Pant, 55.3).
BANGLADESH BOWLING
Taslim 7-1-22-1, Mahmud 11-1-43-0, Nahid 6-0-21-1, Shakib 6-0-29-0.

India was well placed at 205 for three. After the break, Pant rushed towards his sixth Test ton and soon the helmet was removed while he kept gazing at the skies. To survive a life-threatening accident and play cricket again was never easy but Pant did that with a perseverance that is the stuff of legend. Shortly after his emotionally charged sixth Test hundred, Pant (109) struck one back to Miraz and retreated. By then he and Gill had added 167 runs for the fourth wicket and the stage was set for the latter to reach his fifth Test ton. With K.L. Rahul being an able foil, Gill (119 n.o.) pocketed the runs with elan and Rohit Sharma declared at 287 for four leaving Bangladesh staring at a steep target.

Headling into lunch, India was also guilty of dropping Pant on 72, when the latter miscued a lofted shot off Shikib Al Hasan. Headling into lunch, India was also guilty of dropping Pant on 72, when the latter miscued a lofted shot off Shikib Al Hasan. Headling into lunch, India was also guilty of dropping Pant on 72, when the latter miscued a lofted shot off Shikib Al Hasan.

Pant and Gill's Test centuries



The series against England gave me confidence: Gill

S. Dipak Ragu
CHENNAI

Shubman Gill put behind him the disappointment of a first innings duck by slamming his fifth Test century in India's second essay against Bangladesh on Saturday. "Having got out the way I got out in the first innings (caught behind while flicking off his pads), I was very disappointed. It further motivated me to be able to spend a lot of time at the crease and put extra value on my wicket," said Gill after recording his third century of the year. About his knock and the preparations leading into the series, Gill remarked, "I had certain plans, and I think I executed them. It's about having a good defence but also not missing out on the opportunities you get as a batter to score runs." A striking feature of his knock was how he used his feet to charge at the spinners, to drive them down the ground, or go aerial. "It's something that I started practising when I was very young because I



Gill, R. RAGU

was always a tall guy, so it was easier for me to use my feet and play for the length," Gill explained. "Playing in the air and hitting sixes came a bit later when I got more power in my body. But initially, when I used to practice, especially against spinners, it used to be a lot more stepping down trying to rotate strike because it's then hard for bowlers to settle on a pitch like this, where the odd one is turning but not all the balls are turning," he added. On the gameplan he and his fellow centurion Rishabh Pant had at the start of day three, Gill said they decided to dominate after being watchful for the first few overs. "We spoke about trying to spend a little bit more time today because there might be some extra moisture in the wicket after the (overnight) rain. But once we played three to four overs, we tried to dominate because it was not about runs for us at that point. We wanted to give a certain amount of time for our bowlers to bowl," said Gill. The 25-year-old has had a good run in the longest format in 2024, scoring 617 runs in seven matches (13 innings). He cited the England series earlier this year, where he scored 452 runs, as pivotal in cementing his place. "I think the series I had against England gave me confidence. And I felt it was a long time coming for me, especially batting at that position (number three)," said Gill before signing off saying "my best is yet to come".

India in with a chance for historic twin golds

CHESS OLYMPIAD

Sports Bureau

India will go into Sunday's final round of the Chess Olympiad in Budapest with chances of striking gold in both the open and women's sections. The second-seeded Indian men shocked the top seed United States 2.5-1.5, to retain their two-point lead. They have to post, out of a maximum of 20. India's win Dominio Carruana on the top board. The 18-year-old has been in top form in the tournament, continuing from



Gukesh, FIDE

where he left off at the last Olympiad, which India hosted in 2022. It was Arjun Erigaisi who ensured India's victory against the Americans. He beat Leinier Domínguez on the third board. R. Pragnanandhaas had

lost on the second board to Wesley So. On the fourth board, Vidit Gujrati held Levon Aronian to a draw. The Indian women bounced back to the joint lead after beating China 2.5-1.5. Not for the first time, it was Divya Deshmukh who turned out to be the heroine for the top seed. She scored India's lone victory, as she prevailed over NI Shiqiang on the third board. All the other games were drawn. D. Harika vs Zhu Jiner; R. Vaishali vs Guo Qi; Vantika Agrawal vs Lu Miaoyi. India was joined at the top of the table by Kazakhstan, which drew with Georgia 2-2.

Team World and Europe tied 2-2

LIVER CUP

Associated Press
BERLIN

American pair Taylor Fritz and Ben Shelton edged Carlos Alcaraz and Alexander Zverev in doubles to tie the Laver Cup after the first day's play on Friday. Alcaraz and Zverev, who faced each other in the French Open final three months ago, had a point for 5-4 in the second set but lost it and the game, and Fritz and Shelton served out to win 7-6(5), 6-4. That left Team Europe and Team World at 2-2 with two more days to go in a format reminiscent of golf's Ryder Cup.

Liverpool and Chelsea sizzle; Bayern hammers Werder Bremen

EURO LEAGUES

Reuters
LIVERPOOL

A quick-fire double from Luis Diaz set Liverpool on course for a comprehensive 3-0 Premier League home win against Bournemouth on Saturday. Nicolas Jackson scored twice to help Chelsea to a second straight away win with a 2-0 victory at West Ham United. Dominic Solanke scored his first goal for Tottenham Hotspur as Ange Postecoglou's team recovered from conceding inside the opening minute to beat Brentford 3-1. Fulham's Raul Jimenez,



On fire: Diaz's brace helped Liverpool ease past Bournemouth. GETTY IMAGES

Emile Smith Rowe and Mateo Musacchio scored 3-1 victory over Newcastle United at Craven Cottage. Free-scoring Dominic Solanke scored his first goal for Tottenham Hotspur as Ange Postecoglou's team recovered from conceding inside the opening minute to beat Brentford 3-1. Fulham's Raul Jimenez,

with Everton 1 (Ndoye 12); Liverpool 3 (Diaz 26, 28, Nunez 37) bt Bournemouth 0; Southampton 1 (Dibling 5) drew with Ipswich 1 (Merry 10); Tottenham 3 (Solanke 8, Johnson 28, Maddison 85) bt Brentford (Mburnio 11; West Ham 0 lost to Chelsea 3 (Jackson 6, 10, Paine 47); Crystal Palace 0 drew with Manchester United 0. Serie A: Juventus 0 drew with Napoli 0. Bundesliga: Heidenheim 0 lost to Freiburg 3 (Dion 54, Grifo 58, 65); Werder Bremen 0 lost to Bayern Munich 5 (Dion 22, 40, Musiala 32, Kane 57, Gnabry 65); Union Berlin 2 (Rothe 6, Jeong 6) bt Hoffenheim 1 (Buetter 67, 70, 78); Bochum 2 (Berz 22, Dschner 35) drew with Holstein Kiel 2 (Pfeifer 15, Machino 89). On Friday: La Liga: Alaves 2 drew with Real Betis 2; Sevilla 1 (Lukakekio 83).

DOUBLE DELIGHT

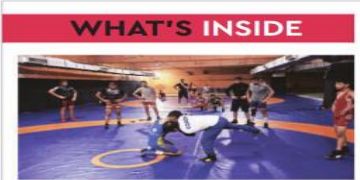
Ashwin goes past Kumble in fourth innings scalps, equals Walsh's tally



R. RAGU

▲ R. Ashwin overtook Anil Kumble for most wickets in the fourth innings of a Test for India. The off-spinner, with 96 scalps, went past the leg-spinner who had 94. His tally of 519 wickets helped Ashwin draw level with Courtney Walsh as the eighth highest wicket-taker in the longest format.

Player	Span	Mat	Inns	Balls	Overs	Mdns	Runs	Wkts	BBI	Ave	Econ	SR	4	5
M Muralidaran (ICC/SL)	1992-2010	133	230	44039	7339.5	1794	18180	800	9/51	22.72	2.47	55.04	45	67
SK Warne (AUS)	1992-2007	145	273	40705	6784.1	1761	17995	708	8/71	25.41	2.65	57.49	48	37
JM Anderson (ENG)	2003-2024	188	350	40037	6672.5	1730	18627	704	7/42	26.45	2.79	56.87	32	32
A Kumble (IND)	1990-2008	132	236	40850	6808.2	1576	18355	619	10/74	29.65	2.69	65.99	31	35
SCJ Broad (ENG)	2007-2023	167	309	33698	5616.2	1304	16719	604	8/15	27.68	2.97	55.79	28	20
GD McGrath (AUS)	1993-2007	124	243	29248	4874.4	1470	12186	563	8/24	21.64	2.49	51.95	28	29
NM Lyon (AUS)	2011-2024	129	242	32761	5460.1	1044	16052	530	8/50	30.28	2.93	61.81	24	24
R Ashwin (IND)	2011-2024	101	191	26370	4395.0	893	12372	522	7/59	23.70	2.81	50.51	25	37
CA Walsh (WI)	1984-2001	132	242	30019	5003.1	1144	12688	519	7/37	24.44	2.53	57.84	32	22
DW Steyn (SA)	2004-2019	93	171	18608	3101.2	660	10077	439	7/51	22.95	3.24	42.38	27	26

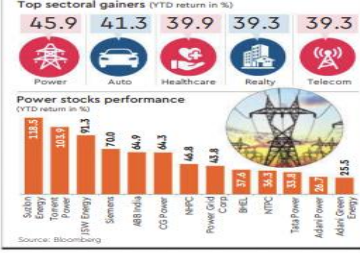


WHAT'S INSIDE

SPOTLIGHT, P8-9
Coliseum of champions
With a legacy of producing Olympic medalists and a rigorous training regimen that blends tradition with modernity, Chhatrasal Stadium in Delhi is a sought-after name in the wrestling world. Here's how the sporting facility is acing the akhara game

LEISURE, P5
When streetwear meets storytelling
How brands are redefining casual fashion by focusing on self-expression, limited-edition releases and community building, and combining them with immersive tech experiences

Power sector stocks emerge top performers
WITH A 46.9% year-to-date return in 2024, the BSE Power Index emerged as the top performer among 20 sectoral indices. In comparison, the benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty gained up to 19%, while the broader BSE Midcap and Smallcap indices delivered returns of up to 34% during the same period. All 13 constituents of the BSE Power Index posted positive returns, ranging from 25.5% to 118.5%.
Compiled by Kishor Kadam



Paralympians rue lack of corporate support

Say our medals not valued as much as the Olympics
REWATI KARAN
New Delhi, September 21

HIGHER ON THE PODIUM
India's medal tally at the Paralympics
● Rio 2016: 4
● Tokyo 2020: 19
● Paris 2024: 29*

Existing brand deals
NISHAD KUMAR High jump Adidas, Bisleri
SUMITANTIL Javelin throw Adidas, Country Delight
AVANI LEKHARA Shooting Puma, brand ambassador of 'Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao' campaign by Rajasthan govt
YOGESH KATHUNIYA Discus throw Performax

India secured a spot in the 2024 medal tally.

ing, as sponsors are far and few, and not every athlete is the recipient of such support. Two-time silver medalist in discus throw Yogesh Kathuniya was categorical in stating: "The government has supported us and has been inclusive. Corporates are not that inclusive as yet because our medal does not hold as much value to them as that of the Olympics. This is the truth." Even after the 2024 Paris Paralympics which yielded seven gold as compared to none in the Olympics, reportedly there have been no fresh brand deals for any of the paralympians.

Continued on Page 2

Modi arrives in US on 3-day visit

Quad is key for stability, peace in Indo-Pacific: PM

AGENCIES
New Delhi/Washington, September 21

THE QUAD HAS emerged as a key platform of like-minded countries focusing on peace and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific region, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Saturday before embarking on a three-day visit to the US to attend a summit of the grouping and address a symposium at the United Nations.

Modi arrived in the US on Saturday evening Indian time, and will hold separate bilateral meetings with US President Joe Biden and other leaders on the margins of the Quad summit in Wilmington, Delaware, and the 'Summit for the Future' at the UN General Assembly in New York.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi greeted by the Indian diaspora upon his arrival in Philadelphia, US, on Saturday

THE ITINERARY

- Sept 21 (Delaware)
 - Participation in fourth Quad Leaders' Summit
 - Bilateral meetings with leaders from US, Japan and Australia, signing of two pacts with US—IPEF & MOU on India-US drug framework
- Sept 22 (New York)
 - Interaction with CEOs of leading US-based companies
 - Address Indian community
- Sept 23 (New York)
 - Participation, address at Summit of the Future, UNGA

Byju's 'borrows' funds to pay salaries in part

FE BUREAU
Bengaluru, September 21

BYJU RAVEENDRAN, CO-FOUNDER of troubled edtech firm Byju's, assured staff in a letter on Saturday that he had "managed to borrow some funds" and they would receive a small payment as part of their pending salaries by this weekend.

In an email sent to teachers, reviewed by FE, Raveendran acknowledged the long-standing delays in salary payments and issued an apology for the financial strain placed on the staff. While part payments were reportedly made for April and May, the company is yet to disburse full payments for previous months, including February and March.

"I owe you an apology. You have given your best, yet we have not been able to compensate you for your work. This is not right, and for that, I am truly sorry," he wrote in the email.

Raveendran described the past three months as "a perfect storm of legal battles, financial uncertainties, and challenges none of us ever expected".

He noted that Byju's is currently navigating an insolvency process, and that the company has challenged in court.

Atishi taking blessings from Aam Aadmi Party national convener Arvind Kejriwal after taking oath as the 8th chief minister of Delhi on Saturday, as LG VK Saxena looks on

Continued on Page 2

OYO to buy US hotel brand in \$525-mn all-cash deal

FE BUREAU
Bengaluru, September 21

TRAVEL TECH UNICORN OYO is set to acquire G6 Hospitality, the parent company of iconic budget hotel brands Motel 6 and Studio 6, from Blackstone Real Estate for \$525 million in an all-cash deal.

The acquisition is expected to bolster OYO's international expansion plans. The IPO-bound company entered the US market in 2019 and currently operates over 320 hotels across 35 states. It aims to add 250 hotels to its US portfolio in 2024.

Blackstone acquired Motel 6, which was founded in 1962, from French lodging giant Accor SA in 2012 in a \$1.9-billion deal. Today, Motel 6's franchise network produces gross room revenues of \$1.7 billion, which generates a strong free base and cash flow for G6. OYO will leverage its comprehensive technology suite as well as its global distribution network and marketing expertise to further strengthen the Motel 6 and Studio 6 brands and drive continued financial growth, the company said in a statement. The transaction is expected to close in the fourth quarter of 2024, subject to customary regulatory approvals.

"This acquisition is a significant milestone for a startup company like us to strengthen our international presence. Motel 6's strong brand recognition, financial profile, and extensive US network, combined with OYO's entrepreneurial spirit, will be instrumental in charting a sustainable path forward," Gautam Swaroop, CEO, OYO International, said.

Last month, OYO announced it turned profitable in FY24, posting a net profit of ₹229.5 crore in FY24 as against a net loss of ₹1,286.5 crore in FY23. The travel tech company offers over 40 integrated products and solutions to patrons who operate over 1.75,000 hotel and home stores in more than 35 countries, including India, Europe and Southeast Asia.

Continued on Page 2

Punch zooming ahead to emerge as highest-selling car this year

First for Tata as well as non-Maruti Suzuki vehicle
VIKRAM CHAUDHARY
New Delhi, September 21

THE PUNCH is expected to emerge as the highest-selling Indian car in 2024—a first time for Tata, as well as for non-Maruti Suzuki vehicle.

During January-August, the Punch—a micro-SUV priced from ₹6.12 lakh-₹9.99 lakh—has sold 142,072 units, at a monthly average of 17,759 units, and leads the second-placed Maruti Suzuki Wagon R by a substantial margin of 9,763 units (the Wagon R sold 1,32,309 units during the period). In the remaining four months of this calendar year, the Wagon R—selling at a monthly average of 16,519 units—is unlikely to catch up with the Punch, despite marginally falling sales of the latter.

The Punch sold 17,978 units in January, 17,547 (February), 17,547 (March), 19,158 (April), 18,949 (May), 18,238 (June), and 16,121 (July). In August, however, sales dropped 396 month-on-month, to 15,643 units, but these are likely to pick up after Tata launched the updated Punch on Tuesday—when the carmaker revised the petrol engine line-up, increased the number of CNG variants, and added new features to mid-range and top-end models. Tata also reduced the price of the top variant by ₹20,000, from ₹10.19 lakh to ₹9.99 lakh, and announced additional benefits up to ₹18,000 for a limited period on the Punch.

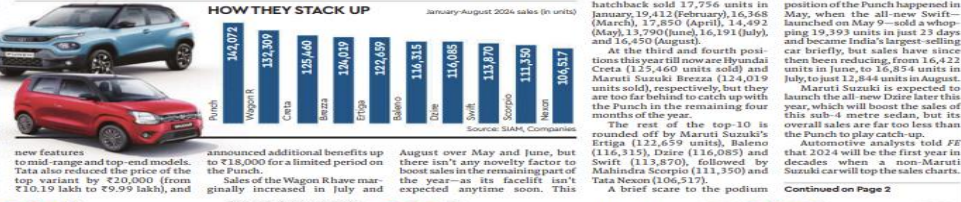
Sales of the Wagon R have marginally increased in July and August over May and June, but there isn't any novelty factor to boost sales in the remaining part of the year—as its facelift isn't expected anytime soon. This hatchback sold 17,756 units in January, 19,412 (February), 16,368 (March), 17,850 (April), 14,492 (May), 13,790 (June), 16,191 (July), and 16,450 (August).

The rest of the top-10 positions this year till now are Hyundai Creta (125,460 units sold) and Maruti Suzuki Brezza (122,019 units sold), respectively, but they are too far behind to catch up with the Punch in the remaining four months of the year.

The rest of the top-10 is rounded off by Maruti Suzuki's Eriga (112,619 units), Baleno (116,315), Datsun (116,085) and Swift (113,870), followed by Mahindra Scorpio (111,350) and Tata Nexon (106,517).

A brief race to the podium

Continued on Page 2





MAHARASHTRA POLLS
Satya Pal Malik to campaign for MVA
NEWS » PAGE 5



HEZBOLLAH HITS BACK
Group declares a 'battle of reckoning' with Israel
WORLD » PAGE 13



SUP VS RSS
Kerjirwal poses five questions to Bhagwat
NEWS » PAGE 5



DATA POINT
Indian women work the most hours globally
They put in over 55 hours a week
OPINION » PAGE 9



CAPTAIN'S MAN
Ashwin spins India to a massive win
SPORT » PAGE 16

INSIDE



'NSA stayed back for J&K election'
National Security Adviser (NSA) Ajit Doval did not join Prime Minister Narendra Modi's U.S. trip in view of the ongoing J&K election and other 'domestic issues', officials said. » PAGE 4



'UP tops in cases of cruelty on SCs'
Nearly 57% of all cases of atrocities against Scheduled Castes in 2022 were reported from 13 states, with Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan recording the highest number of such crimes, according to a government report. » PAGE 6

Left leader Dissanayake is Sri Lanka President

AKD, as he is popularly known, has pledged to end corruption and change the political culture of the country; poll results were declared by Election Commission after counting preferential votes; it marks the first time the island nation's presidency will be held by a party with no links to Sri Lanka Freedom Party or United National Party

Meera Srinivasan
COLOMBO

Left leader Anura Kumara Dissanayake won Sunday's presidential election, securing 42.31% of the votes. Mr. Premadasa was in the second spot with 32.76%, while incumbent Ranil Wickremesinghe came third with under 20% of the vote share.

The three candidates dominated the election, which was the first to be held after the economic crisis of 2022, the worst seen in the country since its independence. Thirty-five other contestants were in the race, including Nimal Rajapaksa, son of Mahinda Rajapaksa, and Taniya Ariyaratne.

An Opposition legislator from capital Colombo, Mr. Dissanayake ran for the Na-



New slide: Anura Kumara Dissanayake arrives at the Election Commission office in Colombo on Sunday.

tional People's Power (NPP) alliance, a coalition helmed by the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP or People's Liberation Front), a party with Marxist-Leninist roots. "AKD", as he is popularly known, has pledged to end corruption and change the political culture of the country

through an effective campaign targeting scores of Sri Lankans who sought change after the country's economic crash in 2022. Sunday's poll outcome is a big win for Mr. Dissanayake, with his vote share growing well over tenfold from the 3.16% he secured in 2019, when he chal-

lenged Gotabaya Rajapaksa and Mr. Premadasa. It marks the first time Sri Lanka's presidency will be held by a party with no links to the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) or the United National Party (UNP) or their offshoots that have dominated the country's politics for over seven decades.

'A positive outcome'
University of Jaffna academic Mahendran Thirumangan described the poll outcome as a "positive" one. "The NPP is a political formation that represents some of the core demands of the *Aragayala* [people's struggle of 2022]. Their victory is reason for optimism," he told *The Hindu*. Although Mr. Dissanayake's camp began working on a grassroots

campaign soon after its poor show in the 2019 presidential poll as well as the 2020 general elections, it came under greater focus after the mass uprising two years ago, that saw citizens emphatically demand "system change". The outcome of this presidential poll reflects the disenchantment of the people with the existing political culture, according to Pradeep Peiris, political scientist from the University of Colombo. "What you see is not necessarily support for his specific proposals or policies, but simply an emphatic anti-establishment vote," he said.

In his view, the verdict exposes both the positive and negative aspects of Sri Lankan democracy and its limits. "We have seen this before, people rallying behind an indi-

vidual or a formation hoping they can somehow change the system, but it is never easy," he observed, pointing to "humongous challenges" facing the President-elect.

"We stand ready to rewrite Sri Lankan history," Mr. Dissanayake said in a message on X on Sunday evening. "This dream can only be realized with a fresh start. The unity of Sinhalese, Tamils, Muslims, and all Sri Lankans is the bedrock of this new beginning. The New Renaissance we seek, will rise from this shared strength and vision," said Mr. Dissanayake, who is due to be sworn in on Monday.

SRI LANKA'S VERDICT
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VOTING PATTERN OF TAMILS
» PAGE 13

GST Council is looking at tax rates item by item for rationalisation: FM

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has said that the Goods and Services Tax (GST) Council is looking at the tax rates, item by item, for rationalisation, and the process has been under discussion for a long time and delayed by several factors, including the impact of COVID-19.

In an interaction with senior journalists of The Hindu Group of publications at its head office in Chennai on Saturday, Ms. Sitharaman, while responding to a question on rationalisation of GST, said, "It has been delayed for a long time and it's much overdue due to various factors including the impact of COVID-19, and elections in some States. Now these



Nirmala Sitharaman

years after implementation of the GST continued ended in cess. The rate at the cess being 4% of the value of the goods. The tied up GST Council is continuing to work on it. The committee on rate rationalisation is looking into it item by item."

On a question related to GST compensation and compensation, she said, "Everyone knows that the GST compensation cannot be given for 30, 2022, and that is by law. So paying off the compensation in the first five

years after implementation of the GST continued ended in cess. The rate at the cess being 4% of the value of the goods. The tied up GST Council is continuing to work on it. The committee on rate rationalisation is looking into it item by item."

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India sweeps Chess Olympiad, makes history by winning gold

P.K. Ajith Kumar

Arjun Erajum, 19-year-old, won the individual gold medal in the Open section, while Divya Dethmukh, 19-year-old, won the individual gold medal in the Women's section. India's win in the Open section was facilitated by outstanding performances on the first and third boards by Gukesh and Arjun, both of whom went on to win individual gold medals. After defeating Vladi-



Arjun Erajum, 19-year-old, won the individual gold medal in the Open section.

mir Fedoseev in the final round, Gukesh finished with nine points in 10 games. Arjun's performances were equally emphatic. Playing on the third board, despite leading the Indian contingent with the highest Elo rating, Arjun scored 10 points in 11 games. Arjun and Gukesh are now ranked third and fifth in the world in live ratings.

In the women's section, 19-year-old Divya won the individual gold for the strongest performance on the third board. She finished with 9.5 points in 11 games. Vanika, playing on the fourth board also won individual gold, finishing with 7.5 points in 9 games.

RELATED REPORTS
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Confusion over alert on 'entry of trained Kuki militants into Manipur'

Vijaya Singh
NEW DELHI

The Army, in a post on X on Sunday, requested Manipur security adviser Kuldeep Singh to provide details of the intelligence inputs that 900 trained Kuki militants from Myanmar had entered Manipur, but it later deleted the post.

The post by the Spear Corps of the Army said, "These inputs have very serious security implications and the office of Security Adviser has been requested to share the details so that appropriate necessary action can be taken at the earliest."

A defence source said the inputs were to be shared with the Army.

Mr. Singh, at a press conference in Imphal on September 20, had said the government was aware of the intelligence inputs regarding the entry of "900 Kuki militants" and "unless it is proven wrong, it is 100% correct."

The inputs were first shared by Chief Minister N. Biren Singh's office with the Director-General of Police and the security adviser last week, a copy of the leaked letter showed.

The September 16 letter said, "Reports have been received that over 900 Kuki militants, newly trained in use of drone-based bombs, projectiles, and other weapons, have entered Manipur from Myanmar."

cal cancer. India will commit \$10 million towards screening for the disease. Vaccine manufacturer Serum Institute of India and Gavi will provide up to 40 million vaccines for the region "subject to approvals".

The countries announced the Quad-at-Sea Ship Observer Mission in 2025 to improve interoperability and maritime safety. Future coast guard missions are planned for after 2025. A logistics network pilot project was also launched, which will involve Quad countries sharing airlift capacity to support disaster response.

A Maritime Initiative for Training in the Indo-Pacific (MATTR) to train Quad

1 health initiatives

na Sea," they said, as they expressed concern about the militarisation of disputed features and intimidation in the South China Sea.

The statement condemned the dangerous use of coast guard and maritime militia vessels and opposes the disruption of other countries' offshore resources and exploitation activities.

War in Ukraine
While there was no direct mention of Russia, presumably out of consideration for India, which shares a relationship with Moscow, the joint statement also condemned the most recent use of the latter's coast guard presence on the Salima shoals, 150 km off its west coast.

"We are seriously concerned about the situation in the East and South Chi-

na Sea," they said, as they expressed concern about the militarisation of disputed features and intimidation in the South China Sea.

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Left leader Dissanayake is Sri Lanka President

'AKD', as he is popularly known, has pledged to end corruption and change the political culture of the country; poll results were declared by Election Commission after counting preferential votes; it marks the first time the island nation's presidency will be held by a party with no links to Sri Lanka Freedom Party or United National Party

Meera Srinivasan
COLOMBO

Left leader Anura Kumara Disanayake on Sunday emerged winner in Sri Lanka's presidential race, obtaining a mandate that signals a clean break from the island nation's political establishment and ushers in unprecedented change.

Mr. Disanayake was officially declared President-elect by the Election Commission of Sri Lanka after it completed a second count of votes to add preference votes, an exercise undertaken for the first time in the country's election history.

The tally of preferential votes cast by voters became necessary since neither Mr. Disanayake, nor his chief challenger, Opposition Leader Sajith

Premadasa, secured the 50% plus one vote in the first round, which is required for winning.

Mr. Disanayake secured 42.31% of the votes. Mr. Premadasa was in the second spot with 32.76%, while incumbent Ranil Wickremesinghe came third with under 20% of the vote share.

The three candidates dominated the election, which was the first to be held after the economic crisis of 2022, the worst seen in the country since its Independence. Thirty-five other contestants were in the race, including Nimal Rajapaksa, son of Mahinda Rajapaksa, and Tamil candidate P. Ariyanethiran.

An Opposition legislator from capital Colombo, Mr. Disanayake ran for the Na-



New tide: Anura Kumara Disanayake arrives at the Election Commission office in Colombo on Sunday. AFP

tional People's Power (NPP) alliance, a coalition helmed by the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP or People's Liberation Front), a party with Marxist-Leninist roots. "AKD", as he is popularly known, has pledged to end corruption and change the political culture of the country

through an effective campaign targeting scores of Sri Lankans who sought change after the country's economic crash in 2022.

Sunday's poll outcome is a big win for Mr. Disanayake, with his vote share growing well over tenfold from the 3.16% he secured in 2019, when he chal-

lenged Gotabaya Rajapaksa and Mr. Premadasa. It marks the first time Sri Lanka's presidency will be held by a party with no links to the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) or the United National Party (UNP) or their offshoots that have dominated the country's politics for over seven decades.

'A positive outcome'

University of Jaffna academic Mahendran Thiruvarangan described the poll outcome as a "positive" one. "The NPP is a political formation that represents some of the core demands of the *Aragayala* [people's struggle of 2022]. Their victory is reason for optimism," he told *The Hindu*.

Although Mr. Disanayake's camp began working on a grassroots

campaign soon after its poor show in the 2019 presidential poll as well as the 2020 general elections, it came under greater focus after the mass uprising two years ago, that saw citizens emphatically demand "system change". The outcome of this presidential poll reflects the disenchantment of the people with the existing political culture, according to Pradeep Peiris, political scientist from the University of Colombo. "What you see is not necessarily support for his specific proposals or policies, but simply an emphatic anti-establishment vote," he said.

In his view, the verdict exposes both the positive side of Sri Lankan democracy and its limits. "We have seen this before, people rallying behind an indi-

vidual or a formation hoping they can somehow change the system, but it is never easy," he observed, pointing to "humongous challenges" facing the President-elect.

"We stand ready to rewrite Sri Lankan history," Mr. Disanayake said in a message on 'X' on Sunday evening. "This dream can only be realised with a fresh start. The unity of Sinhalese, Tamils, Muslims, and all Sri Lankans is the bedrock of this new beginning. The New Renaissance we seek will rise from this shared strength and vision," said Mr. Disanayake, who is due to be sworn in on Monday.

SRI LANKA'S VERDICT

» PAGE 8

VOTING PATTERN OF TAMILS

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. Type of Election:

Sri Lanka elects its president through **direct popular voting**.

The president is the head of state, head of government, and commander-in-chief of the armed forces.

Eligibility of Candidates:

To contest the presidential election, a candidate must:

- Be a **citizen of Sri Lanka**.
- Be at least **35 years old**.
- Be qualified to be elected as a Member of Parliament.
- Not be holding any other paid office except as a Member of Parliament or an office for which the constitution allows dual holding.

Voting System:



The election uses the **absolute majority system** under the **second-past-the-post (instant runoff voting)** system.

If no candidate achieves over **50% of the votes** in the first round, the **second preferences** marked by voters on the ballot are considered.

Votes of the candidate who placed last are redistributed according to second preferences until a candidate obtains the majority.

. Term of Office:

The president is elected for a term of **five years**.

A person can serve as president for a maximum of **two terms**.

6. Election Timing:

Elections must be held **at least one month before the end** of the sitting president's term.

If the president's office becomes vacant due to resignation, death, or removal, a **fresh election** must be held within **three months**.

Election Outcome:

Anura Kumara Dissanayake, leader of the **National People's Power (NPP)** alliance, won the presidential election with **42.31% of the votes**.

Sajith Premadasa, his main challenger and leader of the opposition, came second with **32.76%**.

Ranil Wickremesinghe, the incumbent, finished third with under **20%** of the vote share.

Significance of the Victory:



Dissanayake's victory marks a historic break from the dominance of Sri Lanka's two major political parties: the **Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP)** and the **United National Party (UNP)**, which have held power for over seven decades.

It reflects widespread discontent with the country's political establishment, following the **2022 economic crisis** and massive public protests demanding a change in leadership and governance.

Mandate for Change:

Dissanayake has pledged to **end corruption** and overhaul Sri Lanka's political culture.

He gained significant support from voters seeking a fresh start, especially after the **2019 and 2020 elections** where his party performed poorly.

- 
- **Campaign Strategy:**
 - His campaign focused on grassroots efforts targeting Sri Lankans disillusioned with the status quo, particularly following the **Aragalaya** (people's struggle) against the political system.
- 

- **Challenges Ahead:**
- Dissanayake acknowledged the "**humongous challenges**" ahead as the President-elect, emphasizing the need for unity among all communities in Sri Lanka—**Sinhalese, Tamils, Muslims**—to rebuild the nation.
- **Political Context:**
- The election was necessitated due to the fallout from the 2022 economic crisis and was seen as a referendum on the existing political order.

India sweeps Chess Olympiad, makes history by winning gold

P.K. Ajith Kumar

India recorded one of the greatest moments in its sporting history in Budapest on Sunday, winning the gold medals both in the Open and women's sections of the 45th Chess Olympiad.

The Indian men had been so dominant in the competition that they were almost assured of the gold with a round to spare.

In the 11th and final round match, India scored an easy victory against Slovenia. D. Gukesh, R. Praggnanandhaa and Arjun Erigaisi won their games, while Vidit Gujrathi drew. India won 3.5-0.5 against Slovenia, taking its tally to 21 points, out of the possible 22.

P. Harikrishna is the other member of the men's



Winning moves: D. Gukesh and Divya Deshmukh, along with Arjun Erigaisi and Vantika Agrawal, won individual golds to propel India to its first team golds in the chess Olympiad. FIDE

team and he competed as the reserve board player.

The United States, the top seed whom India defeated in the penultimate round, finished as the runner-up, with 17 points.

In the last round of the women's event, too, India scored a 3.5-0.5 victory over Azerbaijan.

There were wins for D. Harika, Divya Deshmukh and Vantika Agrawal and the only player to draw was

R. Vaishali.

Tania Sachdev played on the reserve board for the top-seeded Indian women. They finished with 19 points, one more than Kazakhstan.

India's win in the Open section was facilitated by outstanding performances on the first and third boards by Gukesh and Arjun, both of whom went on to win individual gold medals. After defeating Vladi-

mir Fedoseev in the final round, Gukesh finished with nine points in 10 games.

Arjun's performances were equally emphatic. Playing on the third board, despite leading the Indian contingent with the highest ELO rating, Arjun scored 10 points in 11 games. Arjun and Gukesh are now ranked third and fifth in the world in live ratings.

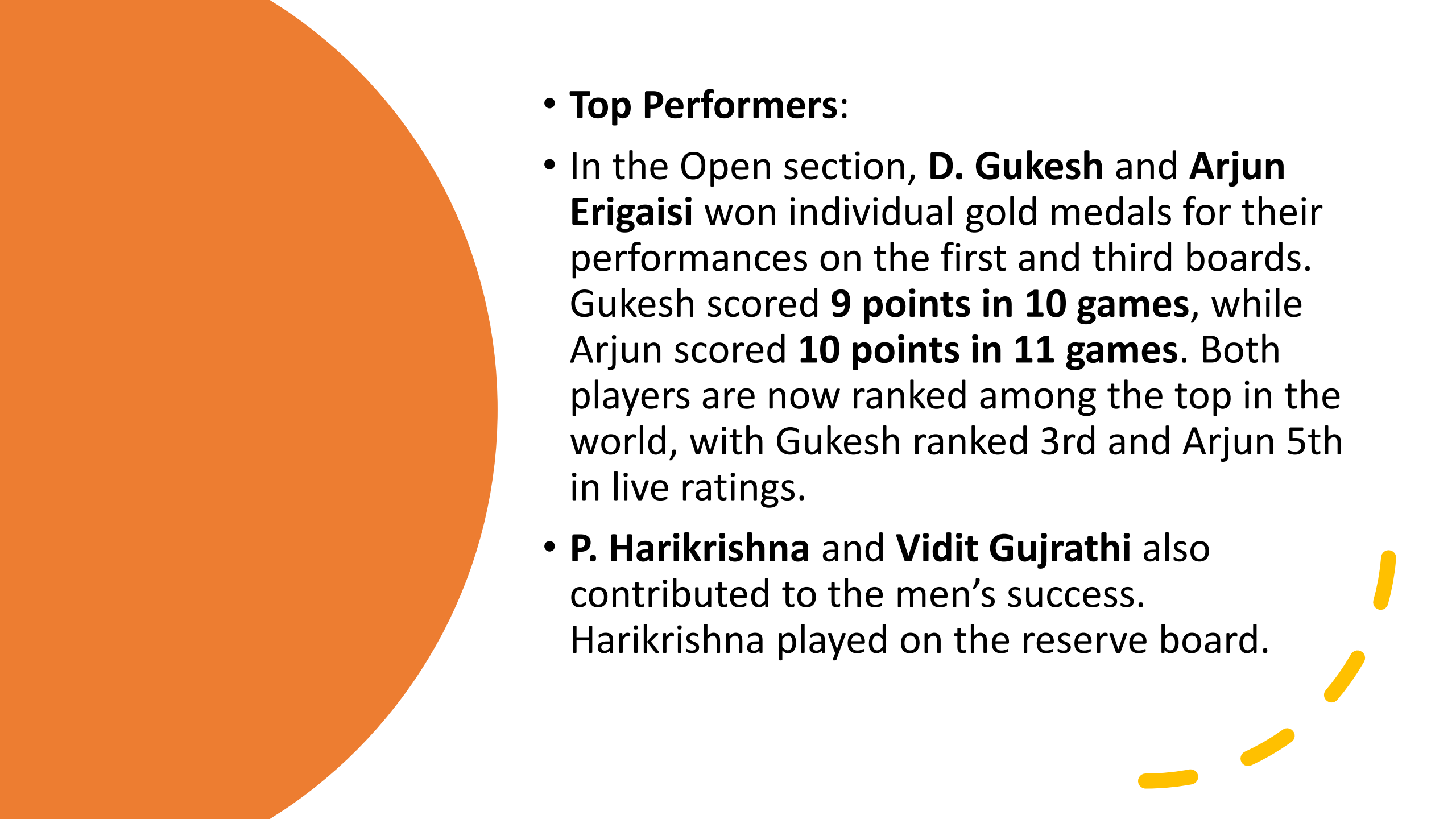
In the women's section, 19 year old Divya won the individual gold for the strongest performance on the third board. She finished with 9.5 points in 11 games. Vantika, playing on the fourth board also won individual gold, finishing with 7.5 points in 9 games.

RELATED REPORTS


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- **India's Dominance:**

- The Indian men's team was dominant throughout the tournament, securing the gold medal with a round to spare. In the 11th and final round, India easily defeated Slovenia with a **3.5-0.5** victory.
- The women's team also claimed gold, winning **3.5-0.5** in their final match against Azerbaijan.

- 
- **Top Performers:**
 - In the Open section, **D. Gukesh** and **Arjun Erigaisi** won individual gold medals for their performances on the first and third boards. Gukesh scored **9 points in 10 games**, while Arjun scored **10 points in 11 games**. Both players are now ranked among the top in the world, with Gukesh ranked 3rd and Arjun 5th in live ratings.
 - **P. Harikrishna** and **Vidit Gujrathi** also contributed to the men's success. Harikrishna played on the reserve board.


For the women's team, **Divya Deshmukh** won the individual gold on the third board, finishing with **9.5 points in 11 games**. **Vantika Agrawal**, on the fourth board, secured an individual gold as well with **7.5 points in 9 games**.



Tania Sachdev played on the reserve board for the Indian women, helping the team secure **19 points**—one more than Kazakhstan, the runner-up.



- **Historic Achievement:**

- India's gold medals mark the first time the country has won team golds at the Chess Olympiad. The **United States** finished as the runner-up in the Open section with **17 points**.
- 

Quad meet launches maritime and health initiatives

Sriram Lakshman

WILMINGTON (DELAWARE)

Leaders of the Quad group of countries – Prime Minister Narendra Modi, U.S. President Joe Biden, Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese and Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida – met at their sixth summit-level meeting at Archmere Academy, Mr. Biden’s former school in Claymont, Delaware, to announce a broad range of outcomes. These included the launch of a new coast guard exercise, a logistics network, expansion of maritime surveillance, and a project to combat cervical cancer.

In terms of positions, the Quad strongly condemned aggression in the East and South China Sea and expressed alarm over the war in Ukraine, noting that all four leaders had vi-

sited the country.

The ‘Quad Cancer Moonshot’ will involve contributions from all four countries to combat cervical cancer. India will commit \$10 million towards screening for the disease. Vaccine manufacturer Serum Institute of India and Gavi will provide up to 40 million vaccines for the region, “subject to approvals”.

The countries announced the Quad-at-Sea Ship Observer Mission in 2025 to improve interoperability and maritime safety. Future coast guard missions are planned for after 2025. A logistics network pilot project was also launched, which will involve Quad countries sharing airlift capacity to support disaster response.

A Maritime Initiative for Training in the Indo-Pacific (MAITRI) to train Quad



(From left) Anthony Albanese, Narendra Modi, Joe Biden, and Fumio Kishida at the ‘Cancer Moonshot’ event in Delaware. ANI

partners “to monitor and secure their waters, enforce their laws, and deter unlawful behaviour” was also announced. India will host the first MAITRI workshop in 2025.

A maritime legal dialogue has been launched to support actions to uphold the rules-based order, the statement said.

Quad members con-

demned maritime aggression, with pointed references to situations involving China, which is currently embroiled in tensions with the Philippines, most recently over the latter’s coast guard presence on the Sabina shoal, 150 km off its west coast.

“We are seriously concerned about the situation in the East and South Chi-

na Seas,” they said, as they expressed concern about the militarisation of disputed features and intimidation in the South China Sea.

The statement condemns the dangerous use of coast guard and maritime militia vessels and opposes the disruption of other countries’ offshore resource exploitation activities.

War in Ukraine

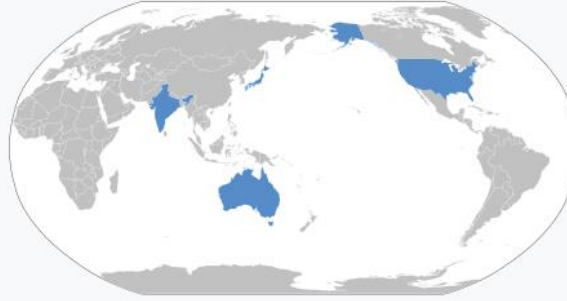
While there was no direct mention of Russia, presumably out of consideration for India, which shares a close relationship with Moscow, the joint statement had references that have been associated with a condemnation of Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, such as Quad countries offering their “unwavering” support for the United Nations Charter. The countries ex-

pressed their “deepest concern” for the war in Ukraine and its consequences.

“Each of us has visited Ukraine since the war began and seen this firsthand; we reiterate the need for a comprehensive, just, and lasting peace in line with international law, consistent with the purposes and principles of the UN Charter, including respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity,” the statement says. It also notes the impact the war has had on food and energy security, especially for developing countries.

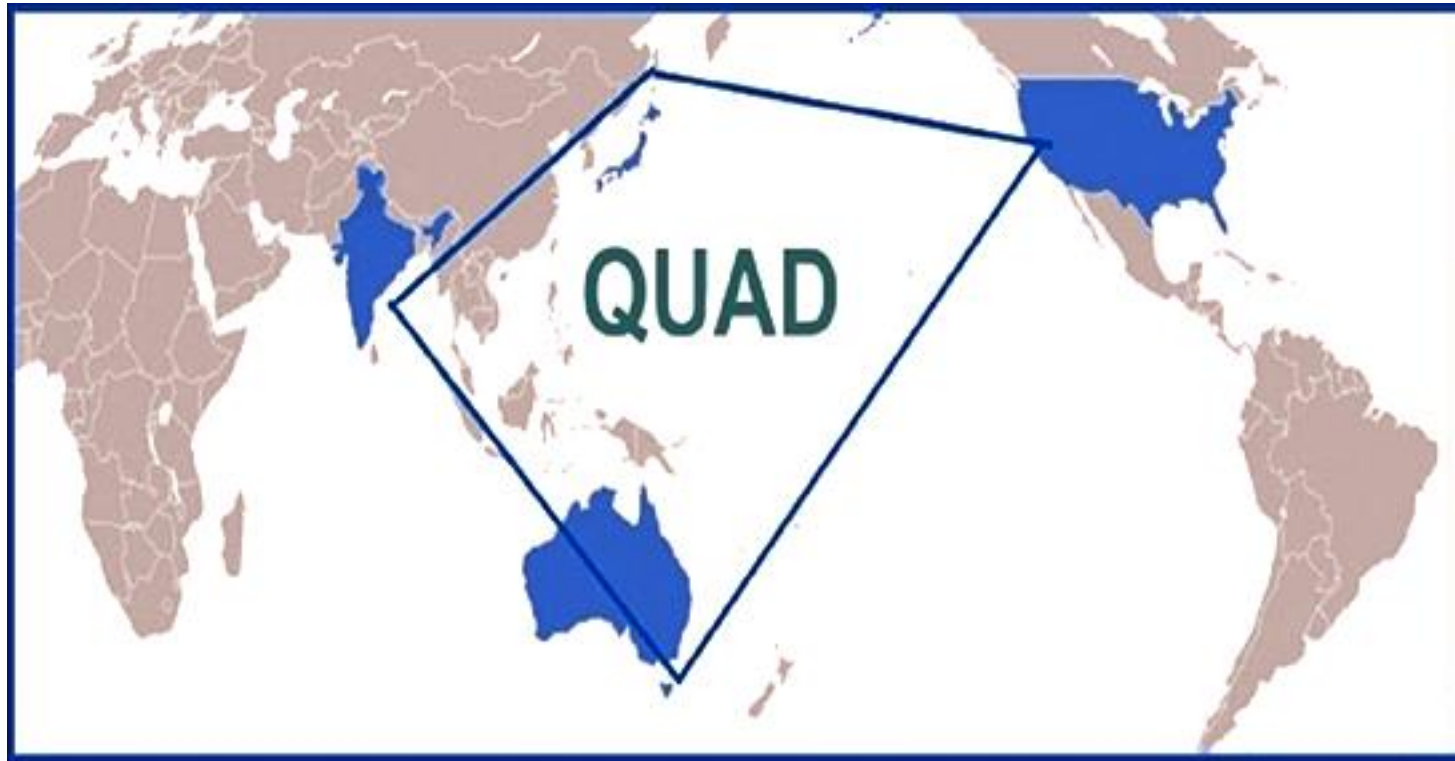
The Quad fellowship, to promote STEM education, has been expanded to include 50 scholarships worth \$5,00,000 for students from the region to study at government-funded technical institutions in India.

Quadrilateral Security Dialogue



Australia, India, Japan, and the United States are highlighted in blue. Former Prime Minister [Shinzo Abe](#) intended for the Quadrilateral to establish an "Asian Arc of Democracy".

Abbreviation	Quad
Established	2007 (1st time); lasted until 2008 2017 (re-established after negotiations in November)
Type	Inter-governmental security forum ^{[1][2]}
Region	Indo-Pacific
Members	States in the Dialogue: <ul style="list-style-type: none">•  Australia•  India•  Japan•  United States






- **Quad Summit Overview:**


- The summit took place in Wilmington, Delaware, at President Biden's former school, focusing on critical global and regional issues.

- **Maritime Initiatives:**

- Launch of a new coast guard exercise.
 - A logistics network to improve maritime surveillance and protection capabilities.
 - Announcement of a Maritime Initiative for Training in the Indo-Pacific (MAITRI) to train Quad members' coast guards, enhancing interoperability.
- 



- **Health Initiatives:**

- Introduction of the 'Quad Cancer Moonshot' to combat cervical cancer, with India committing to screen for the disease and provide vaccines in collaboration with the Vaccine manufacturer Serum Institute of India and Gavi.
 - The program aims to provide up to 40 million vaccines, pending regulatory approvals.
- 



1. Position on Global Issues:

1. Strong condemnation of aggression in the East and South China Seas, highlighting concerns about the militarization and disputed features in these regions.
2. Expression of concerns about the war in Ukraine, reaffirming support for a rules-based international order and the territorial integrity and sovereignty of nations.



2. Partnership and Cooperation:

1. Emphasized on strengthening the partnership within the Quad framework, underscoring their commitment to ensuring peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific region.

IN BRIEF

Manjhi demands CBI probe into arson in Bihar's Nawada

Union Minister Hiran Ram Manjhi on Sunday demanded a CBI probe into the torching of 34 houses, mostly belonging to SC/ST communities, by a group of people in Bihar's Nawada district on September 18. Mr. Manjhi, founder of the Hindustani Awam Morcha (Secular), an ally of the NDA, visited the Manjhi Tola area under the jurisdiction of Mufassil police station where the incident happened. "This incident must be probed by the CBI so that those involved in the incident are exposed and punished," he said.

BJD calls for shutdown over 'assault' on Army man, fiancée

The BJD has called for a six-hour shutdown in Bhubaneswar on Tuesday to protest against the recent alleged assault of an Army officer and his fiancée in police custody when they had gone to lodge a complaint over a road rage incident. Addressing a press conference on Sunday, BJD MP Arun Kumar Sahoo said the bandh will be held for six hours from 6 a.m. till noon. BJD vice-president Debi Prasad Mishra said, "The custodial torture, assault, and harassment has shamed Odisha. The bandh will be held to intensify the protest against police brutality."

Check bias by UPSC in income test for OBCs: Congress MP

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Congress leader Manickam Tagore has recently written to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, seeking his intervention to eliminate discrimination in how the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) applies the income test for determining the Non-Creamy Layer (NCL) status of selected OBC candidates whose parents work in public sector bodies.

"These candidates are currently facing significant obstacles related to the verification of their OBC Non-Creamy Layer status, which is preventing them from joining their designated services," Mr. Tagore wrote to Mr. Modi, who heads the Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances, and Pensions, under which the UPSC operates.

"The current situation has caused undue distress to OBC candidates who have earned their positions through merit, but are being unjustly denied due to procedural ambiguities in the Congress MP said.

Mr. Tagore has sought a "clear and inclusive policy" for determining the NCL status of OBC candidates, uniform implementation of the income test for children of all public sector bodies, and transparency in the verification process.

He said that the core issue in these cases was the UPSC's refusal to accept the NCL certificates issued by State government authorities that confirm the Class II/IV status of OBC candidates' parents who work in Central and State public sector undertakings and public sector banks. Further, he added, the income test was being applied unevenly for children of those working in Central/State governments and of those working in PSUs, PSBs, and various other public sector bodies - an issue that is being litigated in the Supreme Court.

Close shave



Railway officials remove a gas cylinder from a railway track near Prempur station, in Kanpur, Sunday. The loco pilots of a goods train spotted the cylinder and applied the emergency brakes to avoid hitting it.

Allot new poll symbol to both NCP factions, Supriya Sule asks SC

The Hindu Bureau
MUMBAI

The Nationalist Congress Party (Sharad Pawar) leader or Supriya Sule on Saturday said the party has urged the Supreme Court to treat both NCP factions equally in the allotment of NCL status of OBC candidates.

Speaking to the press, Ms. Sule said, "Mr. Pawar is the founding member of NCP and he takes all decisions. The NCP (SP) has sought natural justice from the Supreme Court. The court has asked us to use the symbol of a 'man blowing turba' [a traditional trumpet] until the final decision. The same decision should be taken for the other NCP faction. There is a big confusion about the 'clock' symbol. We must ask the Supreme Court to decide before the upcoming Vidhan Sabha elections." State assembly elections are to be held in November 2024.

In July 2023, Aji Pawar along with several other MLAs joined the Mahayuti alliance. Before the split, NCP's election symbol was

CMRL's first driverless train ready, delivery by mid-Oct.

Only 'static testing' is pending, say CMRL officials. The train will run between Poonamallee and Porur on corridor 4 of the Phase II project. The operations are likely to begin next year

Sumitha Sekar
CHENNAI

Chennai Metro Rail's first driverless train has been manufactured and it is likely to be transported from Sri City to the Poonamallee depot by mid-October.

For the ₹63,246-crore Phase II project, Chennai Metro Rail's objective is to have driverless trains, like the Phase I project, wherein a train operator is present on board.

The contract for this work was given at a cost of ₹1,25.92 crore.

Seven months ago, the manufacturing of the first train got under way at Sri City, with the delivery target set for the end of August. However, the date to deliver the train was put off.

According to officials of Chennai Metro Rail Ltd. (CMRL), though the manufacture has been finished, there will be a testing process called 'static testing', which will be done at Sri City, and the train is likely to be



Arriving seems a first look of the Chennai Metro Rail's driverless train for the Phase II project. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

brought to the depot only by the middle of October. Sources said that the manufacturing process encountered a delay as it took time to procure a few com-

ponents for the train. The driverless train will be operated on the Poonamallee and Porur stretch, a part of corridor 4 of the Phase II project. The oper-

ations are likely to begin next year.

"Minor setback" "We don't anticipate any more delays, and the train should arrive next month," were subsequently start the testing process. This setback will not affect the Phase II work as we will complete the inspection and testing process within five months. The viaduct work between Poonamallee and Porur will be completed only by that time. Once it is ready, the trials will begin along the viaduct between Poonamallee and Porur," an official said.

Since the coaches will arrive separately, they will be first linked, and then, the systems such as passenger information, Wi-Fi, graph, brakes, heating, ventilation, air conditioning, and train control management system will be checked.

"Initially, we will test the train at 10 kmph, and then, increase the speed to a maximum of 90 kmph," a source said.

CWC took unilateral decision to release water: Mamata to PM

Shiv Sahay Singh
KOLKATA

Upping the ante against the Central government, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Sunday wrote another letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi on the flood situation in the State, pointing out that all critical decisions to release water were made unilaterally by representatives of the Central Water Commission (CWC) without reaching a consensus.

This is the second letter by the Chief Minister to the Prime Minister in a span of two days, blaming the release of water from the reservoirs controlled by the Damodar Valley Corporation (DVC) for inundation of large areas in south Bengal. Earlier, Ms. Banerjee in a letter dated September 20 had asked her government will sever all association with the DVC if the situation remains the same.

"All critical decisions are made unilaterally by representatives of the Central Water Commission, Ministry of Jal Shakti, Government of India, without arriving at a consensus.



Mamata Banerjee

Sometimes, water releases take place even without any notice to the State government and the rescue and views of the Government of West Bengal are not honoured," Ms. Banerjee said. She added that peak releases from the reservoirs, lasting for nine hours, were done with only 3.5 hours' notice, which proved insufficient for effective disaster management.

Two officials resign: Protesting against "unprecedented and uncontrolled" release of water by the DVC, West Bengal Power Secretary Santanu Basu tendered his resignation as a member of the DVC. The State's Chief Engineer of Irrigation and Waterways also quit as a member of the body over the issue.

Man shot dead in Ajmer as two groups clash over land dispute

The Hindu Bureau
JAIPUR

One person was shot dead and another injured in a violent clash between two groups over the construction of a shop on a disputed piece of land at Rupnagarh in Rajasthan's Ajmer district on Sunday. One of the two sides allegedly opened fire after a 30-minute fight.

One group had alleged that the sarpanch wrongfully issued the lease deed for the land, situated at a prime location adjacent to the State highway, which was originally registered in the name of the Shiwra-



Villagers set a earth mover on fire during a land dispute in Ajmer on Sunday. PTI

bar Jain students' hostel. However, the local Jain community distanced itself from the dispute.

The dispute escalated on Sunday when members of one group arrived at the site with construction material and excavator machines. Both sides attacked

each other and a person from one group opened fire, resulting in the death of a man, identified as Shakeel Langa. The injured person, Narayan Kumawat, has been referred to Ajmer.

Police said several vehicles were vandalised and an excavator was set on fire in the clash. The incident led to tension in the region, as the markets were closed and additional security forces were deployed. The police launched a manhunt to apprehend those involved in the violence. Ajmer Range Inspector-General of Police Om Prakash said one person had been rounded up.

Why is Manipur allowed to go 'Afghanistan way': Cong. MP questions Union govt.

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

Amid the lingering crisis in Manipur, Congress MP A. Bimol Ahojiam has raised pointed questions over the Centre's "inaction", suggesting that such a situation would not have been left unaddressed if it were to happen in States such as Uttar Pradesh and Bihar.

In an interview with PTI Videos, Mr. Ahojiam vehemently criticised the Centre's handling of the situation in Manipur, asking why the Government of India was allowing the north-eastern State to become like Afghanistan, which he described as a "banana republic".

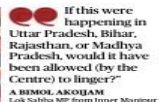
"With 60,000 troops stationed in Manipur, how the Central government should have prevented this crisis from persisting for so long," Ahojiam said.

"If this were happening in Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Rajasthan, or Madhya Pradesh, the prime minister would be asked to resign?" he added. Ethnic violence in Mani-



A. BIMOL AHOJIAM Lok Sabha MP from Inner Manipur

pur erupted on May 3, 2022, following a tribal so-



low this to happen, talk it out, what is the problem," Mr. Ahojiam said.

Representatives of some Kuki groups in Manipur have been demanding the creation of a Union Territory with a legislature along the lines of Puducherry.

Manipur Chief Minister N. Biren Singh, however, has emphatically rejected the demand.

Mr. Ahojiam, MP from the Inner Manipur Lok Sabha constituency, emphasised that while he viewed Mr. Singh as a "small-time player" in the crisis, he could not be completely absolved of responsibility.

Mahayuti ally RPI(A) seeks 10-12 seats for Assembly poll

The Hindu Bureau
MUMBAI

The Republican Party of India (RPI-Athawale) should get to contest at least 10 to 12 seats in the upcoming Maharashtra Assembly election, Ramdas Athawale said on Sunday. RPI (A) is an ally in the ruling Mahayuti alliance.

comprises the Bharatiya Janata Party, Shiv Sena and Nationalist Congress Party. Addressing a press conference in Nagpur, the Minister said, "The RPI (A) has made a list of 18 probable seats, which it will share with the Mahayuti partners in a few days and expects to get at least 10 to 12 seats in the seat-sharing pact. We will contest the election on our party symbol and ask for three to four seats in Vidharbha." He claimed that RPI (A) was earlier promised Cabinet positions in the partnership of two corporations, and roles in district-level committees, but due to the inclusion of NCP, his party did not get ministerial berths in the State.

CMRL's first driverless train ready, delivery by mid-Oct.

Only 'static testing' is pending, say CMRL officials. The train will run between Poonamallee and Porur on corridor 4 of the Phase II project. The operations are likely to begin next year

Sunitha Sekar
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The contract for this work was given at a cost of ₹1,125.92 crore.

Seven months ago, the manufacturing of the first train got under way at Sri City, with the delivery target set for the end of August. However, the date to deliver the train was put off.

According to officials of Chennai Metro Rail Ltd. (CMRL), though the manufacturing has been finished, there will be a testing process called 'static testing', which will be done at Sri City, and the train is likely to be



Arriving soon: A first look of the Chennai Metro Rail's driverless train for the Phase II project. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

brought to the depot only by the middle of October.

Sources said that the manufacturing process encountered a delay as it took time to procure a few com-

ponents for the train.

The driverless train will be operated on the Poonamallee-Porur stretch, a part of corridor 4 of the Phase II project. The oper-

ations are likely to begin next year.

'Minor setback'

"We don't anticipate any more delays, and the train should arrive next month; we will subsequently start the testing process. This setback will not affect the Phase II work as we will complete the inspection and testing process within five months. The viaduct work between Poonamallee and Porur will be completed only by that time. Once it is ready, the trials will begin along the viaduct between Poonamallee and Porur," an official said.

Since the coaches will arrive separately, they will be first linked, and then, the systems such as passenger information, pantograph, brakes, heating, ventilation, air conditioning, and train control management system will be checked.

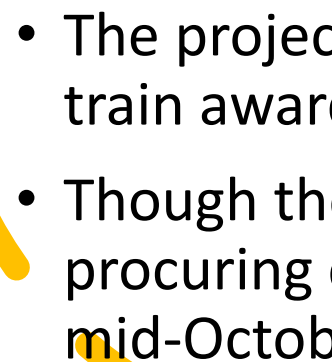
"Initially, we will test the train at 10 kmph, and then, increase the speed to the maximum of 90 kmph," a source said.



- **Driverless Train Progress:**


- CMRL has manufactured its first driverless train as part of the Phase II project.
- The train will run between Poonamallee and Porur, on corridor 4 of the project.
- Operations are expected to start next year.

- **Cost and Delays:**

- The project cost is estimated at ₹63,246 crore, with the contract for the driverless train awarded for ₹1,125.92 crore.
 - Though the manufacturing process began seven months ago, delays occurred in procuring components, pushing back the original delivery target from August to mid-October.
- 



- **Testing Process:**

- The train will undergo a “static testing” process at Sri City before being transported to the Poonamallee depot by mid-October.
 - Once delivered, the train will be linked, and critical systems (e.g., passenger information, brakes, ventilation) will be tested.
- 



- **Train Operations:**

- Initial trials will begin with the train running at 10 km/h, with speeds gradually increasing to 90 km/h.
- The viaduct work between Poonamallee and Porur will be completed within five months, allowing trials to commence.



- **No Major Delays:**

- CMRL officials anticipate no further significant delays, with the overall project remaining on schedule.

FINANCIAL EXPRESS

READ TO LEAD

IN THE NEWS

INDIA SIGNS IPEF'S CLEAN AND FAIR ECONOMY PACTS

INDIA ON SUNDAY signed up to join the clean and fair economy compacts and the overarching agreement of the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity (IPEF) in Delaware in the US in the presence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, reports Mukesh Jagota. ■ PAGE 2



Prime Minister Narendra Modi with US President Joe Biden, Australian PM Anthony Albanese and Japanese PM Fumio Kishida at the Quad Leaders' Summit in Delaware, the US

BROADCASTERS REFUSE TO VACATE SPECTRUM FOR 5G

BROADCASTERS SUCH AS Sony, Zee, Viacom, Disney Star and Sun TV have opposed the government's fresh proposal for allocating 200 MHz of their spectrum in the 3700-3800 MHz band for 5G services, reports Jatin Grover. The 3300-3670 MHz band is now used for 5G services by telcos. ■ PAGE 4

IT HIRING SEES MODERATE GROWTH IN FY25

HIRING BY IT services firms in the current fiscal has seen moderate growth compared to the previous financial year, with companies focusing on enhancing workforce capabilities to meet evolving technological demands, analysts said, reports Padmini Dhruvaraj. ■ PAGE 4

CPSE DIVIDENDS MAY SURPASS ₹60,000 CR IN FY25

THE CENTRE'S DIVIDEND receipts from central public sector enterprises (CPSEs) and its other investments may exceed ₹60,000 crore for the second year in a row in FY25 as against the budget estimate of ₹56,260 crore, reports Prasanta Sahu. ■ PAGE 5

FE SPECIAL Why Indus Waters Treaty needs a relook

India recently issued a notice to Pakistan to review and modify the decades-old treaty. ■ EXPLAINER, P6

Choose long-duration bonds for capital appreciation

Gilt, dynamic bond funds will benefit the most when rates fall. ■ PERSONAL FINANCE, P7

REMARKS A SIGNAL TO BEIJING

Modi: Quad not against anyone but here to stay

Biden names China in hot mic remarks, says it is 'testing us'

SHUBHAJIT ROY New Delhi, September 22

UNDERLINING THAT leaders of the Quad grouping — India, the US, Japan and Australia — were meeting amid global "tensions and conflicts", Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Sunday that they "are not against anyone", and all of them "have a mutual interest in international order, respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, and the peaceful resolution of all issues".

Modi's remarks during the six-day Quad leaders' summit at President Joe Biden's hometown of Delaware were a thinly veiled reference to China's aggressive behaviour in the Indo-Pacific region. But Biden's own hot mic comments at the meeting, also attended by the prime ministers of Japan and Australia, removed that veil as he said China was "testing" them while trying to "buy diplomatic space" for itself.

The Quad declaration, adopted after the summit, focused on "militarisation" in the Indian Ocean region. It also addressed other key global issues, including the conflicts in Ukraine and Gaza. The declaration highlighted the "negative impacts of the war in Ukraine with regard to global food and energy security". It emphasised that a hostage deal would lead to deescalate in Gaza, and underscored "the urgent need to significantly increase deliveries of life-saving humanitarian assistance" and "prevent regional escalation". The leaders announced the Quad Cancer Moonshot — a groundbreaking partnership that will focus initially on combating cervical cancer in the Indo-Pacific region.

INSIDE
More reports
PAGE 2

Continued on Page 11

Mizuho may offer 'golden handcuffs' in Avendus bid

SACHIN KUMAR Mumbai, September 22

AS THE RACE to acquire Avendus Capital gets tighter, Japanese financial conglomerate Mizuho is looking to sweeten the deal by including "golden handcuffs" for the top management, said a source close to the development.

Mizuho's golden handcuffs deal, which is likely to include financial benefits such as bonus and deferred compensation, are commonly used to retain top executives and critical talent, especially during mergers and acquisitions. The scheme's benefits are forfeited if employees leave before the agreed period.

The bank is contemplating golden handcuffs for the top management for the next two or three years. However, the final decision on

SWEETENING THE DEAL

Avendus Capital is seeking a valuation of ₹6,000-7,000 cr

- However, potential buyers are not willing to shell out more than ₹4,500-5,000 cr
- With Avendus acquisition, Mizuho will get a foothold in India's fast-growing investment banking space
- Carlyle and Nomura also in the race to acquire Avendus

the number of employees to be covered under the scheme is yet to be decided, a source told ZE.

The two-horse race between Carlyle and Mizuho to take over Avendus Capital became more interesting after reports suggested that Nomura, the sell-side

₹30K-cr booster for Vi network

FE BUREAU New Delhi, September 22

VODAFONE IDEA, THE country's third largest telecom operator by market share, on Sunday said it has signed a ₹30,000-cr (US \$3 billion) deal with Nokia, Ericsson and Samsung for the supply of 4G and 5G network equipment over three years.

The deal is part of the ₹55,000-cr capital expenditure (capex) guidance given by the company and a strategic partnership that will focus on 4G population coverage from 2024 to 2028. It is the first time and launch 5G in key markets.

"We have kick-started the investment cycle. We are on our journey of VIL 2.0 and from hereon, VIL will stage a smart turnaround to effectively participate in the industry growth opportunities," said Akshaya Moondra, CEO of Vodafone Idea.

"We look forward to work closely with all our partners as we move into the 5G era," Moondra added. The company will start getting the equipment from the vendors in the coming quarter. While Nokia and Ericsson have been Vodafone Idea's network partners for long, the company for the first time has engaged with Samsung.

AKSHAYA MOONDRRA, CEO, Vodafone Idea

WE HAVE KICK-STARTED THE INVESTMENT CYCLE... FROM HEREON, VIL WILL STAGE A SMART TURNAROUND



Continued on Page 5

Govt probing Netflix for visa breaches & racial bias

ADITYA KALRA & KRISHN KAUSHIK New Delhi, September 22

THE GOVERNMENT IS investigating the business practices of US streaming giant Netflix's India operations, including allegations of visa violations and racial discrimination, according to a government email sent to a former executive.

The details of the investigation were included in a July 20 email, reviewed by Reuters, which was written by a home ministry official to Netflix's former director of business and legal affairs for India, Nandini Mehta, who left the company in 2020.

"This is regarding visa and tax violations concerns regarding the business practices of Netflix in India," wrote Deepak Yadav from the Foreigners Regional Registration Office (FRRO) of the home ministry in New Delhi.

"We have received certain details in this regard w.r.t (with respect to) the stated company's conduct, visa violation, illegal structures, tax evasion and other malpractices including incidents of racial discrimination that company has been engaged in while conducting its business in India," he added.

Continued on Page 5

Lokpal wants 'credible' evidence against Buch

ASHWINI SHRIVASTAVA New Delhi, September 22

ANTI-CORRUPTION OMBUDSMAN LOKPAL has said that a complaint by a Lok Sabha MP alleging impropriety and conflict of interest by capital markets regulator Sebi's chairperson, Madhabi Puri Buch, "falls short of persuading it to order any probe."

While deciding on two complaints filed by different individuals on the basis of a report by US-based "activist short-seller" Hindenburg Research, it asked the complainants to file affidavits mentioning details of the efforts made by them "to verify the authenticity and credibility of the claims" made in the Hindenburg report of August 10. It asked them to articulate the allegations which may constitute an offence of corruption within the ambit of the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988, "provision-wise," according to the Lokpal order dated September 20.



Continued on Page 5

Life Cover or Loan Liability feels like Happy Responsibility

My life, my way!

MAJOR BRAND PUSH ON THE CARDS

Reliance steps on the gas in FMCG

VIVEAT SUSAN PINTO Mumbai, September 22

RELIANCE CONSUMER PRODUCTS (RCP), a Reliance Retail subsidiary in the fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) space, is planning big brand push in general and modern trade, as it looks to scale up operations across the country.

The move is timed with the broader objective of driving momentum in the FMCG business as it seeks to become a key player in the market, competing with national rivals, something Reliance has successfully done in businesses such as telecom with Jio. The FMCG plan includes taking in house brands, which are available on Reliance Retail — such as GoodLife, Saactac, Desi Kitchens and MyHome; to general trade. Campa and Independence, which were launched by RCP in general trade last year, will be made available to consumers in Reliance Retail supermarkets, persons in the know said.

"The strategy is two-fold," a source said.

RIDING THE CONSUMER BOOM

- Reliance Consumer Products plans to increase its merchant base to **10 million**
- over 80% of the country's kirana store base of **12 million** — in five years.

"Give access to consumers to own brands through general trade, which is going inside-out. The second part is to take some of the brands in trade through Reliance's supermarkets, which is going outside in. The aim is to maximise reach and offer quality products at affordable prices," the executive added.

The affordable pricing strategy is playing out in beverages and staples, for instance. In Campa price points are almost 50% lower than rivals with carbonated beverages. The pricing of Independence, which is into packaged foods and staple items, is almost 30% lower than competitors in general trade, said distributors.

Current market base of its competitors: (million stores)

- 9
- 5.1
- 7

HUL Nestle Dabur

Continued on Page 5

LIC's YUVA YUVA Credit Life

UIN-S12N355V01 • Plan No. 875
A Non-Participating, Non-Linked, Life, Individual, Pure Risk Plan

A pure risk plan, ensuring a risk-free tomorrow

- Benefit of an attractive High Sum Assured rebate
- Special rates for women
- Higher cover at a lower premium rate
- Flexibility to choose from two benefit options: Level Sum Assured and Increasing Sum Assured

UIN-S12N355V01 • Plan No. 877
A Non-Participating, Non-Linked, Life, Individual, Pure Risk Plan

Safeguard your asset against loan liabilities

- Minimum Sum Assured ₹50 lacs (Relaxation available in certain cases)
- Attractive High Sum Assured rebate
- Special rates for women

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REMARKS OF SPURIOUS PHONE CALLS AND PICTURES / FRAUDULENT OFFERS, WHICH IS NOT INVOLVED IN ACTIVITY, THE SELLING INSURANCE POLICY, ASSUMING LOSS OR MISSTATEMENT OF PREMIUMS. Public receiving such phone calls are requested to lodge a police complaint. For more details on risk factors, conditions, please read sales brochure carefully before concluding a sale.

Har Pal Ankle South

India joins 3 more IPEF pacts

MUKESH JAGOTA
New Delhi, September 22

INDIA ON SUNDAY signed up to join the clean and fair economy components, and the overarching agreement of Indo Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity (IPEF), at Delaware in the US. The signing took place in the presence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who was on a three-day visit to the country for the Quad Summit.

With this signing, India has formally committed to all components of the IPEF framework that it had previously agreed to join.

However, India has chosen not to participate in Pillar I, which deals with trade, opting instead for observer status in the trade negotiations.

The clean economy falls under Pillar III, and the fair economy is covered in Pillar IV of IPEF. India had already signed on to Pillar II, which focuses on supply chains. The supply chain agreement came into effect in February.

Other members of the 14-nation IPEF signed agreements for Pillars III and IV, along with the overarching framework, during a ministerial meeting in Singapore in June. India was unable to sign at that time due to ongoing general elections and delays in completing domestic approval processes.

IPEF was launched in 2022 in Tokyo and includes 14 countries: Australia, Brunei, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Malaysia, New Zealand, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam

EASING SUPPLY CHAINS, BOOST TO TRADE

■ The IPEF agreement was signed in the presence of PM Modi

■ He is on a three-day visit to the US for the Quad Summit

■ India will not participate in Pillar I, which deals with trade, opting instead for observer status in the trade negotiations

■ The clean economy falls under Pillar III, and the fair economy is covered in Pillar IV of IPEF

■ India had already signed on to Pillar II, which focuses on supply chains



Concerns remain, says GTRI

THE NEGOTIATIONS FOR the IPEF have been conducted “in secrecy”, with limited public input, raising concerns about whether India has retained sufficient flexibility and policy space to achieve its economic goals, according to Global Trade Research Initiative (GTRI).

One major issue in the Supply Chain Pillar is whether the agreement might restrict members from trading critical materials, particularly with China.

“It’s hoped that India has

negotiated enough flexibility to avoid strict clauses, such as the prohibition on export restrictions. These are crucial during emergencies, as no country can be expected to supply essential goods when facing its own crisis,” GTRI noted.

In the Clean Economy Pillar, the concern is that India may have agreed to a non-derogation clause, which would prevent the government from relaxing domestic rules for projects of national importance. **FE BUREAU**

and the USA.

The IPEF partners represent 40% of global GDP and 28% of global trade in goods and services.

The clean economy agreement

aims to accelerate efforts among IPEF members towards energy security and transition, climate resilience and adaptation and the mitigation of greenhouse gas emis-

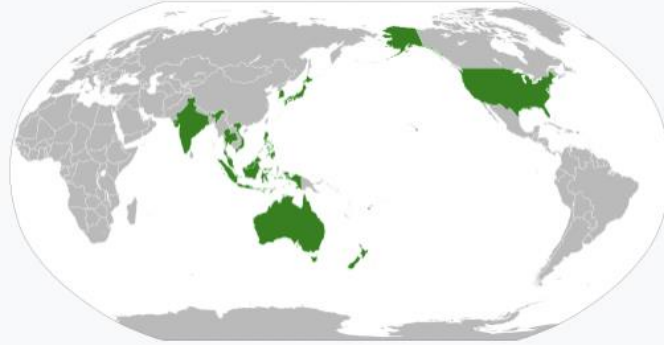
sions. It also seeks to innovate ways to reduce dependence on fossil fuels and promote the deployment of clean energy and climate-friendly technologies.

According to a statement by the commerce ministry, the clean energy pact will encourage investments, project financing (including concessional financing), joint collaborative projects, workforce development and technical assistance. It will also support capacity building for industries, particularly micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs), and facilitate the integration of Indian companies into global value chains, especially within the Indo-Pacific region. These efforts will be carried out through joint initiatives such as Cooperative Work Programmes, the IPEF Catalytic Capital Fund and the IPEF Accelerator.

The fair economy agreement aims to create a more transparent and predictable business environment, promote a level playing field, and enhance efforts to prevent and combat corruption. It also establishes confidential systems, improves tax transparency, and facilitates the exchange of information for tax purposes.

“It focuses on enhancing information sharing among partners, facilitating asset recovery, and strengthening cross-border investigations and prosecutions. This will also support India’s efforts in fighting corruption, money laundering, and terror financing,” the commerce ministry said.

Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity

















Members of IPEF


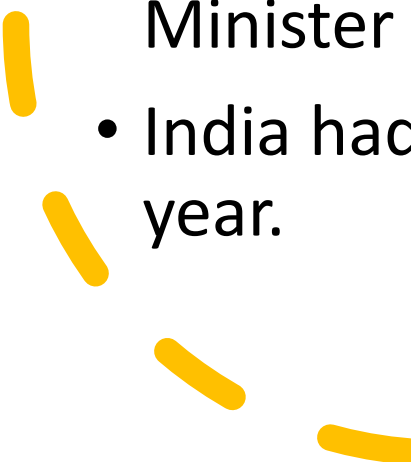
Type

Economic initiative

Membership

14 countries

-  Australia [\[hide\]](#)
-  Brunei
-  Fiji
-  India
-  Indonesia
-  Japan
-  Malaysia
-  New Zealand
-  Philippines
-  Singapore
-  South Korea
-  Thailand
-  United States
-  Vietnam


- 
- **New Accords Signed:** Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity (IPEF)
 - India has joined agreements on the **clean energy** and **fair economy** components of the IPEF, along with the overarching IPEF agreement.
 - The signing took place in Delaware, USA, in the presence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi during his visit to attend the Quad Summit.
 - India had already joined the **supply chains** pillar (Pillar II) earlier this year.
- 



- **India's Position on Trade Pillar:**

- India opted out of the **Pillar I**, which focuses on **trade**. It has chosen observer status due to concerns about sensitive trade negotiations, particularly those involving China.


- **Pillar III (Clean Economy) & Pillar IV (Fair Economy):**



- The clean economy initiative promotes investment in **clean energy projects**, including financing, joint collaborative ventures, and support for Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in energy transition efforts.



- **Concerns Over IPEF:**

- India's decision to not participate in Pillar I stems from **secrecy** in negotiations and concerns over restrictive trade provisions.
 - One key issue is whether the IPEF will allow enough flexibility for India and other nations to meet their economic goals and ensure essential goods are available, especially during crises.
- 

Importance of the Agreement:

The IPEF is significant, representing 40% of the global GDP and 28% of global trade. It aims to reduce fossil fuel dependence, promote clean energy, and improve transparency in trade relations across 14 Indo-Pacific nations.

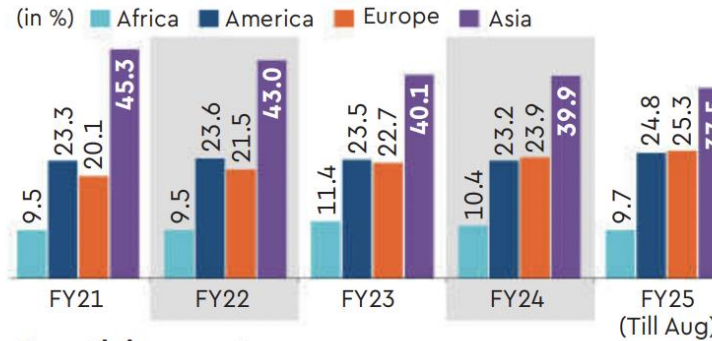
Efforts include fostering economic collaborations, especially in sectors like **renewable energy** and **supply chain resilience**.

Asia loses share in India's exports

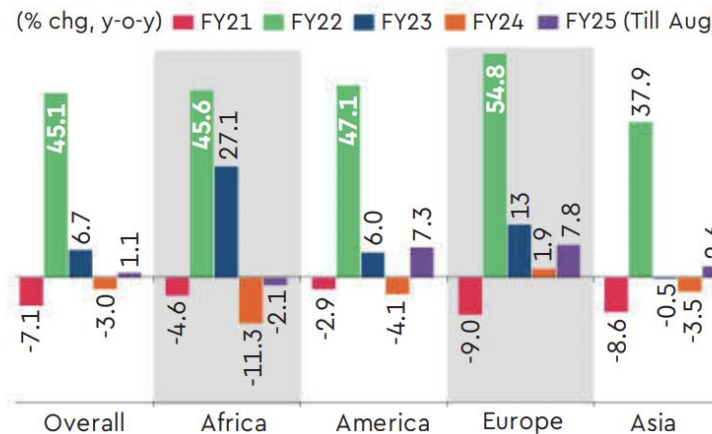
IN THE FOUR YEARS to FY24, while India's goods exports to America have remained stagnant at a tad above 23% of its total merchandise exports, shipments to Europe rose to 24% in FY24 from 20% in FY21, reports **Saikat Neogi**. Exports to Asia have dropped from 45% in FY21 to 40% in FY24. In April-August of the current fiscal year, share of exports to America in total exports increased to 25%, while Europe's share too rose to 25%. Asian markets, on the other hand, continued to cede ground, with their share in India's total goods exports dropping further to 38%. To be sure, while India's overall goods exports contracted 3% in FY24, shipments to America and Asia contracted 4% and 3.5% respectively. Exports to Europe, however, rose around 2% in FY24. In FY25 till August, while the overall exports grew marginally at 1%, shipments to America and Europe rose at 7.3% and 7.8%, respectively.



Region-wise share of India's exports



Growth in exports





Source: Economic Outlook



Border Management: Government to fence the Myanmar border

- 
- The government has sanctioned **₹31,000 crore to fence the Myanmar border**, which spans **1,643 km across Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur, and Mizoram**.
 - The Home Minister cited **border issues as a root cause of Manipur's ethnic violence**. So far, 30 km of fencing has been completed, with ongoing work in Manipur.
 - The **Free Movement Regime along the border has been scrapped**. Efforts to restore peace between the **Meitei and Kuki-Zo communities**, amid ongoing violence that has displaced over 60,000 people, are underway.
- 



- 
- FMR, implemented in 2018, the Free Movement Regime (FMR) **permits residents on both sides of the 1,643 km India-Myanmar border** to travel up to 16 km into each other's territory without a visa.
 - This requires a border pass with one-year validity, allowing a two-week stay. The border spans four states: **Mizoram, Manipur, Nagaland, and Arunachal Pradesh.**
- 

India and Myanmar share a 1,643 km border along four northeastern states



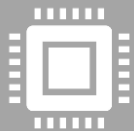
A stylized sun graphic on the left side of the slide. It consists of a solid yellow circle at the bottom left, with several short, thick yellow dashes forming an arc above it, suggesting rays of light. The background is a solid orange color.

Fast track immigration- trusted traveller programme

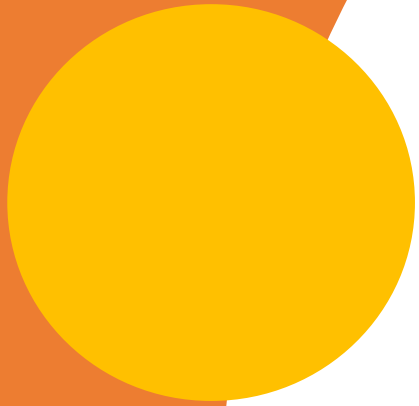
- 
- India has launched its **first Fast Track Immigration-Trusted Traveller Programme (FTI-TTP)** aimed at providing quicker immigration processing for **High-Net-Worth Individuals (HNWIs), CEOs, businessmen, and Overseas Citizens of India (OCI)**.
 - The program, **operational at major airports such as Delhi and Mumbai**, offers faster immigration clearance through e-gates.
- 




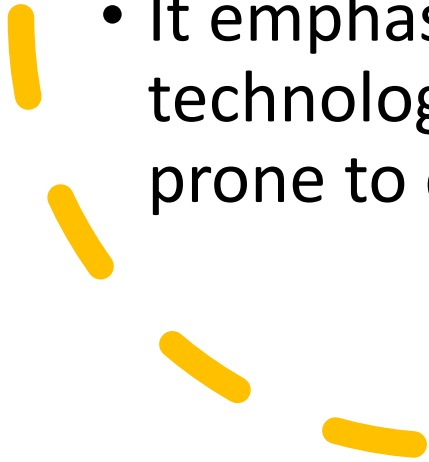
Enrollees must apply online, provide biometrics at airports or Foreigners Regional Registration Offices (FRRO), and can enjoy fast-track clearance for up to five years.



The program ensures secure handling of personal data and is inspired by the US Global Entry system, tailored to Indian needs.



Exercise AIKYA

- 
- The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) and the Southern Command of the Indian Army launched a two-day national symposium, “Exercise AIKYA,” focusing on disaster management.
 - The event includes simulations, technology discussions, and expert insights on disaster preparedness.
 - It emphasized the role of defence forces and the importance of technology in managing disasters, particularly in southern states prone to cyclones and floods.
- 



Jordan

- 
- **Jordan has become the first country in the world to receive World Health Organization (WHO) verification for eliminating leprosy.**
 - **This achievement highlights the country's strong political commitment and effective public health strategies, with no locally transmitted cases reported for over two decades.**
 - **Jordan's success serves as a global model, demonstrating the power of sustained efforts and collaboration in public health.**
- 



Lebanon

Golan Heights

Syria

Iraq

Mediterranean Sea

Sea of Galilee

Jordan River

WEST BANK

Irbid

Al Mafraq

Ar Ruwayshid

Syrian Desert

Salt

Az Zarqa

Azraq

Amman

Jerusalem

Ma'daba

Dead Sea

Al Karak

Jordan

Saudi Arabia

Israel

Ard As Sawwan Desert

Petra

Ma'an

Al'Aqabah

Gulf of Aqaba

Egypt (Sinai)

N

50 mi



50 km



JORDAN



LOW / HILLS / MOUNTAINS



India Joins International Big Cat Alliance

- 
- After an approval from the Union Cabinet, India has formally joined the International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA), by signing and ratification of the Framework Agreement of IBCA.
 - **International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA)**
 - The alliance was conceived as a multi-country, multi-agency coalition of **96** big cat range countries and others to establish a common platform for conservation.
- 


- 
- **Objective:** Focus of the Alliance is to conserve **seven big cats** of the world which includes Tiger, Lion, Leopard, Snow Leopard, Puma, Jaguar and Cheetah.
 - **In India** out of the seven big cats **only five** — tiger, lion, leopard, snow leopard and cheetah — are found.
 - **Funding:** The government also approved a one-time budgetary support of **₹150 crore** for a period of five years from **2023-24 to 2027-28**.
- 

- 
- **Governance:** IBCA governance consists of an Assembly of Members, Standing Committee and a Secretariat with its **Head Quarter in India.**
 - **All UN member countries are eligible** for becoming a member of IBCA.
 - So far 4 countries have become members of IBCA including **India, Nicaragua, Eswatini and Somalia.**
- 


-



Global Cybersecurity Index 2024

- 
- India has achieved Tier 1 status in the Global Cybersecurity Index (GCI) 2024, with a score of 98.49 out of 100, marking it as a global leader in cybersecurity.

- **About**

- India's success is driven by robust cybercrime laws, sector-specific Computer Incident Response Teams (CSIRTs), education initiatives, and international collaborations.
 - India's global leadership is reinforced by international partnerships and agreements to enhance cybersecurity capacity and information sharing
- 

Word of the day

Pendant:


an adornment that hangs from a piece of jewelry (necklace or earring); held from above and hanging down

Usage: *She wore a blue pendant around her neck.*

Pronunciation: bit.ly/pendantpro

International Phonetic

Alphabet: /'pɛnd(ə)nt/

A group of people are clapping in a dimly lit room. The focus is on the hands and forearms of several individuals, with some in the foreground and others blurred in the background. The lighting is soft and moody, creating a sense of collective appreciation or celebration. An orange horizontal bar is located in the top left corner of the image.

Thank you
guys.
