

EXPLAINED

MEDICINE NOBEL FOR SCIENTISTS BEHIND mRNA VACCINE AGAINST COVID PAGE 12

NITISH, TEJASHWI WELCOME SURVEY, SAY GOVT will plan policies accordingly to benefit all

BJP: WILL ASSESS FINDINGS, SURVEY DOES NOT reflect changed social and economic realities

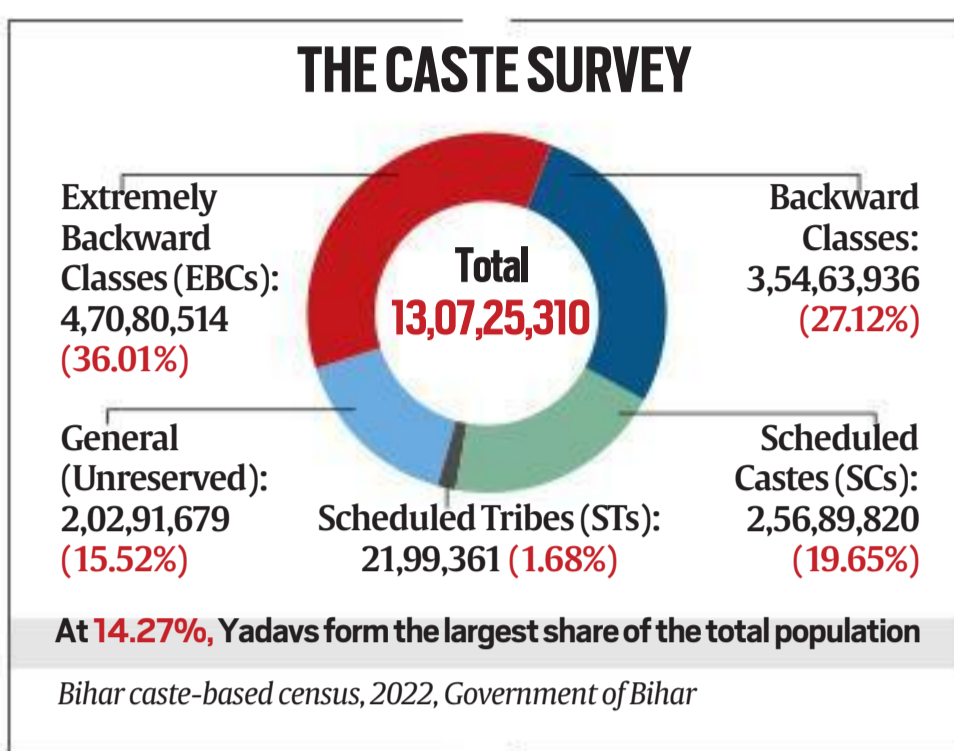
Bihar puts number to its castes: EBCs at 36%, push OBC count to 63%

OBCs jump 10% since 1931 count; Yadavs at 14.27% form largest share

SANTOSH SINGH
PATNA, OCTOBER 2

AT A time when the BJP and Congress are vying with each other for the OBC vote in the coming elections, Bihar Chief Minister and JD(U) supremo Nitish Kumar on Monday stole a march over them.

Choosing Gandhi Jayanti to make the announcement, the Nitish government revealed the results of its caste survey, putting



the combined OBC strength in the state at 63% — a 10% leap over their share estimated by the

1931 census, the last time caste enumeration was done in the

Mandal parties hope for second wind as BJP looks to build backward bastion

SANTOSH SINGH & VIKAS PATHAK
PATNA, NEW DELHI, OCT 2

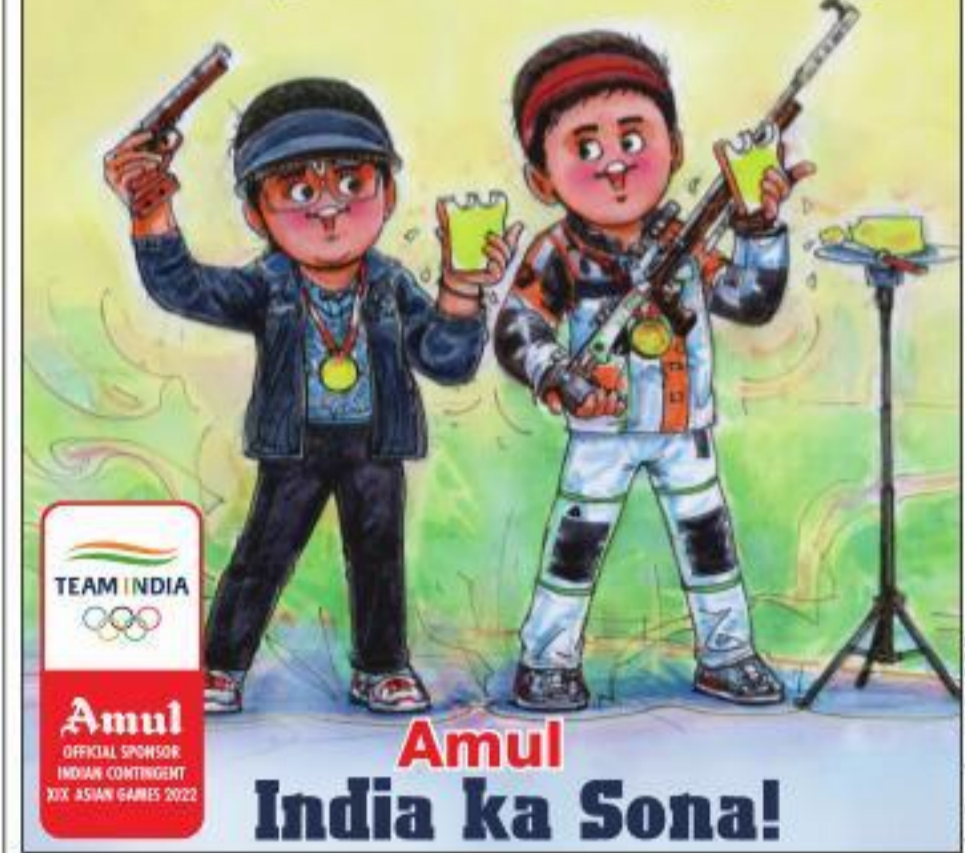
LESS THAN nine months to the general elections, Bihar's caste survey released Monday comes amid an increasing chorus of caste as a factor of political empowerment and representation — across the political divide.

The Opposition has made the caste census and Other Backward

Classes (OBC) sub-quota in the women's reservation law a major issue. The Congress, too, has thrown its weight behind the demand with Rahul Gandhi saying that he "regretted 100%" that the UPA did not include the OBC sub-quota in the women's Bill of 2008.

MORE REPORTS
PAGES 5, 12

Shooting stars shining bright



PM flags Kanhaiya Lal killing: 'Video viral... Cong saw a votebank'

HAMZA KHAN & ANAND MOHAN J
JAIPUR, BHOPAL, OCTOBER 2

ADDRESSING SEPARATE public events in poll-bound Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh on Monday, Prime Minister Narendra Modi raised the killing of Kanhaiya Lal — a tailor in Udaipur who was hacked to death in June last year — to target the Congress.

"Aap mujhe bataiye, jo Udaipur mein hua, vaisi kabhi aapne kalpana bhi ki thi? Jis Rajasthan ne dushman par bhi dhokhe se vaar na karne ki parampara ko jiya hai, us Rajasthan ki dharti par itna bada paap hua. Kapde silane ke bahane log aate hain aur bina dar, bina khauf ke, tailor ka gala kaat dete hain, aur video banakar garv se viral kar dete hain. Congress sarkar ko usmein bhi votebank ki chintni satati hai," Modi said at a



Prime Minister Narendra Modi at a public meeting in Chittorgarh on Monday. ANI

rally in Rajasthan's Chittorgarh. ("Tell me, did you ever imagine an incident like what happened in Udaipur? Such a big sin took place on the land of Rajasthan, which has lived the tradition of not attacking even the enemy by deceit. They

6 killed in UP village over land dispute, 14 detained

MANISH SAHU
LUCKNOW, OCTOBER 2

SIX PERSONS, including five of a family, were killed over an almost decade-old land dispute that flared up Monday morning at Fatehpur village in Deoria district of Uttar Pradesh.

According to police, a former zila panchayat member, Prem Yadav (53), was attacked with blunt objects and killed by his rival Satya Prakash Dubey and his family members when he went to his house. In retaliation, a group of people killed Satya Prakash, his wife and three children, including two daughters. One son survived the attack and

A fisherman, Ganesh idol plank and a boy found alive at sea 26 hours later

KAMAAL SAIYED
SURAT, OCTOBER 2

TEN NAUTICAL miles off the coast of Surat's Dumas shore is where a small miracle of sorts took place, as a 14-year-old boy, who got swept away while trying to save his brother at the beach 26 hours earlier, was found clinging to the remains of a wooden plank used to support a Ganesh idol.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



Lakhan Devipujak was swept away after saving his brother

For 63-yr-old, India-Pak match about meeting granddaughter for first time

PRATYUSH RAJ
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 2

LIYAKAT KHAN, a retired Block Development Officer from Haryana's Nuh district, can't wait for the India-Pakistan World Cup match in Ahmedabad on October 14, and his reasons aren't just cricketing. The most-watched match of the mega event will give him a chance to hold his two-year-old granddaughter in his arms for the first time.

It's been four years since Khan's daughter, Samiya, got



Samiya and Hasan Ali got married in Dubai in 2019

married to Pakistan pacer Hasan Ali in Dubai in 2019. After her wedding, she wasn't able to make the trip across the border — till now.

"My wife went to Pakistan in 2021 when my daughter was expecting her first child. We will meet again, hopefully, in Ahmedabad. I can't wait to hold my grandchild," says Khan, 63, who lives in Chandeni village.

Before the Pakistan team's visit to India, there were days clouded by uncertainty over the long-awaited family reunion.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Adhik jaankari ke liye apne MFD/RIA se sampark karein ya scan karein



SIP ke fayde



Market ki timing se azadi



Nivesh raashi chunne ki azadi



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RESEARCH 'MAKING' OF MAHATMA: WHAT THE MANY GANDHI'S STATUES TELL US ABOUT INDIA From statues of him dotting small Indian towns to a meditative Gandhi at the Parliament complex in New Delhi...

EXPRESS AUDIO What the emphasis on non-violence actually meant to Gandhi In this episode, host Sandip talks to Jyotirmaya Sharma, professor of political science...

Indian scientists hail Nobel for medicine, say mRNA vaccines possible for TB, others

ANURADHA MASCARENHAS PUNE, OCTOBER 2 TWO SCIENTISTS, Hungarian-born American Katalin Karikó and American Drew Weissman, won the Nobel Prize in medicine on Monday for discoveries that enabled the creation of mRNA vaccines against Covid-19...

FROM PAGE ONE Bihar puts a number to its castes

country—and adding fresh vigour to the Opposition's demand for a caste census. It might also cast a shadow over the Modi government's achievement in passing the law to reserve seats for women in state Assemblies and the Lok Sabha...

PM flags Kanhaiya Lal killing

(the killers) come on the pretext of getting clothes stitched, slit the tailor's throat without fear, and then proudly make the video viral. And the Congress government is worried about votebank even then...

Govt teacher travels 45 km daily to teach a single student in Pune

ATIKH RASHID PUNE, OCTOBER 2 FOR ALL intents and purposes, the single-storey primary school building on gateless compound in Atalwadi appears closed—the playground is covered in overgrown weeds and all the classrooms in the front are padlocked...

6 killed in UP

was admitted to hospital with critical injuries. Both the attacks took place in less than 30 minutes, police said, adding that 14 people have been detained. Heavy police deployment has been made in the village considering that the dispute involves two castes.

Mandal parties hope for second wind

Barely days ago, PM Narendra Modi spoke of his OBC identity to hit back at the Congress and alleged that by abusing him regularly the Opposition party was abusing all OBCs.

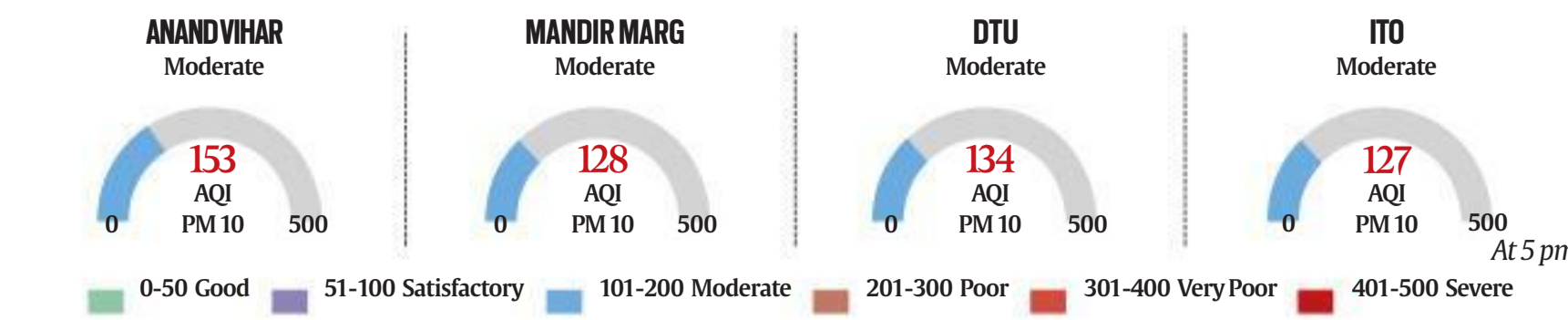
Swept into sea, Gujarat boy found

According to his family, the boy, Lakhman Devipujak, was playing at the beach with his younger brother Karan (12) and sister Anjali (8), and their grandmother Sevantaben Devipujak, on the afternoon of September 29 when the waves dragged the two boys in...

India-Pak match about granddaughter

First, there were questions about the team's travel to India, and later, Hasan Ali wasn't named in the provisional World Cup squad. It was only after Naseem Shah suffered an injury during last month's Asia Cup, that Ali was named as a late replacement.

3 THE CITY



SKY WATCH

FORECAST: October 3
Mainly clear sky. Mist in the morning.

MAX: 35 (0.8°C above normal)
MIN: 20 (2.3°C below normal)

Former constable's murder: Cops question dhaba owner, witnesses to nail co-accused

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 2

DAYS AFTER a Delhi Police constable and his aides were arrested for allegedly murdering a 28-year-old former cop two years ago, police said the accused would travel at least two hours from Delhi every time he wanted to call the victim's family.

The deceased, Monica Yadav, went missing from her PG in Mukherjee Nagar in September 2021. Her skeletal remains were recovered on Saturday and her senior, 42-year-old Surender Singh Rana, was arrested. Police said the accused wanted to be in a relationship with her and forced her to live with him. When she rejected his advances, he planned to kill her.

Monica had resigned from the police force and was preparing for UPSC exams. On September 8, 2021, the ac-



Monica Yadav's skeletal remains were recovered on Saturday



family from different states. Police said Ravin is Rana's brother-in-law. DCP (Crime) Sanjay Bhatia

Monday said further investigation has revealed that on September 11, 2021, Ravin hired a woman and the duo went to a dhaba, almost 2-2.5 hours from Delhi. "Ravin would often hire different women and ask them to pose as the deceased. They would go to different dhabas and hotels in Punjab, Haryana, Shimla and leave their ID documents to fool police. We have now traced and questioned the owner of one dhaba, Bhagat Singh Dhaba. The witness, Samunder Singh (60), was examined and he identified Ravin. He said Ravin came with a woman and stayed for some time," said an officer.

Investigators said Rajpal's role has been confirmed as an aide who helped the accused procure a SIM which was used to make calls to the family. Police said they also identified a shop in Haryana's Atela where Rajpal had issued the SIM card using a fake name, 'Pawan Kumar'.

Eye on polls, Delhi BJP to ensure women get leadership roles

GAYATHRI MANI
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 2

WITH THE Lok Sabha Polls scheduled for next year and Delhi assembly polls a year after, the Delhi unit of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) is planning to increase the participation of women in leadership roles.

According to leaders, by deploying more women leaders with decision-making powers at ground level, the party aims to woo women voters, which it believes it has lost to Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) over the years.

The state unit has decided to appoint at least one woman in one out of three leadership roles in each of its 14 districts and increase the number of women leaders in the 256 wards (mandal). There are two leadership positions — president and general secretary — at the ward level.

"Current voting patterns show that AAP has a very good hold and influence among women voters and the reason behind this is their women-centric schemes such as free bus rides, which are popular among the women and young girls students. Once appointed, women in leadership roles will work at the grassroots level and promote various women-centric schemes of the Centre, such as beti padhao beti bachao and free ration scheme," said a party leader.

A party official also said that the step will help build the party's image as one that believes in equal participation in politics. "It will take time to get to a stage where half the leaders are women, but this is going to be the first step towards increasing women's political participation," he said.

The leaders will be ground-level workers who mingle with people and meet them daily.

'PLANNING TERROR STRIKES IN INDIA USING SPECIAL IEDs': SPECIAL CELL

B.Tech grad, Physics teacher: 3 men 'part of ISIS terror module' arrested

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 2

THREE MEN were arrested by the Delhi Police Special Cell Monday for allegedly being operatives of a Pakistan-ISIS-sponsored module. According to police, the module was at an "advanced stage of planning terror strikes in India" using specially designed Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) that were tested in forest areas over months.

Police said the accused are Shah Nawaz Alam (31), a resident of Hazaribagh in Jharkhand; Mohammad Rizwan Ashraf (28) from Lucknow; and Mohammad Arshad Warsi from Garhwa district in Jharkhand. The latter was presently residing in Delhi's Jamia Nagar. While Rizwan Ashraf was arrested from Lucknow, Shah Nawaz was arrested from Jaitpur and Warsi from Moradabad. Iron pipes, chemicals, time devices, pistol cartridges, among other items used to make explosives were recovered from Shah Nawaz's possession, added police.

Officers said that the three men swore allegiance to ISIS as their Pakistan handlers had ties to ISIS as well as Pakistan ISI. They added that ISIS operated in the background so it circumvents scrutiny by international agencies. Pak-ISIS handlers were controlling the activities of the three men, officers added.

Special CP (Special Cell) HGS Dhaliwal said the accused were produced before a local court and remanded to seven-day police custody.

Police said the men were "heavily religiously indoctrinated". "The accused are involved in several terror attack cases across the country and were being controlled by cross-border handlers from Pakistan. Early in interrogation has so far revealed that they had influence in Western and Southern India, where they had carried out an extensive recon. They had also tried to set up base



Special CP (Special Cell) HGS Dhaliwal (left) said all three accused studied B.Tech

in the Western Ghats and carried out an elaborate recon at Gujarat," said the Special CP.

Officers added that the accused had strategised local procurement of weapons so that the blame did not fall on cross-border elements. "All three had a scientific bend of mind which helped them test bombs in forest areas to ensure success during final execution," said Dhaliwal.

According to police, Shah Nawaz had come to Delhi in November 2016 to prepare for the SSC exam and stayed in Abul Fazal Enclave. He would go to Shaheen Bagh to allegedly listen to lectures by Radical Islamic group Hizb-ut-Tahrir. Around this time, Shah Nawaz became "influenced by ISIS ideology".

In 2016, Shah Nawaz also met Rizwan and they became good friends. "Rizwan was also inclined to the ISIS. Shah Nawaz was arrested in Hazaribagh in multiple cases of dacoity and theft in 2019 and remained in jail for 8-9 months," said Dhaliwal. In 2020, he was granted bail.

Later, Shah Nawaz started communicating with a foreign-based ISIS handler and Rizwan also established contact with the same person. "They visited several places like Lavasa, Mahabaleshwar, Goa, Hubli to find suitable hideouts in the Western Ghats to

'Men learnt to make bombs via videos sent on messaging apps'

JATIN ANAND
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 2

THE THREE alleged ISIS operatives arrested by the Delhi Police Special Cell were "learning bomb making" through exchange of videos with their "trans-national handlers" on encrypted messaging apps, according to intelligence sources aware of details related to their interrogation.

Termining Shah Nawaz Alam (31) the key player for allegedly planning to carry out terror strikes in northern India, sources claimed since the trio were "just starting out", their handlers were sending them instructional videos on bomb-making followed by assessments of "videos of their work".

"Alam used to receive instructional videos on configuring Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) from his handlers who had further tasked him with sending them real-time videos of putting the devices together," a source claimed, citing his interrogation.

"Apart from assessing videos of the couple constructing IEDs so they could correct him and fill in any gaps in creating them, the handlers also asked them to share videos of test blasts so they could check if the device had detonated properly for feedback on making effective ones," the source also claimed.

In addition to being in contact with handlers in "Pakistan as well as Syria" through popular messaging apps, sources claimed, the three had charted out potential targets ranging including "temples, government installations and local BJP leaders". "Shah Nawaz had led the recon of several locations across the country and shared information of locations that could potentially be targeted with his handlers who are based in more than one international location," sources claimed.

Shah Nawaz's wife, whom sources said was also "a potential threat, was also part of the IED assembling and assessment exercise. "Shah Nawaz got married just three years ago to a woman in Aligarh," police claimed.

The couple had, according to police, taken to making IEDs in Delhi until they found some suitable contacts to be able to migrate to Afghanistan. These IEDs, police claimed, were tested by them at several locations in Delhi, Rajasthan and Uttarakhand.



The men were on the NIA's wanted list

Hindu Raksha Dal leader 'threatens' traffic cop for issuing challan, FIR registered

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
GHAZIABAD, OCTOBER 2

GHAZIABAD POLICE registered two FIRs against Bhubendra Tomar alias Pinky Chaudhary, leader of Hindu Raksha Dal, for threatening a traffic policeman and "using abusive language about Hindu religion".

A purported video, where a group of Chaudhary's supporters were seen misbehaving and threatening a traffic cop who had issued a challan again a mini truck for using religion-related remarks, has also emerged. The UP police has been issuing challans against those using stickers signifying caste or religious remarks on vehicles.

One of the FIRs has been registered at Nandgram police station for rioting with deadly weapon, breach of peace, causing hurt and deterring a public servant from discharging their duty, among others. Along with Chaudhary, the driver of the mini truck and 10-12 other persons have been booked in the case.

"On October 1, I was on my duty at Morti Tiraha at Nandgram police station area. Around 4:30 pm, I issued a e-challan for traffic violations against a mini truck which was going towards Hindon Airport. Due to this, the driver misbehaved with me. After a while he came back with 10-12 people and they misbehaved with me. One of them, Pinky Chaudhary threatened me and interfered with my work," read the FIR registered on the complaint of Dinesh Kumar, head constable, traffic police.

The second FIR has been registered against Chaudhary at Shalimar Garden police station. "We have received a video, which shows Chaudhary used abusive language about Hindu religion along with his supporters and religious sentiments have been hurt. Taking cognizance of the video, a case has been registered," said Suryabali Maurya, ACP Shalimar Garden.

New unit to ensure multi-modal integration plans take off in city

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 2

CROWDED AREAS and those where different modes of transport converge are expected to soon get a people-friendly revamp with a new unit being set up to coordinate implementation of plans that have been hanging fire for years. L-G VK Saxena has issued directions to constitute a Project Management Unit to ensure Multi-Modal Integration plans for Delhi, which so far exist only for metro stations and that too only on paper, take shape on the ground.

According to L-G House officials, the unit will function under the Transport Commissioner and have agencies such as the DDA, PWD, DMRC, MCD and Traffic Police on board. This was after Saxena expressed "deep

concern" for lack of coordination and cooperation among agencies at a meeting last month.

Plans to integrate different modes of transport are to be implemented in, and around, at least six metro city stations which have transformed into public transportation hubs over the years. The plans include building interconnected street networks and designs, street crossings with signals, parking space for cycles, buses, auto rickshaw and cars, public toilets, lighting, hawkers zones, signages, street maps and public transportation for last-mile connectivity.

"We will begin by putting a plan in place prioritising two kinds of transit points — those which see high footfall and those which have several modes of transport converging at a single point. The Unit will be constituted soon," a government official said.

'Weren't paid a paisa for our labour:' MGNREGA workers from West Bengal ready to protest today

UPASIKA SINGHAL
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 2

"OUR FAITH in the central government is lost," says Budhanrui Das (45), a day labourer from Jamuria, Paschim Bardhaman, West Bengal, who has been waiting for his MGNREGA wages since 2021. He and many other beneficiaries of the MGNREGA (Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act) scheme have been trickling into Ambedkar Bhawan in Jhadowalan, in buses arranged by the All India Trinamool Congress (AITC), to demand their pending wages.

On Tuesday, they will join the protest led by AITC national general secretary Abhishek Banerjee at Jantar Mantar against the alleged withholding of funds for MGNREGA workers.



The workers have set up camp at Ambedkar Bhawan in Jhadowalan. Express

A temporary tent has been set up to house the 4,000-odd beneficiaries and party members, mattresses line the floor as far as the eye can see and fans whirl fruitlessly trying to beat the humid September afternoon heat.

Teams of doctors, who are also AITC party members, make rounds in the camp. The beneficiaries have travelled by road for

three days straight and some have fallen sick with dehydration and heat fatigue.

First, they travelled by bus from their districts to Kolkata. There they were housed in Netaji Indoor Stadium for another day while party members attempted to make arrangements for buses to the national capital.

According to Shreshtha, a member of the AITC's student wing, the party had applied for a special train but it was rejected. The party then arranged around 50 private buses to bring people to Delhi.

"We have done all the work the 100-day scheme asked of us — deepened and cleaned ponds, constructed roads, made canals and embankments," said Bappa Bauri (35), another day labourer, adding, "But we weren't paid a paisa for our labour."

"They sent so many people

from Delhi during the 2021 elections but could not make a dent in our votes," said Jyotirmoy Mandal (40), a day labourer from Khargram, Murshidabad.

However, Mandal's troubles go beyond politics. He owns 2.5 acres of land on which he cultivates paddy, wheat and mustard. Of late, even agriculture has not kept his financial burdens at bay, but added to them. "After paying for labour, fertilisers, seeds and tractor rent I'm left with only Rs 6,000-7,000," he said.

According to Md. Rahul Sheikh (32), a small business owner from Khargram, some women in Murshidabad turn to beedi-making to earn some extra money. Here too the wages are sparse — Rs 220 per 1,000 beedis. "The woman has to leave every other responsibility and devote her whole day to making beedis," he said.

SAMAN HUSAIN
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 2

FROM THANJAVUR to Chembur, people travelled across states to pay homage to the Mahatma at Rajghat on the occasion of Gandhi Jayanti Monday. Among them was Sivanganam, a resident of Thanjavur who travelled over 2,500 km on the Tamil Nadu Express on Friday to reach Delhi. This, however, is not his first visit — he has been visiting Delhi every year for the past 15 years to mark the occasion.

Sporting a white hand-spun dhoti and holding a tricolor, Sivanganam said, "I would be willing to travel any distance to pay my respects to the Mahatma."

On how he spends his annual October 2 visit to Rajghat, he said, "I reach at 10 am and profess my love for the Mahatma by prostrating in front of his memorial. I then



75-year-old Sivanganam, a resident of Thanjavur, has been coming to Rajghat for 15 years now. Express

pray and meditate. For lunch, I always carry curd rice which I eat at Rajghat. Then, I interact with people and spread awareness about the Mahatma's teachings."

The 72-year-old Gandhian also clicks pictures and gets them printed every time he visits Rajghat. "Since 2015, I have been documenting every visit... I carry them everywhere," he said.

Sivanganam believes his troubles have vanished ever since he started following the ideals of Gandhi. Impressed with Sivanganam's Gandhi attire, many visitors at Rajghat took photos with him. "It always warms my heart when kids identify me with Babu," he said.

Dengue cases in Gurgaon breach 200-mark

AISWARYA RAJ
GURGAON, OCTOBER 2

WITH 201 dengue cases, Gurgaon breached the 200-mark on Monday, with one death reported so far this year, officials said. As per the health department, around 75 per cent of the cases required hospitalisations. "It has surfaced that the main strain of virus is DENV 2 strain or D2, which is more severe and virulent than the other strains. We

have ensured that there are daily inspections to check breeding. Situation is under control now," Gurgaon DSO Dr Jai Parkash said. Charkhi Dadri reported the most cases in Haryana at 441 and Rewari at 323 so far. Of the 16 cases in the state on Monday, two were from Gurgaon. Gurgaon CMO Dr Virender Yadav said, "Last year, number of cases were more and Gurgaon is not one among the 10 districts with the highest cases." Among the 50 samples sent

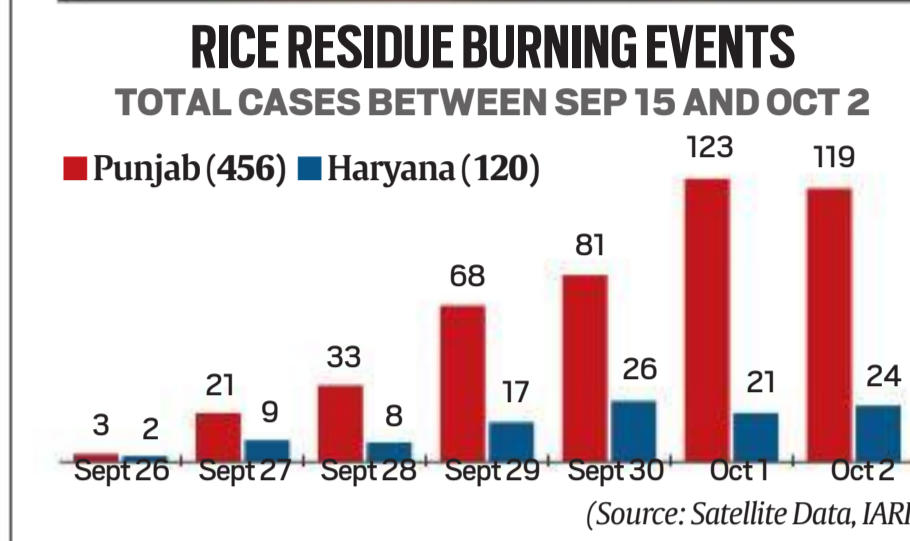
to ascertain the strain, Dr Yadav said, it was found that most of them, 21, had DENV2. He said that the symptoms include sudden drop in platelet count, high fever, headache, dengue hemorrhagic fever among others. According to the health department the most affected areas are Wazirabad, PHC Gurgaon, Garhi, Manesar, Badshahpur and Bhangrola. Meanwhile, malaria cases remain zero in the district.

CROP STUBBLE BURNING CASES IN PUNJAB ON THE RISE

Will weather aid in Capital's pollution fight like last yr? Unlikely, say experts

ABHINAYA HARIGOVIND
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 2

WITH THE paddy harvest and instances of stubble burning having picked up pace in the northern districts of Punjab, and winter around the corner, how is Delhi's air quality likely to fare this winter? According to experts, the meteorological factors that helped keep Delhi's air cleaner than usual last winter may not extend into the upcoming winter. Gufran Beig, founder-project director, System of Air Quality and Weather Forecasting and Research (SAFAR), said, "Last year, there were natural factors that came to NCR's rescue. Wind speeds were higher for a majority of the time. But this year, that is unlikely because La Nina conditions are not there. Last year, due to La Nina conditions, winds in the northern part of India were faster, while it was calmer over



the southwestern part of the country. That is one of the reasons that in the southwest, in Mumbai and other places, air quality had

worsened. But in Delhi it was better relative to the previous year. This is unlikely in an El Nino year. This year, festivals are also around the time when it is colder. Steps will have to be taken." La Nina refers to abnormally cool sea surface temperatures in the equatorial Pacific Ocean, while El Nino is the phenomenon of warmer waters in the Pacific Ocean. Last year, on the day after Diwali for instance, higher wind speeds had helped disperse pollutants, and Diwali was in October, when colder conditions had not yet set in. According to an analysis by the Centre for Science and Environment, last winter, the average PM 2.5 level in the city was the lowest from 2018-19 onwards. In November 2022, the daily peak contribution of stubble burning to PM 2.5 levels in Delhi was also lower than previous years, standing at 34%. This figure was over 40% in 2021, 2020 and 2019.

Meanwhile, satellite data from the Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IARI) shows that Punjab has recorded 456 crop residue burning events so far this season, while there have been 120 such instances in Haryana. VK Sehgal, Principal Scientist, IARI, said that in Punjab, the instances are mostly in Amritsar and Tarn Taran. "Harvesting has begun and peak of harvesting would come somewhere around the last week of October and first week of November," he said. Delhi's AQI was 146 in the 'moderate' category on Monday. According to the Air Quality Early Warning System for Delhi, the AQI is likely to remain in the 'moderate' category from October 3 to 5. The Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP) came into effect on October 1, which means that measures under GRAP can begin to be invoked when the AQI is in the 'poor' category (201 to 300).

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3	Proposed Strengthening of practical crop production instructional unit at SVPUAT Meerut.	11.40	0.23	5000+ 18% GST	60 Days	T-96, Phase-II Pallavpuram, Distt- Meerut.	T-96, Phase-II Pallavpuram, Distt- Meerut.	
4	Repair, maintenance/modernization & painting works for establishment of advance center for diagnosis & therapeutics of animal infertility at SVPUAT Meerut.(Civil work)	6.08	0.122	3000+ 18% GST	30 Days			"E" & Above
5	Construction of RCC base foundation for liquid medical oxygen (LMO) tanks in M VA S Medical college Bijnor.	7.31	0.15	3000+ 18% GST	30 Days			

The tender document can be downloaded from the website [www.http://etender.up.nic.in](http://etender.up.nic.in) during the period 03.10.2023 to 14.10.2023. The tender should be submitted up to 02:00 PM on 14.10.2023. The technical bid shall be opened on same day at 03.00 P.M.

Prospective bidders are advised to regularly check through U.P. Projects Corporation Ltd. Web site www.upprojects.org and e-tendering web site [www.http://etender.up.nic.in](http://etender.up.nic.in) for all other terms and conditions, qualifying criteria, corrigendum / amendments etc., if any, separate advertisement will not be made for the same. For any clarifications / queries the prospective bidders may contact office of the person given in col. No. 7 & 8. Undersigned reserves the right to reject any or all the tenders without assigning any reason.

Project Manager, Unit-33
U.P. Projects Corporation Ltd., Meerut.

Out for taekwondo practice, teen run over by truck on Dwarka expressway

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 2

AN EARLY morning run and exercise session by a group of Taekwondo players took a tragic turn after one of them, a 15-year-old girl, was mowed down by a truck and four others suffered severe injuries. The incident took place early Sunday on the Dwarka Expressway. The victim, Najafgarh resident Arundhati Kumar, and her friends attend Taekwondo classes in the area. The group decided to run on the expressway as there was not much crowd in the morning hours, said police. Around 5.30-5.40 am, they were doing warm-up exercises on the under-construction portion of the expressway when the truck



Arundhati Kumar (15)

who was near the railing and suffered minor injuries, said, "We woke up early and left for our Taekwondo practice. I was with four other friends on the expressway... we were jogging and doing warm-up exercises when a truck came and hit my friends. I tried to note down its numberplate but the driver fled. He was driving rashly." While Anurag was taken to record his statement, police said the others who were injured, Naina (16), Supriya (16), Rajesh (25) and Sachin (42), are undergoing treatment at a hospital. Police said they found a damaged bicycle at the spot which belonged to one of the victims. A senior officer said, "Arundhati had suffered severe injuries to her head and body and died. Her body was sent to RTRM hospital for an

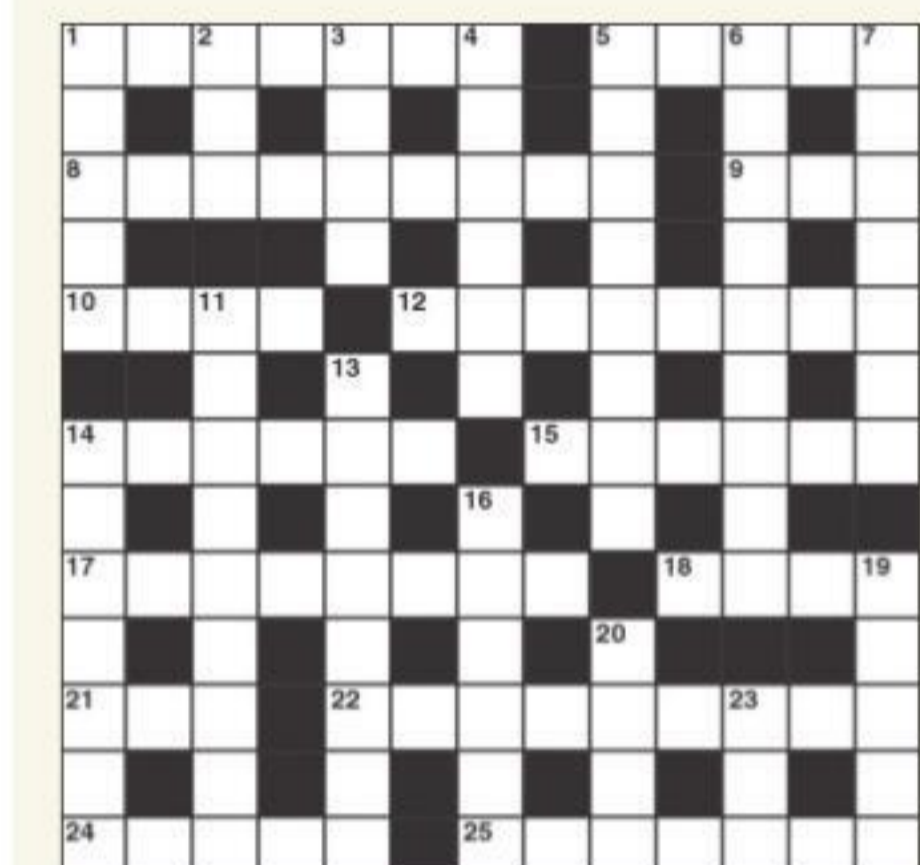
autopsy. We are looking for the accused." However, police sources said there are no CCTVs near the stretch and they are yet to identify the accused or the truck. Arundhati had been practicing Taekwondo for a few years at her school and in her area. Her father, Naveen, said, "We are very stressed. They usually go for exercises... what was her fault?" One of Anurag's relatives, who refused to be named, said, "It was horrifying... The kids usually go for jogging, nothing has happened before. We received calls from neighbours about the accident. They were rushed to the hospital in cabs, autos, cars. We want strict action against the driver." Families said the victims attend Satyendra Bisht Taekwondo Centre and have participated in competitions across Delhi.

HC rules in favour of Domino's Pizza in trademark case

MALAVIKA PRASAD
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 2

THE DELHI HC recently permanently restrained a pizza and fast food services entity, "Dominick Pizza", from using this mark after popular pizza giant Domino's Pizza moved the court in a trademark infringement lawsuit. Domino's had argued that its logo is distinctive, and features the faces of a domino which are unique and coined. "Domino's Pizza and Dominick's Pizza appear, to me, to be ex-facie deceptively similar to each other," Justice C Hari Shankar said. This, accompanied by the fact that there was also a similarity in the logos of the two entities, along with the similar goods and services provided by the two, rendered the marks "deceptively similar", the HC said.

CROSSWORD 5172



- ACROSS**
1 Negative. Utter nonsense! (3,4)
5 He gives orders for the most part (5)
8 A neat prison (6,3)
9 Everything is back to front in Holland (3)
10 Real sort of nobleman (4)
12 Detect in wrong act and uncertain touch (5,3)
14 Put on a ship taking back a native of Australia (6)
15 Trader upset by delay (6)
17 It may be regarded as a form of curiosity (3,5)
18 He continues to work for southern transport (4)
21 Lady taking orders to and fro (3)
22 Guards ordered to breached lines (9)
24 Eyesores in the way? Yes (5)
25 Spotted divine fruit inside (7)
- DOWN**
1 Hospital situated in pleasant nook (5)
2 A small drink for a small child (3)
3 Baker's list? (4)
4 Discovery means plea is changed (6)
5 Maclean's turn to show restraint (8)
6 She died with honour at stake (4,2,3)
7 Told of a family connection? (7)
11 The Government agent is here to stay (9)
13 Same ship; different stress (8)
14 Teems as spring comes in (7)
16 Unsealed circular letter to writer and editor (6)
19 Rested when a bed's made up (5)
20 It hinders progress when I'm breaking a record (4)
23 Slippery part of the elm (3)

Solutions Crossword 5171 Across: 1 Tumpike, 5 Asia, 9 Level, 10 Persist, 11 Cabinet-maker, 13 Ensign, 14 Stroll, 17 Narrow escape, 20 Innates, 21 Ideal, 22 Ease, 23 Stands by Down: 1 Tell, 2 Reveals, 3 Polling booth, 4 Kipper, 6 Slick, 7 After all, 8 Prompt action, 12 Meatime, 15 Orpheus, 16 Teaset, 18 Remus, 19 Play

JUMBLD WORDS

Given below are four jumbled words. Solve the jumbles to make proper words and move them to the respective squares below. Select the letters in the shaded squares and jumble them to get the answer for the given clue.
A man can no better than he... - Charles Stanley (6,5)

CPAAE **AIRCPY**
[Shaded squares for jumbling]

EIRRS **ABTYHP**
[Shaded squares for jumbling]

SOLUTION: AVANCE, RISER, PIRACK, BRYTH
Answer: A man can reach no better than he prevys - Charles Stanley

OVER THE HEDGE by Michael Fry & T Lewis



CALVIN & HOBBS by Bill Watterson



MARVIN by Tom Armstrong



SUDOKU 5339

Difficulty Level 4s
Instructions
To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from 1 to 9 must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Difficulty Level
1s = Very easy; 2s = Easy; 3s = Medium; 4s = Hard; 5s = Very Hard; 6s = Genius

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

SOLUTION SUDOKU 5338

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

DAY TODAY

BY PETER VIDAL

- ARIES (Mar 21 - Apr 20)**
You're now in a phase in which you need to take a more thoughtful approach. I don't mean that you've got to come over all dry, dusty and professorial, but there is no doubt that you will benefit from thinking through all the options in a finely balanced situation.
- Taurus (Apr 21 - May 21)**
Don't panic if nothing seems to work out as planned. You're entering a period of about four weeks during which you will be inclined to pick up the wrong end of the stick. Adopt a laid-back approach.
- GEMINI (May 22 - June 21)**
You seem to be in a quandary of sorts, trapped between a rock and a hard place, as they say. However, have you considered the possibility that current dilemmas result from your own impatience? If so, then the remedy lies in your hands. There may be lessons here for the future.
- CANCER (June 22 - July 23)**
You appear to have had your nose put out of joint, but when and by whom? These questions are not easy to answer, and you may be inclined to blame the wrong people. You would serve your own cause better if you bided your time.
- LEO (July 24 - Aug 23)**
Passions are still running high, most likely as a consequence of arguments which are now in the past. However, as you know, there are situations in which it is very difficult to forgive and forget, and this may be one of them. Follow a noble path and you will be the winner.
- VIRGO (Aug 24 - Sep 23)**
By rights your professional achievements should now have been rewarded with increased cash. If this is not the case, all I can suggest is that you haven't made the right connections or asked the pertinent questions. Don't give up hope, for a new set of planetary influences is being brought to bear.
- LIBRA (Sep 24 - Oct 23)**
Contradictory planetary patterns could get you off to an erratic start. Within a broadly enjoyable framework, it seems clear that the longer you spend pursuing activities which bring you pleasure, the better you'll be able to deal with problems when the time comes.
- SCORPIO (Oct 24 - Nov 23)**
You are in a position to off-load responsibilities, but it may be that attempts to cut down domestically will be balanced by expanding commitments in the big world. A feeling that you are increasingly burdened at home may not reflect the reality of the situation.
- SAGITTARIUS (Nov 24 - Dec 23)**
You may still be wondering what to do about a financial matter, but at least you can now talk to people about all the pros and cons. If a short trip is necessary, don't delay. You need to check up on instructions, just in case anything has changed while your back was turned.
- CAPRICORN (Dec 23 - Jan 20)**
Listen to reason and you'll find that family relationships improve dramatically. If you can possibly initiate discussions with children, parents and partners you'll do even better than before. Of course, that doesn't mean that they'll listen, but you can do your best.
- AQUARIUS (Jan 21 - Feb 19)**
A fantastic relationship between Neptune and Saturn should now focus your mind and concentrate your attention on long-term goals. Take immediate action to fulfil your deepest dreams. Don't worry about a spot of confusion - it might help you clarify your options.
- PISCES (Feb 20 - Mar 20)**
Try to be more businesslike over the next few weeks. It may not be to your taste, but you must go through all financial obligations with a fine tooth-comb, checking that there are no ambiguities. Consider whether you need a little extra time to yourself.

5 GOVT & POLITICS

BIHAR CASTE SURVEY

Caste survey a step towards realising JP's dream: Lalu

SANTOSH SINGH
PATNA, OCTOBER 2

HAILING THE release of Bihar caste survey report as a "historic moment", RJD national president Lalu Prasad said it was a step towards realising socialist icon Jayaprakash Narayan's dream of "Total Revolution". "These figures will set an example for the country in making holistic plans for proper development and progress of the neglected and poor and in giving representation to marginalised groups in proportion to the population," he posted on X.

Chief Minister Nitish Kumar lauded the efforts of the team involved in the survey and said, "...The survey has not only taken into account one's caste but also one's economic status, which will help us devise further policies for development of all classes."

Deputy CM Tejashwi Yadav said the state government had to conduct the caste-based survey after the Centre denied the demand of Bihar parties to conduct a nationwide survey. He also accused BJP leadership of obstructing the survey, though unsuccessfully.

Rebutting Tejashwi's allegations, BJP Rajya Sabha MP Sushil Kumar Modi said: "The BJP was a part of the unanimous resolution in legislature and also a part of the 10-party delegation headed by CM Nitish Kumar to meet the PM (Narendra Modi)." BJP state president Samrat Choudhary said, "Nitish government released the caste survey report only after we applied pressure on them. We deserve equal credit for it." He, however, voiced dissatisfaction over the survey "not giving an idea of the changed social and economic realities."

Welcoming the release of the caste survey findings, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi said the exercise has proved that 84 per cent of people in Bihar are OBCs, SCs and STs and their share should be according to their population.

Asking the BJP government to leave politics behind, Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav said, "Caste survey is the path of the country's progress, and it has become amply clear now that PDA (Pitchche, Dalit and Apsankhyak) will decide the future course of politics in the country."

BJP ally SBSP general secretary Arun Rajbhar said, "RJD and JD(U) should also release data on how much political representation their government has given to various backward castes like Rajbhar, Rajwanshi, Pal, Prajapati, etc."

Pending in SC: Question on survey or census, issues relating to privacy

ANANTHAKRISHNAN G
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 2

ALTHOUGH FINDINGS of the Bihar caste survey were released on Monday, the Nitish Kumar government's decision to conduct the exercise has been challenged in the courts and is still awaiting final outcome before the Supreme Court. It has been challenged on the grounds that it violates the Supreme Court's privacy judgment and is actually a census in the garb of a survey, which is beyond the legislative competence of the state government.

Petitions opposing the exercise were initially filed in the Supreme Court in January but it refused to entertain them and asked the petitioners to approach the High Court if they had any grievance. Subsequently, petitions were filed in the Patna High Court urging it to quash the notifications issued for the survey. Hearing the matter on April 18, the High Court orally rejected the prayer for interim relief.

On appeal, the Supreme Court on April 28 noted that the plea was pending before the High Court and asked it to decide the petitioner's fresh application for interim relief at the earliest.

On May 4, the High Court, hearing the prayer for interim re-



Bihar Chief Secretary Vivek Kumar Singh releases the caste survey findings at the old secretariat in Patna, Monday. ANI

lief, put the survey on hold. A division bench of Chief Justice K Vinod Chandran and Justice Madhuresh Prasad said the Bihar government's measure was an infringement upon the rights of Parliament and suggested that the exercise was essentially "a census". "Prima facie, we are of the opinion that the state has no power to carry out a caste-based survey, in the manner in which it is fashioned now which would amount to a census, thus impinging upon the legislative power of the Union Parliament," the bench said. It also raised questions regarding privacy and data security.

The Bihar government appealed to the Supreme Court but a bench of Justices A S Oka and

Rajesh Bindal declined to lift the stay. It said there are issues of privacy involved. Justice Oka also said the court will have to see if what is being done is indeed a census in the name of a survey.

The matter was once again heard by the HC where a bench of Chief Justice K Vinod Chandran and Justice Partha Sarathy on August 1 upheld the survey. It said: "...we find the action of the State to be perfectly valid, initiated with due competence, with the legitimate aim of providing 'development with justice'..."

Regarding privacy concerns, the High Court went by the state's affidavit, which referred to letters by the Bihar State Electronics Development Corporation Ltd, on

whose servers the data is stored, that "...application and data-based hosting related with caste-based census for State Data Centre is a secured IT Infrastructure..."

This was further challenged before the Supreme Court. In fact, documents filed in the appeal before the top court challenging the August 1 order show that state notifications in June, July, September and November 2022 had referred to the exercise as a "census".

Hearing the appeal, a two-judge bench presided by Justice Sanjiv Khanna, however, refused to stay the High Court order. "Unless a prima facie case is made out, we will not stay," said Justice Khanna.

The appellants contended that the state's move is clearly in violation of the Supreme Court's nine-judge bench verdict in the 2017 privacy case (K S Puttaswamy vs Union of India) wherein it was held that State cannot encroach on the privacy of individuals without a law to back it.

The union government also filed a brief affidavit in the Supreme Court stating that Census Act, 1948, empowers only the Centre to conduct a census. The government said that it was filing the affidavit "only with a view to place the constitutional and legal position for consideration" of the court.

Counting the gains: How the survey puts Nitish back in focus

DEEPTIMAN TIWARY
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 2

WITH HIS ties with the INDIA alliance coming under strain in recent weeks, Nitish Kumar appeared a bit distant from the Opposition bloc and in search of political preeminence. On Monday, the Bihar Chief Minister once again took centre stage in national politics following the release of the state caste survey data.

The findings of the survey are likely to help Nitish strengthen his position as a champion of the Extremely Backward Classes (EBCs), non-Yadav Other Backward Classes (OBCs), and Mahadalits — vote banks that no party can ignore ahead of the parliamentary elections next year.

According to the data, the EBCs constitute the biggest vote block with a population of 36.01%, followed by 27.12% OBCs, of whom 14.26% are Yadavs, the single-largest social group. Dalits, according to the data, constitute over 19.65% of Bihar's population against 15% recorded by the 2011 Census. The EBC and OBC data also include Pasmanda Muslims.

Notably, it was Nitish who created the political constituencies of EBCs and Mahadalits to compensate for the inadequate numbers of his own caste, Kurmis, who the survey has enumerated to be around 3% of the population. This social engineering, achieved in his first term itself, held Nitish in good stead politically for over a decade. As his social base once again shows signs of drifting away, the caste survey could be used as a glue to keep his flock together.

"Rahul Gandhi is today going around the country speaking about caste census. But Nitish Kumar raised it three years ago, followed it up with action, fought a court battle and got it done. As the champion of the EBCs and non-Yadav OBCs, it puts him leaps ahead of other leaders in the Hindi heartland. This message is not just going to impact Bihar but even percolate to UP in the context of the 2024 polls," said a senior leader of the JD(U), the CM's party.

According to the functionary, during the first INDIA meeting in



Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar speaks to the media in Patna on Monday. PTI

Patna in June, Nitish said caste census should become one of the key agendas of the alliance and asked for the bloc to announce that if INDIA wins the parliamentary elections it would conduct a caste census. But the Trinamool Congress expressed reservations at the time, the leader said. "Eventually it was accepted in the coordination meeting held at Sharad Pawar's house (last month)," he said.

Bihar's Minister for Water Resources Sanjay Kumar Jha of the JD(U) said the survey findings had demonstrated the CM's "forward-thinking approach".

"Regardless of political rhetoric, the reality is that these findings will serve as a crucial tool in tailoring our policies to cater to the diverse needs and aspirations of various castes and classes. In Bihar, targeted interventions through customized policies have significantly improved the lives of millions. We applaud our leader for paving the way, and we reiterate our commitment to conducting a pan-India caste census in 2024 if our government gets power at the Centre," Jha said.

The survey data's release also holds significance in light of Nitish's depleting strength in the state. In the last Assembly polls, though the JD(U)-BJP combine won the polls, the tally of Nitish's party fell to 43 from 71 constituencies in the 2015 elections. The BJP with 74 seats became the

senior partner in the alliance. Now with the RJD, which has 75 constituencies, he is again CM with far fewer seats than his partner.

"While Nitish Kumar's political importance in the state is on the wane, he continues to command anywhere between 5% and 7% votes on his own. Whichever way he swings could significantly benefit that alliance. He will naturally claim credit for the caste survey and it may even shore up his importance. But these polls are not going to be fought on just the caste survey. Price rise and unemployment are the issues," said an RJD leader.

Former Bihar Deputy CM and BJP leader Sushil Kumar Modi said, "When this decision was taken, we were part of the government. This is actually our baby. Conversely, in the women's reservation Bill, everyone knows what has been RJD's historical role."

A senior BJP leader said the survey numbers did not throw any surprising data as political parties had always attributed similar numbers to the castes in their internal calculations. "As of now, caste census is not an issue among the people. It may be politically used to demand greater reservation for OBCs and EBCs. That can make it an electoral issue. In Bihar, EBCs have a reservation of 20% in panchayat elections. There has been a demand for increasing it and BJP supports it. The one thing it will show though is that Nitish Kumar always knows how to remain politically relevant," he said.

INDRA SAWHNEY VS UNION OF INDIA

Bihar data can reopen debate on SC's 50% quota ceiling in 1992

APURVA VISHWANATH
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 2

UNDERLINING THE need to ensure "efficiency" in administration, the Supreme Court in its 1992 decision in Indra Sawhney vs Union of India had fixed the 50% ceiling for reservation.

The caste survey data released by the Bihar government on Monday, which puts the general category population at 15.52%, could once again reopen the debate on the Indra Sawhney ceiling.

Despite the Indra Sawhney ruling, the idea of breaching the 50% limit for reservation has had political currency. However, even as Indra Sawhney ruling is under further challenge, several legislations that could breach this limit have been blocked by the judiciary — with the exception of

the 10% EWS quota in 2019.

A nine-judge bench with a 6:3 majority, the Indra Sawhney ruling upheld the 27% reservation for socially and economically backward classes (SEBC). In doing so, the court set important precedents. It set social and educational backwardness as the criteria for a group to qualify for reservation and also reiterated the 50% limit — unless in, "exceptional circumstances".

The 76th Constitutional amendment in 1994, inserted the Tamil Nadu reservation law breaching the 50% limit — The Tamil Nadu, Backward Classes, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Reservation of Seats in Educational Institutions and of Appointments or Posts in the Services under the State) Act-1993 — into the Ninth Schedule of the Constitution.

The validity of that law, and whether its inclusion in the Ninth Schedule by a constitutional amendment while its basic structure is under challenge, is pending before a Constitution bench of the Supreme Court.

The Ninth Schedule provides the law with a "safe harbour" from judicial review under Article 31A of the Constitution. Laws placed in the Ninth Schedule cannot be challenged for reasons of violating any fundamental right protected under the Constitution.

In May 2021, a five-judge Constitution bench of the SC unanimously struck down the Maharashtra law, which provides reservation to the Maratha community, as unconstitutional, holding the total quota limit would exceed 50%. With the implementation of the Maratha quota, reservation could have

gone up to 68%. Similar to the Maratha issue are the cases of Patels in Gujarat, Jats in Haryana and Kapus in Andhra Pradesh.

In November last year, a five-judge bench of the Supreme Court upheld the 10% EWS quota, which also breached the 50% ceiling. In a 3:2 ruling, the majority opinion bypassed the Indra Sawhney rule by holding that the ceiling was for backward classes and the EWS quota provided reservation for "an entirely different class".

"Moreover... The ceiling limit... has not been held to be inflexible or inviolable for all times to come," the majority opinion had stated. However, two judges, who wrote the minority view, sounded a "cautionary note" that "permitting the breach of the 50% rule" could become a "gateway for further infractions, resulting in compartmentalisation".

CONG MLA ARREST

Mann govt's fight is against drugs, not any party or leader: Kejriwal

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
CHANDIGARH, OCTOBER 2

UNDER ATTACK from the opposition Congress over the arrest of its MLA Sukhpal Singh Khaira in a 2015 drugs case, Aam Aadmi Party chief Arvind Kejriwal Monday said the Bhagwant Mann-led Punjab government's fight is against drugs and not against any party or leader.

"Three-four days ago, a very big person was arrested on charges of drug trafficking. All the parties are hurling abuses at Bhagwant Mann, asking him why he did it. I want to ask whether drug traffickers should be arrested or not. Whether drug traffickers should be put behind bars or not? I want to tell such leaders, that our fight is not against any party, politician, or specific individual. It is against drugs," said Kejriwal.

The Delhi chief minister was addressing a gathering in Patiala after launching 'Sehatmand Punjab' — a campaign to upgrade of 40 government hospitals with Intensive Care Units (ICUs), emergency wards and operation theatres at a cost of Rs 550 crore.

Kejriwal said there was a time when Punjab was known for drugs and movies were also being made on the drugs issue. Patting Mann government, he said the Punjab Police have launched a war against drugs. "...the way police and government have waged war, it is the talking point across the country," he said.

RESUMING MINING AT BICHOLIM BLOCK

Union Environment Ministry defers decision on Vedanta's Goa mining proposal

PAVNEET SINGH CHADHA
PANAJI, OCTOBER 2

THE EXPERT Appraisal Committee (EAC) of the Union Ministry for Environment, Forest and Climate Change has deferred its decision on a proposal to grant environmental clearance to M/S Vedanta Limited for the resumption of iron ore mining at Bicholim mineral block in Goa.

In a recent meeting, the EAC for environmental appraisal of non-coal mining projects directed the project proponent to submit a letter from the Goa government's Directorate of Mines and Geology, clarifying "whether any illegal mining within the mine lease area has been carried out or not and whether the same has been carried out by M/s Vedanta Limited or not".

Bicholim Mineral Block-Block 1, which has an area of 478.5206 hectares, is spread across the villages of Bicholim, Bordem, Lamgao, Mulgoa, Mayem and Sirgao in North Goa's Bicholim Taluka. It has a proposed production capacity of 3 million tonnes per annum (MPTA).

Goa Chief Minister Pramod Sawant had said in the Monsoon Session of the legislative Assembly that the iron ore mining operations, which had been stopped since 2018 in the state,

would start by November 2023.

According to the minutes of the 20th EAC meeting held on September 21-22, the EAC said that there was no clarity regarding the involvement of forest land within the mine lease area as contradictory information was given by the project proponent. The EAC observed that since the mine lease area shared a common boundary with Mayem Forest, the project proponent needed to submit a letter from the state forest department.

The EAC noted that there is a need to ascertain the ground reality regarding the handling of waste; settling ponds; the location of waste dumps with respect to habitation, schools and river; forest, temples, caves and fort; mineral transportation route; and traffic congestion.

The EAC noted that in the public hearing for the grant of environmental clearance, 4,708 written objections were submitted against the project, while 5,183 letters were received in support of the project. The EAC said that a site visit needs to be conducted by EAC members and officers from the Union ministry.

A spokesperson for Vedanta Sesa Goa said: "Vedanta Sesa Goa is committed to adherence to regulations and to resumption of mining in Goa in a responsible and transparent manner".

Abhishek: Centre withheld payments because people of Bengal rejected BJP

DEEPTIMAN TIWARY & SAMAN HUSSAIN
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 2

TRINAMOOL CONGRESS general secretary Abhishek Banerjee on Monday targeted the Narendra Modi government, saying that it spent Rs 1,500 crore on a new Parliament building but was not releasing dues of the poor in West Bengal. He said it was doing so because it wants to punish the people of the state for rejecting the BJP.

"You have spent Rs 1,500 crore on the new Parliament and you are not paying Rs 1.5 lakh (each) for people's houses (under the PMAY). People who have worked two years ago (under MGNREGA) and have dues ranging from Rs 10,000 to Rs 15,000 have not been paid. You have withheld payments because the people of Bengal have defeated you and rejected you. And this is something the BJP is not able to tolerate," he said following a meeting of top party leaders at MP Sudip Bandopadhyay's residence.

Banerjee is in Delhi along with party leaders to protest against delayed payments to MGNREGA job card holders and PMAY beneficiaries in Bengal. The state has accused the Centre for not clearing dues for close to two years.

On Monday, Banerjee held a two-hour sit-in protest at Rajghat to highlight the issue. The party has also planned a protest on Tuesday at Jantar Mantar, for which it has brought a 4,000-strong contingent of MGNREGA job card holders to Delhi.

TMC leaders said the protests



TMC general secretary Abhishek Banerjee with party leaders during their protest against the Central government, at Rajghat on Monday. Praveen Khanna

will begin at 1 pm and continue till 5 pm following which Banerjee along with senior party leaders will march to Krishna Bhawan to meet Minister of State (Rural Development) Sadhvi Niranjan Jyoti and put forth their demands. They said they had sought an appointment with Rural Development Minister Giriraj Singh but were granted a meeting with Jyoti at 6.30 pm.

On a question if Giriraj Singh, who is away in Begusarai in Bihar, was avoiding meeting the TMC delegation, Banerjee said, "It is clearly understandable and visible from the optics we have seen so far that he does not want to face the delegation... Because he does not have the answers..."

On Singh's allegations of corruption in implementation of the MGNREGA scheme in Bengal, he said, "I challenge him to sit with

us... The West Bengal government has replied to every query they have sent within 48-72 hours. There is not a single matter which is pending with us. Still they have deliberately withheld the state's rightful dues because they want the people of Bengal to suffer."

On Singh suggesting a CBI probe into alleged irregularities, he said, "If there is a CBI inquiry into MGNREGA, Giriraj Singh must be the first person to be arrested. An investigation can happen but it must be a court-monitored probe... If handing the case over to CBI would ensure the disbursement of funds for common people, I welcome it."

Banerjee accused the Centre of only collecting taxes from Bengal but giving it nothing back. "By releasing the funds you will not do any favour to us. This money belongs to the people. You

collect Rs 1 lakh crore from Bengal and give just Rs 20,000-30,000 crore. You keep 70% of all the money. That money funds your propaganda," he said. According to Banerjee, the Centre owes Rs 1.15 lakh crore to the West Bengal government and under MGNREGA and Awas Yojana, they have withheld nearly Rs 15,200 crore.

The TMC also alleged that attempts were made to stop the protest at Rajghat. "...The CISF, CRPF, and Delhi Police personnel kept assaulting everyone, including our women leaders, consistently," Banerjee alleged.

After Banerjee completed his speech, Delhi Police officers asked the protesters to vacate the area. "Your protest is causing inconvenience to the public..." said DCP Central Sanjay Sain. He then gave directions to the security personnel remove the protesters.

TMC claims wrong, says Union minister

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 2

WITH THE TMC protesting in the national capital against the Centre allegedly not releasing funds for central schemes to Bengal, the government and the ruling party hit out at the Mamata government and the TMC Monday.

"TMC leaders facing corruption charges and investigations have been sent to stage a protest in the national capital. They are claiming that the Centre did not release funds, which is wrong. The Modi government has released Rs 54,150 crore to Bengal, which is much higher than the Rs 14,985 crore that the UPA government had given," Union I&B Minister Anurag Thakur told media.

BJP's Bengal state president Sukanta Majumdar said that a central team had made field visits in 2019 and listed irregularities and the state government did not take any action.

Majumdar said that at Rs 30,000 crore, allocation to Bengal under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana was six times what the state was allocated under the UPA. Union Minister Subhash Sarkar said that the NREGA grant was stopped two years ago under Section 27 of the 2005 Act because of irregularities.

BJP MP Lockett Chatterjee said that while there was no TMC protest when women were stripped in panchayat polls, "TMC is now coming to Delhi to start a circus". "We are willing to give money to the state, just like every state. Par hisaab to do (but produce accounts)," she said.



The Indian EXPRESS

FOUNDED BY
RAMNATH GOENKA

BECAUSE THE TRUTH INVOLVES US ALL

JUSTICE COUNTS

Bihar's caste survey is welcome but it should be used to increase opportunity, not as a primer for deepening faultlines

THE RELEASE OF the caste survey data in Bihar is a much-needed and long-overdue step for the state's politics and policy. Caste numbers can provide a critical reality check for governments that make "samajik nyaya" or social justice their calling card, or claim to. Data can help fine-tune efforts to address historically embedded backwardness and inequality. A wider political churning was touched off in the 1990s with the implementation of the Mandal Commission report at the Centre — it inaugurated and then routinised such a politics in the country's north (the states of the south had already taken a lead) by mobilising historically neglected constituencies, empowering new parties and players, and expanding quotas in education and jobs to include the OBCs. Counting caste numbers is a logical next step that, at the national level, has been delayed much too long. That's why the Bihar numbers, even as they promise to fill a gap in the state, will also resonate beyond it.

Within the state, by assigning the highest percentage of all caste groups, 36.01 per cent, to the Extremely Backward Castes (EBCs), the survey promises a new dignity, if not coherence, to the mostly small and scattered groups, seen as politically footloose, in this category. For long, the dominant Backward versus Forward cleavage in the state relegated these groups to the margins, and the absence of a unified EBC leadership has meant that political parties ranging from the RJD and JD(U) to the BJP, that have sought to coopt them, have struck bargains that assign their concerns less than their due space and role. The politics of the EBC may well receive a new fillip now in Bihar. Ahead of the general election in 2024, Bihar's survey will also amplify other calls for enumeration outside the state — the women's Bill has just been passed by Parliament with the question of quota-within-quota still hanging; the Justice G Rohini Commission recently submitted its report on the sub-categorisation of OBCs; the Modi government is reportedly discussing a proposal for sub-categorisation among SCs; the Opposition alliance, INDIA, is pushing for a country-wide caste census, ostensibly to counter the BJP's Hindutva consolidation, and many states are pushing for independent caste-based surveys in their own jurisdictions.

Even as a caste headcount is necessary and desirable in a deeply stratified society, in which caste-based reservation has become an important instrument to address historical injustice, the data must be handled with care. The challenge, going ahead, is this: The data must not become a weapon for deepening faultlines and increasing polarisation to win elections. It should not lead to the splintering and shrinking of the very notion of representation in a large and diverse democracy. Politicians will need to remind themselves of the larger purpose: Caste must be counted in order to strengthen efforts to transcend it. In a changing India, in which education and technology are important equalising forces, caste-based affirmative action, fine-tuned with the help of caste numbers, can spur larger conversations on aspiration and ambition, freedom and opportunity, and the need for an eco-system in which citizens are neither unfairly privileged nor straitjacketed by their identities. A series of recent electoral verdicts have driven home the fact that the people may be ahead of their politicians in recognising the future citizenship — while party campaigns all too often play upon fixed identities, voters are increasingly crossing caste and community lines and voting for moveable concerns, shared ideas and dreams.

BAD AIR PLAN

Delhi has done well to prepare for pollution in advance. The early start must be used to devise long-term solutions

ON SUNDAY, THE Delhi government began implementation of the Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP) to check the city's notorious winter pollution. Like the past seven years, the plan is a combination of preventive and punitive measures. The plan indicates a welcome awareness of the need to collaborate with Punjab and Haryana to check stubble burning. But the mere expression of intent will not be enough. A coordination mechanism between Delhi and its neighbouring states to make sure that the air in the region doesn't turn foul during the winters has been in the works for far too long. Delhi's latest plan indicates that people could be at the mercy of emergency measures even this year.

Last year, the Commission for Air Quality Management underlined the need for a round-the-clock air quality monitoring network in the NCR. It stated that for NCR districts, the CPCB and state pollution control boards need to identify new sites to monitor pollution. But as a report in this paper, last week, pointed out, half of these stations in the region are in Delhi. Going by the CPCB's list, at least nine of the monitoring units do not work. Only 20 of the 65 manual monitoring stations have the capacity to keep a continuous track of PM 2.5. Going ahead, NCR governments will have to identify monitoring shadow areas and plug the gaps.

The Delhi government claims its policies have led to 40 per cent reduction in pollution since 2015. It's right to an extent. But the fact also is that the plans have been found wanting several times when meteorological conditions turned unfavourable. Last year, Delhi experienced its cleanest Diwali in seven years, largely because winds blowing at 6-7 km/h prevented the accumulation of pollutants. In less than four days, any hope of the smog not keeping its date with the capital was belied. Less than two months later, in early January this year, Delhi's residents were breathing toxic air again. Like in the past two years, the Delhi government has done well to frame its action plan at the beginning of the season. This early start must now be used to frame long-term solutions.

THE NEW PLAYERS

Power of 'influencers', with their reach and sway over the young, cannot be ignored. Baiyanpuria's video with PM is no oddity

IN THE ONLINE universe, where a great deal of influence is wielded by those who purvey fitness, make-up, financial and other kinds of advice, Ankit Baiyanpuria is a person of some renown. The 25-year-old fitness "influencer" has a following of over 5 million on Instagram and 1.82 lakh on YouTube. These impressive numbers no doubt contributed to Baiyanpuria's appearance in a 'Swachhata hi Seva' campaign video, released on the eve of Gandhi Jayanti, alongside Prime Minister Narendra Modi. In the parlance of celebrity culture of the pre-digital era, Baiyanpuria has "hit the big time".

Critics of social media often use the pejorative "influenza" to describe those like Baiyanpuria. But this can also be read as a grudging acknowledgement of their reach, wide enough to have caught the attention of brand managers, marketers, filmmakers and politicians. Many, like Kusha Kapila, Ranveer Allahbadia and Bhuvan Bam now have the kind of recognition that was once the preserve of blue-chip stars. In the new media landscape, where influencers are seen as moving into a space that traditional media has failed to seize or been forced to vacate, Baiyanpuria's video with the PM is no oddity.

For the influencers, this recognition of their power can translate to movie roles and book deals, the opportunity to make a splash on red carpets and exclusive interviews. That these credentials are not of the traditional kind seems to matter little, especially at a time when conventional qualifications are — often correctly — being criticised as the product of privilege. For a nation hoping to make the most of its "demographic dividend", it may not be wise to dismiss the power of today's youth idols.

Canada's hollow moralpolitik

Its entrenched culture of self-righteous posturing is on display in current crisis with India



RAJA MANDALA
BY C RAJA MOHAN

STRANGE AS IT may seem today, India and Canada were once bound by shared idealism and a liberal internationalist commitment to a normative global order. That era ended in the mid-1970s, and since then, Canada has found it hard to build a sustained and productive relationship with India. If Ottawa takes a fresh look at Delhi and begins an engagement rooted in realpolitik, the current crisis in bilateral relations might yet serve a purpose. One thing that puzzles the Indian foreign policy elite about the current crisis is Ottawa's utter unwillingness to take a political look at the character of the Khalistani militants operating on its soil.

External Affairs Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar's frequent reference to Canada's permissive "vote bank politics", which have become especially acute under Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, explains one part of the problem. There is another source of the Canadian establishment's inability to hear, let alone understand, India's concerns about the criminal violence of the Khalistani groups operating on its soil. It is Canada's entrenched culture of self-righteous posturing.

The American scholar and columnist Walter Russell Mead, who has written perceptively about the US and the Anglo-Saxon engagement with the world, drew attention to this when he moderated Jaishankar's talk at the Hudson Institute in Washington last week. Mead recalled the comments by Dean Acheson, US Secretary of State during the early years of the Cold War, on Canada's tendency to moralise. As the US embarked on a muscular foreign policy aimed at taking charge of the world in the aftermath of the Second World War, it had to endure endless lecturing from its northern neighbour. Discussing international affairs with Canada, Acheson said, was "like listening to the stern daughter of the voice of god". Acheson was, of course, no American redneck. (The myth of "nice Canadian" versus "boisterous American" endures to this day). He was the son of English migrants from Canada and was quite familiar with its culture.

Canada's moralpolitik had some utility. It helped define a Canadian identity — after all, it is not easy to live in the shadow of the US. It is also quite easy to be "principled" when you are not responsible for anything, let alone running the world. With the luxury of a strong

military alliance and expansive economic relationship with the US, Canada could often grandstand on global issues and differentiate itself from Washington. Ottawa, for example, established full diplomatic relations with China in 1970, nearly a decade before the US. Ottawa also reached out to Cuba with some fanfare in 1976 when Pierre Trudeau visited Havana and met Fidel Castro. Although the trip seemingly defined Canada's independent foreign policy, it was facilitated by the US decision in 1976 to loosen the embargo on Cuba.

The episode, however, is emblematic of an enduring narrative — the US is a "mischief-maker" and Canada is the "helpful fixer". If the US relies on blunt instruments of military power, Canada would focus on diplomacy and engagement. The US, with its burden of "securing the world from communism and other evils", had to dirty its hands. Seizing the high moral ground allowed Ottawa to present itself as the "White Knight" of North America.

Independent India, it turned out, loved Canada's moralpolitik because Delhi was in the same mode in the 1950s and '60s. Delhi and Ottawa were in the same corner preaching the virtues of a normative global order when the great powers were spoiling for a war that could turn nuclear. If the US was taking care of Canadian security interests in the Cold War era, Jawaharlal Nehru believed Delhi faced no security threats. That provided a basis for an interesting convergence on global issues in the early Cold War from the Korean War to the Suez Crisis. Nehru and his Canadian counterparts — especially Louis Saint Laurent and Lester Pearson — would call for restraint in and occasionally help defuse conflicts.

Although Canada was a founding member of NATO and India the leader of the Non-aligned Movement, the two sides found it beneficial to work together. For India, an empathetic Canada was a valuable partner when its relations with the West were under growing strain. Canada could carve out a global niche by acting as a bridge between India and the US and between the West and the developing world. Beyond this, Ottawa's liberal internationalism saw Canada become a major partner for India. Under the Colombo Plan, Canada offered significant developmental assistance to India. It also empathised with newly independent India's ambition to de-

velop advanced technology, especially nuclear. Canada helped India build a research nuclear reactor, CIRUS, that would hone India's skills to produce plutonium that could be used in nuclear weapons. Canada also joined hands with India to design and develop a heavy-water natural uranium power reactor (CANDU) that would be the foundation for India's nuclear electric power generation. If nuclear technology outlined the expansive horizons for the India-Canada relationship, it also became the focus of the breakdown in bilateral relations. Canada reacted with ferocious anger to India's first nuclear test in 1974. India's moralpolitik claiming it a "peaceful nuclear explosion" did not calm Ottawa's claim that Delhi betrayed Canada's support for civilian development of atomic energy. Canada was among the last nations to come to terms with the US effort to end India's disputes with the global nuclear order during 2005-08.

Even as the nuclear contentions peaked and receded, Canada's minority politics at home began to cast a shadow over bilateral relations since the 1980s. The effort to manage this negative dynamic showed some promise when the conservative Stephen Harper was in power from 2006-15, but began to break down when liberals under Justin Trudeau took charge. In dressing up his domestic political calculus on cultivating Khalistani extremists in the rhetoric about freedom of speech and the rule of law, Trudeau was simply falling back on the time-tested liberal Canadian moralpolitik. The costs of that strategy for Canada's relations with India — whether Trudeau underestimated them or did not care — are now at hand.

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But Canada's India relationship, which holds great economic and strategic potential, is not beyond repair. In the last few days, India has been pointing the way out. Delhi has clarified that the assassination of terrorists abroad is not India's policy and will cooperate with Ottawa based on credible intelligence-sharing. India, in turn, expects Canada to stop empowering the Khalistani extremists, end the current political impunity they enjoy, and crack down on their violent activities.

The writer is senior fellow, Asia Society Policy Institute, Delhi and contributing editor on international affairs for The Indian Express



OOPALEE OPERAJITA

RAHUL GANDHI'S RECENT article on Hinduism/Sanatan Dharma ("Satyam Shivam Sundaram", IE, October 1) is, tragically, largely based on fear. In the first paragraph alone he uses "fear" and "frightening" multiple times. Why would anyone want to spend their lives recoiling in fear? A sense of overriding fear destroys everything else. The piece is obviously aimed at a certain enclave; and by being circumlocutory, and agenda driven, Gandhi loses sight of the central tenet of his own essay.

As a little girl in Rishi Valley School, the first — and most important — lesson I received from our founder J Krishnamurti's teaching, was the importance of freedom from fear. I recall the very moment he spoke to us, in our small auditorium, about fearing the idea of a snake more than the snake itself. I was seven: It was a transformational moment in my life.

Shashi Tharoor sends this article up on Twitter/X, gushing about its ocean imagery, as if it is something novel, whereas, the ocean and water are dominant metaphors in ancient dharmic texts. The Taittiriya Upanishad, for example, describes the relation of the five koshas (sheaths, in humankind) to water. The "acquatic Absolute" (inspired by Vedanta), runs much later through Rabindranath Tagore's writings as well.

Tharoor also says on Twitter/X that there's "nothing new to say in Hinduism" — a surpris-

AN ARGUMENT DRIVEN BY FEAR

Rahul Gandhi writes on Sanatan Dharma without understanding it

ing statement, especially emanating from him — which is both meshuga, and lacking in veracity. I read from the Upanishads, the Vedas, the Valmiki Ramayana, and the Puranas, almost each day — and the limitless wealth in them is as vast as the universe.

It is ironic that Rahul Gandhi comes up with this article when he has been conspicuously silent these many weeks, as his party's coalition partners have mutilated the Sanatan Dharma, without remotely understanding it. Mum has been his deafening word. Some duplicitous leaders have ferociously attacked the Sanatan Dharma, both in India and, reprehensibly, on foreign shores, on many occasions, for the sake of appeasement — the hypocrisy is galling, but predictable.

What's driving Gandhi's current *janeudhari* agenda? And would it be conflated with the forthcoming state elections?

Sanatan Dharma is certainly a culture, an unbroken civilisational reality, and richly felt experience; because a culture is a way of life, a cultivation of the treasured self, and larger than any set of religious prescriptions. For millennia, this dharma has valorised the knowledge of the self (the *atman*), which the great sage Yajnavalkya views as identical to Brahman, or consciousness.

We don't swim in the oceans and, concomitantly, fear sinking — we swim to merge

with the ocean, let our spirits sing, and set ourselves free. Rivers are, as individual souls (*atman*), merging into the supreme soul of the ocean of the immortal Brahman, (Mundaka Upanishad 3.2.8). Brahman has also been defined as "the creative principle which lies within the whole universe". What's to fear in that? And where are the limits to this culture — this exhilarating mode of realised, liberated Being (Aham Brahmasmi)?

Nobody owns the Sanatan Dharma; but it has an ancient history, astounding intellectual rigour and richness, and a land of origin. It repeatedly alludes to the many, equally valid, paths to the Truth. But kudos and gratitude to those who use their goodness and understanding to prevent it from being maled by frequent, feral attacks from troglodytes.

I recall a passage from an Upanishad: *Tatha vidvan namah-rupad vimuktaha/Paratparam purusham upaiti divyam* [The knower of Brahman casts aside all names and forms, and attains to the Supreme Being (Energy)], which is above all conceivable divinities in the cosmos. Thus, the Supreme Being becomes our whole.

Operajita has been a Distinguished Fellow at Carnegie Mellon University. She is a global advisor on public policy, communication and international relations. Views are personal



OCTOBER 3, 1983, FORTY YEARS AGO

NDA VS CONGRESS

THE NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC Alliance (NDA) comprising the Lok Dal and the BJP appealed to the people to work for the ouster of the Congress (I) government at the Centre. Lok Dal chief Charan Singh and BJP president Atal Bihari Vajpayee accused the Congress (I) of following wrong policies and having designs to retain power by fair and foul means.

AKALI DAL IN DELHI

ONE PERSON WAS injured in a clash which took place when a group of youths belonging

to the Delhi Akali Dal captured the Bangla Sahib gurdwara to hold its one-day Sikh youth convention. The youths barged into the gurdwara, seized all keys and held their meeting in the main hall near the Guru Granth Sahib.

SINDH FIRING

TROOPS EXCHANGED FIRE with anti-government demonstrators during the last round of local elections in the southern Sindh province and 16 people were killed. The troops were trying to clear trees and boulders blocking the national highway near Moro, about 320 km

north-east of Karachi, when the mob attacked. Four soldiers were killed.

PATIL'S INNINGS

SANDIP PATIL, DROPPED from the team for the Nagpur Test, batted with a vengeance. He hit seven fours and two sixes in his classic 51, made from only 21 deliveries at the jam-packed Sawai Man Singh Stadium. Patil outshined his mentor-guide Sunil Gavaskar, who also batted superbly for his 41, and saw India romp home against Pakistan with four wickets in hand and 5.2 overs to spare in the second one-day international match.

7 THE IDEAS PAGE

WHAT THE OTHERS SAY

"We urge the authorities to acknowledge the dire condition of Dhaka, understand the complexity of its developmental issues, and look beyond extravagant, visible solutions to make this city liveable for the residents."

— THE DAILY STAR, BANGLADESH

The investment reality check

GDP growth, geopolitical scenario make India's economic rise a compelling narrative. Yet, FDI has been falling



ISHAN BAKSHI

THE INDIAN ECONOMY grew at 7.8 per cent in the first quarter of the ongoing financial year. Forecasts by most analysts, including those by the RBI, indicate that the country is likely to grow at around 6-6.5 per cent over the full year. Medium-term assessments, such as those by the IMF, peg growth at roughly 6 per cent between 2023 and 2028. Such projections only affirm India's growth prospects, and raise expectations of its contribution to global growth perhaps rivalling that of China in the coming years. Alongside, the country is also said to have emerged as a prominent investment destination for multinationals looking for an alternative to China. More so, with the geopolitical scenario seemingly shifting in its favour. All these make India one of the most compelling growth stories in the world today.

Yet, for all the exuberance over the country's prospects, foreign direct investment (FDI) has been falling. In 2022-23, FDI inflows (including reinvested earnings and other capital) stood at \$71.3 billion, down 16 per cent from \$84.8 billion in 2021-22. Flows in 2022-23 were, in fact, below levels seen in 2019-20. Worryingly, the decline has continued in the ongoing financial year as well — in the first four months (April-July), gross FDI inflows were at \$21.9 billion, down 26 per cent from \$29.6 billion over the same period last year.

The disaggregated data shows that much of the fall during this period has been in fresh equity flows. Equity flows dropped from roughly \$59.6 billion in 2021-22 to around \$47.6 billion in 2022-23, and, in the first four months of the ongoing year, plunged to \$13.9 billion from \$22 billion last year. Over the same period, investments through the reinvested earnings route have held steady, though repatriation/disinvestment has picked up. Does this indicate that the reluctance to invest in the country is more among those sitting on the sidelines, the uncommitted? Or are the existing well-established players, who are possibly better able to navigate the system, equally hesitant?

This drop in FDI is not just concentrated in the tech space. Between 2021-22 and 2022-23, FDI fell not only in the computer software and hardware sector, but also in the automobile industry, construction (infrastructure activities), and metallurgical industries.

While interest rates, which do tend to influence investment decisions, have risen sharply across developed economies during this period, compared to the steep fall seen in India, FDI flows into countries such as Vietnam and Indonesia, which are India's competitors in the "China plus one" play, are holding steady. During January-August this year, FDI in Vietnam stood at around \$18 billion, up roughly 8 per cent over the same period last year. The disbursed volume is also up 1.3 per cent to \$13 billion. In

the case of Indonesia, flows stood at around \$10 billion during January-June this year, roughly similar to levels seen last year.

The decline in FDI is, however, not an indictment of India's prospects. After all, companies in the Apple ecosystem like Foxconn and some others are indeed taking a huge bet on India by ramping up their investments in the country. And, foreign portfolio investors (FPI), who represent a different type of capital, have upped up their investments in the country: Since January, FPIs have poured in around \$15 billion in the Indian markets, after withdrawing \$16.5 billion in 2022 (calendar year).

But, this does raise the question: If India is indeed the alternative for companies looking to diversify away from China, if the country is the "one" in the China plus one strategy, if the PLI scheme of the government serves as a strong enough incentive to draw in investments, and if the growth forecasts projecting its rise over the coming decades do rest on solid foundations, then shouldn't every category of investor be long India? Or, does this decline reflect something deeper?

Is it the case that certain sections of foreign capital are perhaps more comfortable playing the India story, not directly, but indirectly through investments in the larger domestic companies who are better able to manage the environment? And, that some of those diversifying away from China consider other countries — some for electronics, others for textiles — a more attractive proposition?

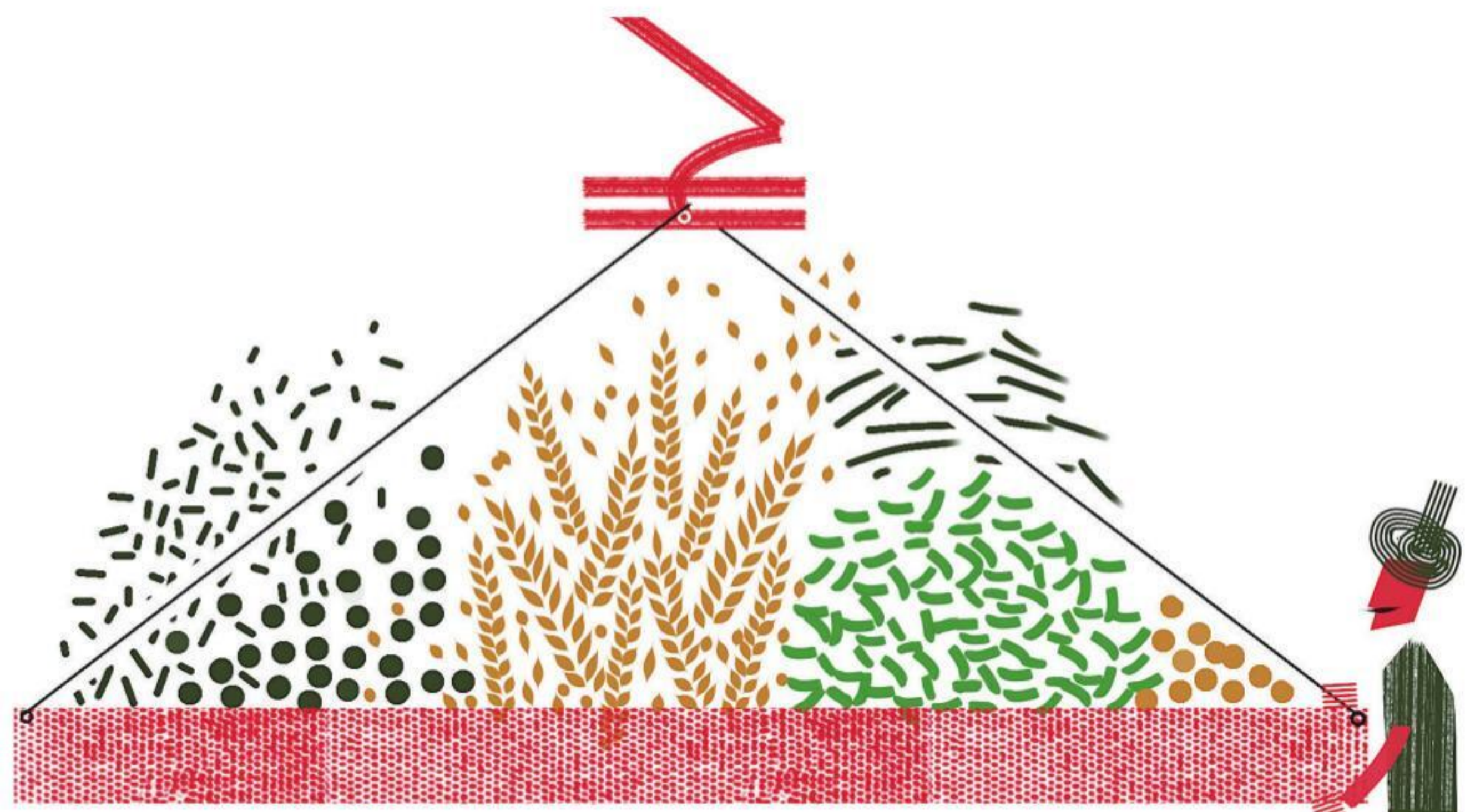
Several possible reasons could explain the reluctance among multinationals, and also the hesitation among domestic firms to invest in India — but along with the well-known impediments to investments, investors now also have to contend with policy uncertainty. After all, an uncertain business environment, an uneven playing field, and the fear of the rules of the game being arbitrarily changed midway, act as powerful deterrents.

Another possible explanation now could be the absence of the country from major trading blocks. While India has signed and is currently negotiating a few bilateral free trade agreements, it does not have a trade agreement with the European Union, nor is it part of RCEP, the trade agreement between the 10 member states of ASEAN and their free trade agreement partners — Australia, China, Japan, New Zealand and Korea. And as economic integration between these countries, which are at the centre of manufacturing supply chains, will deepen further with RCEP, not being part of such agreements and the supply chains that run through these regions places India at a further disadvantage in this manufacturing ecosystem.

FDI flows are more likely to gravitate towards countries with broader and deeper trade agreements. After all, lower tariffs, among other benefits, negotiated through FTAs incentivise foreign investment. It is thus possible that the fall in FDI flows to India reflects this.

This would suggest that while India may well be a compelling story, it is not the only one. This calls for a more sober assessment of the country's prospects.

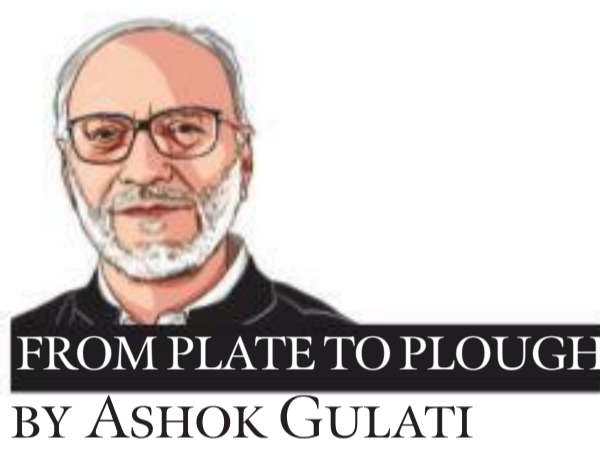
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C R Sasikumar

A plan for the winter crop

Better technology and policies must be deployed to ensure farmers get their due. Abrupt export bans or stocking limits are not the best way forward



FROM PLATE TO PLOUGH
BY ASHOK GULATI

agri-research system has released 2,200 varieties of different crops, of which 1,800 are climate resilient. Going by these assurances, another "record" rabi crop is in the offing.

Against this backdrop, I will raise a few queries and offer some suggestions so that MoA&FW can move from a highly "production-centric" approach to a "food systems" approach — a topic on which I delivered a keynote address at the rabi conference.

Here are some questions to ponder with respect to wheat in the last two years. As per the MoA&FW, wheat production in 2021-22 was 107 MT and in 2022-23, it was 112.7 MT. But the trade estimates for these two years are far lower, below 100 MT in 2021-22 and below 105 MT in 2022-23. This huge gap in the GoI's estimates and trade estimates creates inflationary market expectations.

We also know that in 2022, wheat procurement plummeted to less than 19MT, a drop of more than 50 per cent from the previous year. As a result, retail prices of wheat came under pressure. GoI put an export ban on wheat on May 13, 2022, fearing that the Russia-Ukraine war could escalate prices. Wheat inflation, less than 10 per cent in May, climbed to 15.7 per cent in August. When the GoI banned atta exports, the inflation did not stop there. It kept going up and in December 2022, it climbed to 22 per cent and further to 25 per cent in January 2023.

The wholesale wheat prices in mandis are hovering around Rs 2,700/quintal, while the minimum support price (MSP) for the coming marketing season of wheat is Rs 2,125/quintal. The FCI has unloaded its stocks at prices way below its economic cost, fearing that it would not be able to procure enough for the public distribution system (PDS). This is literally "dumping" to beat the market prices down to MSP levels. Offloading 3.4 MT in February-March ensured that market prices were down to MSP, and FCI was able to procure about 26 MT of wheat. Its success cost wheat farmers Rs 40,000 crore (Policy Brief 15 on ICRIER website has details of this). This is a transfer of resources from producers to consumers and indicates a typical pro-consumer bias in the

policy framework.

My question is: When more than 800 million people already get free wheat or rice (5kg/person/month) under the PDS, who is the government trying to protect? The urban middle class at the cost of farmers? Is that a rational policy to incentivise farmers to produce more? Certainly not. This is what economists Ann Krueger, Maurice Schiff and Alberto Valdes called the "plundering of agriculture" in their classic work, Political economy of agricultural prices.

The story is not very different in the case of rice which faced export restrictions when there was a complete ban on non-basmati white rice exports. Then export duties were imposed on parboiled rice and a minimum export price was set for basmati rice. The whole effort has been to beat market prices down to the MSP, even if that involves "dumping". FCI's economic cost of rice is around Rs 3,700/quintal, but it is selling rice at below Rs 3,000/quintal. If some other country had been dumping its products in India, the government would have taken the dispute to WTO. But what can farmers do when the FCI dumps its wheat and rice at way below their economic costs?

As we go further into the rabi season, we not only need better and more accurate estimates of production, but also need to monitor the prices that farmers get. At a time when technology can track each moving car, why can't we monitor the progress of crops every week — if not daily? We need to upgrade our patwari-based production estimate system to one that is based on high technology. This will help settle crop insurance claims, and also give enough lead time to the government to import in time if there is likely to be a shortfall.

Overall, my submission to MoA&FW was that we need better technology and better policies to ensure farmers get their due. Only then India can emerge as a powerhouse in agriculture. Abrupt export bans/stocking limits are not the best way forward.

Gulati is Distinguished Professor at ICRIER. Views are personal

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After the hurrahs

Euphoria over women's reservation Bill should be tempered with scepticism



COOMI KAPOOR

ADMITTEDLY, I SOUND like a party pooper, but the hurrahs and hype over the passing of the women's reservation Bill should be viewed with a pinch of scepticism. In the race to score brownie points with women voters, few dared to dwell on the cynical manner in which a bill of such far-reaching dimensions was hustled through. The Modi government's introduction of the Bill in a five-day special session at the fag end of a 10-year-term, taking everyone by surprise, was no doubt a political coup. The Bill was shrouded in such secrecy that it was not listed in the session's business agenda or even mentioned at an all-party MPs' meet. It was kept under wraps until Prime Minister Narendra Modi made his dramatic announcement on the second day of the special Parliament session. Within two days flat, the Bill was passed with almost total unanimity in the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha.

The government deserved congratulations for clearing a bill which for 27 years was on hold because of the silent and not-so-silent resistance by male MPs, who feared that the ground would be cut from under their feet. This time, the Opposition, particularly the Congress, was more concerned with trying to claim credit for being the first to suggest the proposed reform, rather than questioning the

unseemly haste and complete lack of consultation. In the game of optics, questioning any aspect of the women's reservation Bill was like criticising mother's milk or the tricolour. With time not on their side, the Opposition did not, as should normally have been the case, even insist on referring the Bill to a special parliamentary committee where MPs could study the clauses and suggest improvements to a piece of legislation which will have a major impact on the electoral character of our democracy. Home Minister Amit Shah acknowledged that the hastily drawn up legislation might have flaws, but remarked breezily that any shortcomings in the Bill would be "rectified along the way". The government, while basking in the glory of taking this historic step, has left the task of fine-tuning the Bill and translating it into a reality to future governments — a post-dated cheque with the actual time for encashment left uncertain.

It was politically savvy to peg the actual implementation of the Women's Reservation Bill to the process of delimitation of constituencies. Delimitation is a mine field which is bound to evoke an outcry in southern states and explains why, for the last 50 years, all governments have avoided wading into this bog. Redrawing and increasing Lok Sabha con-

stituencies on the basis of population will mean that south India gets short changed as the proportion of seats in the BJP-ruled cow belt states in Parliament automatically rises. The southern states have long maintained that they cannot be penalised for practising family planning. If the implementation of the women's reservation Bill gets delayed further than 2029, it will likely be blamed on the complexities of delimitation. Indian women have come a long way from when Ram Manohar Lohia described them as "bachche banana ki machine". But strangely, in contrast to the impressive number of Indian women in higher education and specialised fields once reserved for men, the percentage of women in Lok Sabha has never crossed 15 per cent. This is far below the global average of 25.5 per cent. In our highly patriarchal rough-and-tumble political milieu, it is difficult for an aspiring woman politician to break through without the help of male mentors. In recent years, among the few women MPs to rise up the political ladder entirely on their own steam are the late Sushma Swaraj and Mamata Banerjee. Most of our prominent women politicians were and are dynasts. The late Sharad Yadav argued that his staunch opposition to the Bill was that "parkati mahilayen (women with

short hair)" would dominate the quota. His fear was misplaced. Today's ruling party tends to select its candidates on regional considerations, caste and religion, not elitism or education. A greater danger than upper-caste and upper-class women dominating is that many women candidates could be ciphers, selected for their pliability and family links to powerful male politicians.

The double standards of political parties who claim to have been fighting for women's empowerment for years is exposed by their failure to voluntarily allot tickets for elections to women (Though the BJP must be credited for amending its party constitution to ensure 33 per cent reservation for women within its organisational framework). Two politicians who stand out in genuinely attempting to empower women are Navin Patnaik and Mamata Banerjee. In 2019, Patnaik's BJD allocated a third of Odisha's 21 Lok Sabha seats to women, Banerjee fielded 17 women in West Bengal for 42 Lok Sabha seats. Probably the road ahead for empowering women would be quicker and smoother if all parties agreed to adopt this doable first step in opening doors for women.

Coomi Kapoor is consulting editor, The Indian Express

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

RETHINK IT BILL

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'A softer touch' (IE, October 2). The IT Bill can best be described as intrusive. It is a jab at the democratic heart of our country. This Bill can be exploited to stifle dissent. It will inevitably result in our population turning into mere puppets in the hands of our soi-disant liberal government. The need of the hour is for the government to rethink its decision and clarify parts of the Bill that remain vague. We must focus on the growth of our IT industry. This Bill endangers that growth. A more nuanced approach is required.

Udi Gupta, New Delhi

IDENTITY POLITICS

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'Rhyme and reason' (IE, October 2). By mixing the emotional issue of ethnicity with security in a sensitive border state, the Mizoram government is playing with fire. The concept of a modern nation-state supposes the pre-eminence of political identity over a cultural or ethnic one. What this form of identity politics misses is the basic liberal concept of national identity as supreme, which has resulted in untold miseries throughout human history. India may have to pay a very heavy price.

Shubhada H, via email

TRIBUTE TO GANDHI

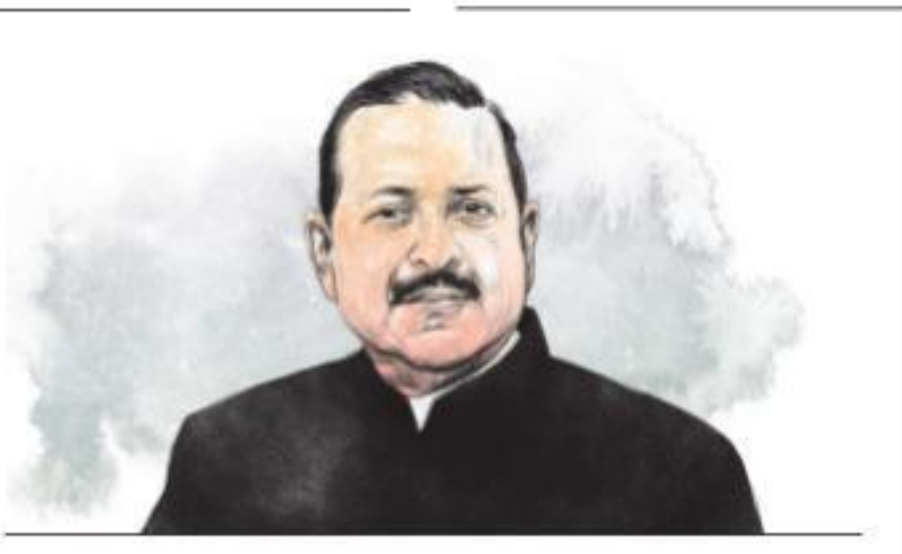
THIS REFERS TO the article, 'The Rajghat consensus' (IE, October 2). Truth was the single most important principle for Gandhi, which we must respect and hold on to in our lives. *The Story of My Experiments with Truth* is one of the best autobiographies. His philosophy of non-violence is what won us our freedom. Many world leaders have tried to adopt the same method. The best way for us to celebrate his birthday is to keep in mind his principles of ahimsa, truth and satyagraha — and try to adopt them in our day to day lives.

Sanjay Chopra, Mohali

TWO STATE DISPUTE

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'Cauvery's people' (IE, September 30). The governments of Karnataka and Tamil Nadu need to find an amicable solution to the 150-year-old Cauvery water dispute. Since the ruling parties in both states are constituents of the Opposition INDIA bloc, the dispute may cast a shadow on the bloc's efforts to take on the BJP in 2024. Reports of disruption of Tamil actor Siddharth's press conference in Bengaluru and blocking of a Karnataka State Road Transport bus at Tamil Nadu's Tiruchirappalli are disturbing and point to dangerous times ahead.

SH Quadri, Bikaner



DOCTOR MINISTER

BEFORE HE plunged full-time into politics, Union Minister for Science Dr Jitendra Singh was a doctor of diabetes and endocrinology and continues to pore over medical research. During a meeting with Dr Eric J Rubin, Editor-in-Chief, New England Journal of Medicine, Dr Singh raised an issue close to his heart. Citing research over the years, he said it has been proven beyond a doubt that people of Indian origin living in the US and Europe for several generations continue to have a higher risk of diabetes due to central obesity. The two medical academicians discussed the advancements in the field such as research on gut bacteria improving insulin resistance. They also discussed tuberculosis that Dr Rubin specialises in and India is working to eliminate.

ALL-WOMAN SHOW

WITH THE women's reservation law or Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam firmly behind it, the Union government is now aiming at pulling off an all-woman Republic Day participation, including march past by forces, tableaux and performances. In this regard, for the annual Vande Bharatam Nritya Utsav, the Ministry of Culture has called upon only female artists to perform at the Kartavya Path on January 26 next year. Participants in the age group of 18 to 35 years are required to send their videos by October 14, showcasing their skill in folk, tribal, classical, contemporary and fusion genres. Last year, 500 dancers were selected to perform a grand cultural show during the Republic Day celebrations on the theme of 'Nari Shakti', but that also included over 150 male performers.

Winnable candidates to be given tickets for Rajasthan polls: Pilot

Jaipur: Congress leader Sachin Pilot on Monday said winnable candidates will be preferred during the allocation of party tickets for the upcoming Assembly elections in Rajasthan. Pilot said the party will prioritise tickets for youths, minorities and members of the SC, ST and the OBC, but winnability cannot be ignored.

"The ticket allotment this time will be purely on merit. Ending all potential disputes that sometimes arises, the Congress party will distribute tickets on the basis of those who are on the ground and have a likelihood of winning," Pilot told reporters in Jaipur on Monday. **PTI**

Mahatma's message a beacon of hope: CJJ

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 2

MAHATMA GANDHI'S "ideas have persisted over time as a tool of social change, non-violent ways of life and humanism" and his "message of harmony and tolerance stands as a beacon of hope and wisdom...in today's globalised world", Chief Justice of India D Y Chandrachud said on Monday.

Speaking at the Gandhi Jayanti celebrations in Tavistock Square in London, the CJJ said, "Gandhiji's name is one which is known to everyone in the world...which stands for the principle of truth and non-violence...which calls for universal



Chief Justice of India D Y Chandrachud at the Gandhi Jayanti celebrations in London, Monday. **PTI**

peace...which inspires hope that we shall make our world a better place than it was before".

The CJJ said that "in a spiritual sense, he is a guiding light for all of us" and that his "legacy extends far beyond the boundaries of India". "His ideas have inspired countless individuals and people's movements around the world, transcending cultural and geographical barriers. His philosophy continues to influence and guide those who strive for a more equitable and just society. Bapu's core philosophy of non-violence and universalism are grounded on the fact that the world is one and there is a need for harmony and fraternity among the people. This idea captures the basis of moral obligations of humanism as a society. Bapu's vision for humanity was a testament of his commitment towards peaceful co-existence for a united world," CJJ Chandrachud said.

He pointed out that Gandhiji's "teachings on unity and respect for diversity are timeless and hold immense significance in our modern society" and said that "as we navigate through complex global challenges, it is essential that we preserve and promote Bapu's legacy. His principles of understanding each other and empathy are more important than ever. By embracing and practising these values, the world can foster a culture of inclusivity and acceptance".

The CJJ said that Mahatma Gandhi's "lessons on sustainability are guiding light for today's world. As we face the pressing issue of climate change and environmental challenges, his emphasis on living in harmony with nature and practising sustainable lifestyles provides us with valuable guidance. Bapu believed in the philosophy of "plain living and high thinking", thus advocating for a lifestyle that is mindful of our impact on the environment. His ideas on sustainability remind us of the importance of contentment and responsible consumption, conservation of resources, and the need to protect the natural world for future generations".

900 gifts, mementos presented to PM Modi put up for e-auction

DIVYAA NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 2

A 12-Feet-long Paresh Maity canvas - capturing a universal Banaras landscape with the ghats and boats - covering an entire wall of the exhibition hall at National Gallery of Modern Art has been put up for the month-long e-auction of gifts and mementos received by the Prime Minister, that started Monday. The painting, 4.5 metre in height and weighing around 30 kg, was presented to PM Narendra Modi by the noted artist after one of his creative sojourns to Varanasi. At a base price of Rs 64 lakh, the artwork will be up for e-auction along with over 900 other such objects this year.

The month-long online auction has 912 such gifts and presents going under the hammer, out of which, 150 are on physical display at the gallery. While the Maity canvas is the most expensive item of the lot, the lowest reserve price is Rs 100 for some digital prints that were presented to the PM during his trips within the country. This is the fifth edition of the auction, and the proceeds will go to the Namami Gange programme. Minister of State for Culture Meenakshi Lekhi said around Rs 33 crore has been collected through such auctions over the years, and all the proceeds have gone towards the rejuvenation of the river Ganga.

Officials say around 7,000 such mementos have been auctioned during consecutive editions, starting January 2019, and people from across the country have participated and bid for them. While foreigners are not allowed to bid, the presents received by the Prime Minister during his foreign visits are also not part of the auction, officials added.

The products on display also represent various Indian art forms, and include paintings, sculptures, handicrafts, and folk and tribal artefacts, besides replicas of architectural buildings such as Modhera Sun Temple and Vijay Stambh of Chittorgarh. There are also angavastrams, shawls, headgear, and ceremonial swords that were presented to Prime Minister Modi on different occasions.



Congress leader Rahul Gandhi performs voluntary service at Golden Temple, Monday. **AICC**

Rahul pays a quiet visit to Golden Temple

KAMALDEEP SINGH BRAR AMRITSAR, OCTOBER 2

APART FROM spirituality and politics, every visit by Rahul Gandhi to Darbar Sahib, or the Golden Temple, is a moment of reconciliation of contradictions, against the backdrop of a violent history.

His visit this time, starting Monday, comes at a time when the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbhandak Committee (SGPC) has been alleging deliberate attempts to spread hate propaganda against Sikhs, following the escalation in India-Canada tensions over the murder of Khalistan separatist Hardeep Singh Nijjar - designated a terrorist by India - in Canada.

The Congress has taken care to stand behind the Union gov-

ernment in the India-Canada row. Congress leader Jairam Ramesh said last month, "The Indian National Congress has always believed that our country's fight against terrorism has to be uncompromising, especially when terrorism threatens India's sovereignty, unity and integrity. Our country's interests and concerns must be paramount at all times."

Unlike his previous stints, Rahul will stay in Amritsar for an extended period, with plans to spend the night at a hotel near the Darbar Sahib. During the day, he listened to Gurbani kirtan inside the Darbar Sahib and performed the volunteer service of washing dishes in the community kitchen. He visited the Akal Takht, the highest temporal seat of the Sikhs, and also served 'chhabeel' to the visitors. He is also likely to attend the ritual of 'palki sewa' on Tuesday morning.

State Congress chief Amrinder Singh Raja Warring said Rahul is on a personal visit to the city. "This is his personal, spiritual visit. Let's respect his privacy. Request all party workers to not be physically present for this visit. You all can show your support in spirit & meet him the next time. Satnaam Shri Waheguru," Warring posted on X.

Given the Congress's history as regards the Golden Temple, which was raided to rid it of armed militants under the Indira Gandhi government, the SGPC does not accord Rahul the red-carpet welcome given to other political leaders, irrespective of their party affiliations.

Rahul has also kept his visits low-key and uncontroversial. **FULL REPORT ON www.indianexpress.com**

Won't stay if ties with JJP continues in Haryana: BJP leader Birender Singh warns party

SUKHBIR SIWACH CHANDIGARH, OCTOBER 2

SENIOR BJP leader Chaudhary Birender Singh Monday threatened to quit the party if continues with its alliance with the Jannayak Janta Party (JJP) in Haryana accusing the Deputy Chief Minister Dushyant Chautala-led outfit of "indulging in alleged rampant corruption".

"BJP ka aur JJP ka - Dushyant Chautala ka aur BJP ka - agar samjhauta chalega Haryana mein, toh Birender Singh nahii rahega, ye baat saaf hai (One thing is clear, if BJP and JJP alliance continues in Haryana, then Birender Singh won't stay)", Singh, a former Union minister, said.

He said if the BJP thinks that the JJP can fetch the alliance votes in next year's elections, then they are mistaken. "The JJP is not even going to get their own votes. If BJP wants to contest polls the right way, then they (JJP) should be shown the door. Then maybe people will listen," he said.

He was addressing a rally 'Meri Awaaz Suno (listen to my voice)' - in his stronghold Jind. His supporters had earlier said that the rally, held without flags and banners of BJP, was a "non-political programme".

Accusing the JJP of indulging in rampant corruption, but without naming anyone, the former Union minister said, "A big leader of the JJP has betrayed the people in such a massive way that no other political leader of Haryana has. People come to me and talk about rampant corruption which they (JJP leaders) are indulging in".

The JJP, founded by Dushyant's father Ajay Singh Chautala, had joined hand with the BJP in 2019 after the saffron outfit fell short of the majority mark by six seats in the Assembly polls. In the 90-member Vidhan Sabha, BJP has 40 MLAs and the JJP 10. In the recent weeks, both parties have said that they are preparing to contest on all the 10 Lok Sabha as well as all 90 Assembly seats.

Singh also spoke about the circumstances which led him to join the BJP in 2014 after snapping his over four-decades-old association with the Congress and reminded the saffron party he and others made contributions in bringing the party to power in state that year.

Classifieds

PERSONAL

It is for general information that I, Neeraj nagar, S/o Late Brahmpal R/o B-224, Swarn Nagri, Greater Noida, Gautam-Buddha-Nagar U.P.-201308-inform that name of my wife has been written as Sheetal Nagari in my Passport.No.L7646350. That the actual name of my wife is Sheetal.

0040691839-5

NAME CHANGE

This is to inform to the public at large that I, Gopal Dass Sharma S/o Late Shri Ganga Dutt Sharma R/o 211-A, Tikkan Colony, Maidan Garhi, Delhi-110068, that my Father's name was differently mentioned in government document i.e. Late Shri G.D. Sharma and in other documents Late Shri Ganga Dutt and in property documents is late Shri Ganga Bishan and in my aadhar card Late Shri Ganga Dutt Sharma. I am stating that all these name are of the same person. if someone have any issue with same kindly please report to us.

0040691839-1

NAME CHANGE

This is to inform to the public at large that I, Mahavir Prasad Kausik S/o Late Shri Ganga Dutt Sharma R/o B-474, Sangam Vihar, Near S.S. Public School, Sangam Vihar, Mehrauli, Delhi-110062 that my Father's name was differently mentioned in government document i.e. Late Shri G.D. Sharma and in other documents Late Shri Ganga Dutt and in property documents is late Shri Ganga Bishan and in my aadhar card Late Shri Ganga Dutt Sharma. I am stating that all these name are of the same person. if someone have any issue with same kindly please report to us.

0040691839-7

NAME CHANGE

This is to inform to the public at large that I, Satish Kumar S/o Late Shri Ganga Dutt Sharma R/o Plot No. 7, Shashtri Vihar, Najafgarh, Dhansa Road, Gopal Nagar, Opposite Ashirwad Vatika, Najafgarh, Delhi-110043, that my Father's name was differently mentioned in government document i.e. Late Shri G.D. Sharma and in other documents Late Shri Ganga Dutt and in property documents is late Shri Ganga Bishan and in my aadhar card Late Shri Ganga Dutt Sharma. I am stating that all these name are of the same person. if someone have any issue with same kindly please report to us.

S t h 3 X4hPRN(S)

PUBLIC NOTICE

Public is hereby informed that Mr. Harpal Singh has claimed himself as owner of Property No. M-4, measuring 200 Sq.yds, Kirti Nagar, New Delhi. And now, Mr. Harpal Singh has approached the IDBI Bank Ltd. for loan against mortgage of above said property, if any person has any right, claim, title or interest in any manner over the said property then intimate within 7 days to Vikas Shokeen, Advocate, H-20, BASEMENT, BALI NAGAR, NEW DELHI-110015. Thereafter any kind of claim will not be accepted.

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IMPORTANT

I, Kumud Kumari W/O Vikas Arora D/O Bhopal Singh R/O of E-253 Shastri Gali, East Babarpur, Shahdara, New Delhi-110032 have changed my name to Kumud Arora.

0040691839-6

OBITUARY

OBITUARY

19th Mar 1948 - 24th Sep 2023

With profound grief and sorrow we inform the sad & untimely demise of
COL K E PATANKAR
who left us for his heavenly abode on 24 Sep 2023 at R&R Hospital Delhi Cantt. In his demise, we have lost a highly spirited Kiranti officer. He will always be remembered by all of us

-: IN GRIEF :-

CO, 6/11 Gorkha Rifles and All Rks

राजस्थान स्कूल शिक्षा परिषद्

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क्रमांक-F-5(1187)RCSE/CIWS/SMSA/NT 2023-24/2023Vok-40D-3856 दिनांक: 20.09.2023

अल्पकालिन ई-निविदा सूचना संख्या 22 (सिविल) /2023-24 (राजकीय विद्यालयों के निर्माण कार्य हेतु)

राज्य एवं केंद्र सरकार के राजकीय/अर्द्धराजकीय/स्वायत्तशासी निकायों में राक्षम श्रेणी में निर्माण कार्य हेतु प्रयोजित संवेदकों से DMFT योजनाअन्तर्गत स्वीकृत 09 राजकीय विद्यालयों के निर्माण कार्य हेतु राशि रु. 3494.74 लाख (प्रति कार्य की राशि रुपये 196.71 लाख से 412.25 लाख के मध्य) बाबत कार्यवार ई-टेंडरिंग के माध्यम से अल्पकालिन ई-निविदाएं 26/09/2023 प्रातः 10:00 बजे से 05/10/2023 को सायं 6:00 बजे तक आमंत्रित की जाती है।

- निविदा से सम्बन्धित समस्त विस्तृत विवरण वेबसाइट <http://rajamsa.nic.in>, <http://sppp.rajasthan.gov.in> एवं <http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in> पर देखा जा सकता है।
- निविदा से सम्बन्धित प्रक्रिया जिला परियोजना समन्वयक, समग्र शिक्षा कार्यालय सम्बन्धित जिला के स्तर से की जावेगी।

UBS is: RSE2324WSO802009

राज.संवाद/सी/23/10587

GOVERNMENT OF ANDHRA PRADESH

WATER RESOURCES DEPARTMENT

O/o the Chief Engineer, Hydrology

Tender Notice

S. No 1) Tender Notice No. NHP/APS/RDC/01/2023-24, Work description: Construction of Regional Data Centre at Vijayawada under National Hydrology Project (NHP) 2) PID & Package No. 12890 & NHP-2021-2022 -APSW- 776938 1 3) Start/Last Date/Time of Tender document schedules available: From 03.10.2023 at 10.00 AM to 02.11.2023 up to 3:00 PM 4) Start/Last Date/Time for Submission of Tenders: From 16.10.2023 at 11.00 AM to 02.11.2023 up to 3:30 PM 5) Pre Bid meeting: 11.10.2023 at 11.00 AM in O/o Chief Engineer, Hydrology, Vijayawada 6) Bid Opening Date, Time and Place & Address of the Superintending Engineer concerned. 02.11.2023 from 4:00 PM onwards Superintending Engineer, O/o Chief Engineer, Hydrology, Water Resources Department, H.No. 76-16-16, 2nd Floor, Lane beside Reliance Smart Bhavanipuram, Vijayawada, A.P. - 520012. Interested authorized/reputed Bidders may obtain the tender schedule from <https://tender.eprocurement.gov.in>. For Further details visit <https://eprocure.gov.in/eprocure/app>, <http://nhp.mowr.gov.in/TenderDetails.aspx> and <http://irrigationapp.cgg.gov.in/wrd/getTenderDigest>. Contact: 8919434901, Email: andhrasw@ap.gov.in

Sd/- Chief Engineer Hydrology Vijayawada
No: 2383PP/CL/ADV11/01/2021-22

उत्तर प्रदेश पावर ट्रॉन्समिशन कारपोरेशन लिड

अल्पकालीन ई-निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना (2023-24)
विद्युत जानपद पारेषण मण्डल आगरा

1. अल्पकालीन ई-निविदा सूचना संख्या-11/वि0जा10पामं0/आगरा/2023-24-- 220 के0वी0 उपकेंद्र दूधला, फिरोजाबाद पर मेसर्स पारस ग्लासवेयर प्रा0 लि0 हेतु 33 के0वी0 स्वतंत्र पोषक 'वे' के जानपदीय निर्माण कार्य, समय अवधि 01 माह, धरोहर धनराशि रु0 11,200.00, निविदा मूल्य रु0 1000+180 =1180.00, अन्तिम तिथि 17.10.2023। PR No-1300033422. निविदा का विस्तृत विवरण, विस्तारिकरण शुद्धिकरण इत्यादि की सूचना ई-टेंडरिंग की वेबसाइट <http://etender.up.nic.in> पर उपलब्ध है, जिसको वेबसाइट के माध्यम से डाउनलोड किया जा सकता है। बैंक खाता अधिशासी अभियन्ता (जानपद) आगरा A/C No.-30065294923, IFSC Code-SBIN0005717 Payable at S.B.I. Foundary Nagar (Agra). अधीक्षण अभियन्ता, विद्युत जानपद पारेषण मण्डल, उ0प्रा0 पावर ट्रॉन्समिशन कारपोरेशन लि0, 220 के0वी0 उपकेंद्र सिकन्दरा आगरा। "राष्ट्र हित में बिजली बचायें" पत्रांक: 641-वि0जा10पामं0आ0/निविदा प्रकाशन/दिनांक: 30.09.2023

Office of The Chief Engineer (Bhopal Zone) P.W.D.

Bhopal (M.P.)

Tender Notice

NIT No. 48/ G. I/Mis/Bp.L.Z./2019 (Year 2023) Bhopal, Date 26-09-2023

Online Tender for mentioned below are being invited. The Tender have been uploaded on the e-Procurement system of Public Works Department on the Portal <https://mptenders.gov.in> Tender details are as below:-

S. No.	Tender No.	District	Nature of work	Name of work	Call No.	Cost of Project (PAC) (Rs. In lakh)	Remarks
1	2023_PWDDB_310245_1	Harda	Plan	Construction of Kaloda Tg Sukhrash Vin Kelanpur Road Length 08.00 K.M Under Mandi Nidhi Fund	6th Call	677.56	EMD/All Document are to be submitted online only.
2	2023_PWDDB_310247_1	Harda	Plan	Construction of Bunda To Gahal road length 6.50 km under mandi nidhi	1st Call	704.37	EMD/All Document are to be submitted online only.
3	2023_PWDDB_310249_1	Harda	Plan	Construction of Bherobaha Neemsarai Dhanvara Kudava Choukdi road length 13.5 km under mandi nidhi	1st Call	739.89	EMD/All Document are to be submitted online only.
4	2023_PWDDB_310250_1	Harda	Plan	Construction of Singa Ji Mandir Kukrawat To Roopiparetiya Road Length 6.00 km under mandi nidhi	1st Call	601.27	EMD/All Document are to be submitted online only.
5	2023_PWDDB_311967_1	Harda	Plan	Construction of Slabedi to kayagaon via neemgaon jhadpa Road Length 12.00 km under mandi nidhi	1st Call	1488.61	EMD/All Document are to be submitted online only.
						4211.70	

The document can only be purchased online from the above website after making online payment. The last date & time for purchase of Document on view is Dated 10.10.23 up to (17:30) Detailed NIT and other details can be viewed on the above mentioned portal. Amendments to NIT, if any, would be published on website only, and not in newspaper.

Sd/-
Chief Engineer (Bhopal Zone)
P.W.D. Bhopal Madhya Pradesh

G-20636/23

NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY

OPEN E-TENDER NOTICE

Divl. Rly Manager N.W. Railway, Jaipur for and on behalf of President of India invites open E-Tender for the following works up to 15.30 hours on the date shown as below: Sr. No. 1, Name of Work with its Location: ENGG-JP-2023-24-80, ADEN/HQ-I/JP SUB-Division: Provision of false ceiling in connection with "JP-Provision of new air-conditioning unit in place of old overaged air conditioning system installed at PHOD Chamber of all floors & 4th, 5th and 6th floor of NWR HQ building at GTJT. Approx. Cost of Work: ₹6456092.59. Earnest Money: ₹129100/-, Sr. No. 2, Name of Work with its Location: ENGG-JP-2023-24-81, ADEN(HQ-II)/JP SUB Div.- Supply of potable drinking water at various locations in JP-CKS & JP-BAI Section for Staff colony, LC gates, Gang quarters & Station. (For 2 years). Approx. Cost of Work: ₹6818940/-, Sr. No. 3, Name of Work with its Location: ENGG-JP-2023-24-83 ADEN/HQ-I/JP Sub-Division:- Repairs to toilet fittings/water supply line, flooring tiles and almirah of PHOD colony and GM bungalow etc. at GTJT. Approx. Cost of Work: ₹5520892/-, Sr. No. 4, Name of Work with its Location: ENGG-JP-2023-24-80, 81 & 83 is to be closed on 20.10.2023 at 15.30 hrs. and opened on 20.10.2023 at 16.00 hrs. 1052-CQ/23

Follow us on www.nwr.gov.in and www.irps.gov.in and Notice Board in WA Section, DRM Office, NWR/Jaipur. 2. Tender NO. ENGG-JP-2023-24-80, 81 & 83 is to be closed on 20.10.2023 at 15.30 hrs. and opened on 20.10.2023 at 16.00 hrs. 1052-CQ/23

WHO approves R21 malaria vaccine for use

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
 PUNE, OCTOBER 2

THE R21/Matrix-M™ malaria vaccine developed by the University of Oxford and the Serum Institute of India, leveraging Novavax's adjuvant technology, has been recommended for use by the World Health Organization (WHO) after meeting required safety, quality and effectiveness standards.

The Serum Institute of India has already established production capacity for 100 million doses per annum, which will be doubled over the next two years, the statement said.

The vaccine was developed by the Jenner Institute at Oxford University and Serum Institute of India with support from European and Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership (EDCTP), the Wellcome Trust, and the European Investment Bank (EIB).

24 deaths in 24 hours at Nanded govt hospital, 12 of them infants

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
 MUMBAI, OCTOBER 2

THE MAHARASHTRA government has ordered a probe after 24 patients, including 12 infants, died in 24 hours between September 30 and October 1 at the state-run Dr Shankarrao Chavan Government Medical College and Hospital in Nanded city.

This is the second instance of a state-run hospital reporting high number of deaths in a single day after a similar incident was reported in August when 18 people died at the Thane Municipal Corporation-run Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Memorial (CSMM) Hospital in Kalwa.

According to information from the hospital, six infant boys and six infant girls were among those died in 24 hours, notably

higher than the average daily death toll of approximately 10 reported each day at the hospital.

In a statement issued by the hospital, among the adult patients who died, there were four cases of heart disease, one case of poisoning, one case of gastric disease, two cases of kidney disease, one case of obstetric complications and three cases of accidents. Among the child patients, four were in a terminal stage and were referred from private hospitals.

"In recent days, more critical patients, especially those in terminal stages, have arrived from the district and other areas. The dedicated medical team and staff are diligently attending to their needs. This medical college and hospital have a longstanding history of providing excellent services to the community, and all admitted pa-

tients are receiving the necessary care," reads the statement.

A doctor from the hospital said, "While our capacity is 600 beds, at present we have over 800 patients admitted. We are the sole tertiary-care hospital in the district and we often receive patients in critical condition."

In Mumbai, Chief Minister Eknath Shinde termed the fatalities "unfortunate" and declared a thorough investigation into the incident, even as the Opposition criticised the state government over the condition of public health facilities in the state.

Maharashtra Medical Education Minister Hasan Mushrif said that he will visit the hospital on Tuesday and senior officials have been instructed to conduct a thorough inquiry. "Based on the report, further action will be decided. Seven

deaths were of critical patients. Two were due to snake bite and poisoning. I have asked our director to visit Nanded. I will also be going there. Inquiry has been ordered," he said.

Former CM and senior Congress MLA Ashok Chavan demanded immediate action to save 70 seriously ill patients admitted in the hospital, which is named after his father and former CM, late Shankarrao Chavan.

"The situation in the hospital is worrisome. No new appointments have been made to the vacancies of the nurses who were transferred. Doctors need to be recruited. Money from the District Planning Committee is yet to get technical approval, leaving the hospital in financial distress. The hospital presently has 1,200 patients while the capacity is 500," said Chavan.

MANIPUR CONFLICT

Tribal group protests CBI arrests, enforces shutdown

SUKRITA BARUAH
 GUWAHATI, OCTOBER 2

AN "INDEFINITE SHUTDOWN" came into effect in Churachandpur district, Manipur from Monday in protest against the arrests of five Kuki-Zomi persons in connection to two cases in the last few days. The shutdown had been initiated by the Indigenous Tribal Leaders' Forum referring to their arrests as "selective haste of central investigating agencies."

Whereas, another Kuki-Zomi organisation, Committee on Tribal Unity, based in Kangpokpi district, imposed an "emergency shutdown" on National Highway 37 connecting Silchar and Imphal, to demand the release of those arrested. The body has threatened that if they are not released within 48 hours, it will impose an indefinite shutdown in Kangpokpi district as well.

In the meantime, the closure of schools and colleges in the state, which had been announced last week after tensions escalated in the state's valley areas, has now been extended till October 5.

Four of the people had been arrested by the CBI on Sunday in connection with the killing of two Meitei youths who had been missing from their homes



Manipur Citizen Forum members hold a public meeting at the Palace Compound, Imphal, on Monday. ANI

in Imphal since July 6. These arrests came after widespread and fierce protests in Meitei-dominated valley areas after the photos which appeared to show the dead bodies of the missing two students surfaced last week. Another person Seiminlun Gangte (51) had been arrested by the NIA on September 30 from Kwakta, Bishnupur in connection to an IED car blast on June 21 and a case of transnational conspiracy by Myanmar-Bangladesh-based militant groups was found during pre-

liminary investigation.

Before the violence broke out in the state, Gangte had been working as an English teacher in a private school in Kwakta. On Monday, the principal of VN Model English High School, issued a statement that Gangte had been an employee of the school from February 2, 2018 to May 2, 2023. "He has no involvement in any anti-social activities and has no record of anti-national activities so far as my knowledge is concerned," the statement said.

Kargil hill council polls tomorrow, J&K bifurcation dominating issue

NAVEED IQBAL
 KARGIL, OCTOBER 2

A CAVALCADE of cars makes its way through the narrow roads of Kargil Market, a voice blaring from the loudspeaker mounted on top of the first car. It is Khadim Hussain, an advocate and the Congress candidate from the Baroo constituency in the Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council (Kargil) elections making his pitch to voters.

The cavalcade passes through the village of Minjee and stops at a field with stable still jutting out of the ground. There is no elaborate arrangement. Party workers pull a microphone and portable speaker out of a car and Hussain begins addressing a small crowd in Balti, the local language. It is Monday, the last day of campaigning for the hill council polls and the conversation is dominated by the creation of the Union Territory of Ladakh in August 2019 and the fallout of the Centre's decision.

The election is scheduled to be held on Wednesday. More than 95,000 voters will elect 26 councillors to the governing body that plans and executes development work in this region.

Campaigning for Khadim Hussain is Haji Asgar Ali Karbalai, one of Ladakh's senior Congress leaders. Though the constituency has no BJP candidate, and despite a pre-election seat-sharing



Senior Congress leader Haji Asgar Ali Karbalai addresses a gathering in Kargil. Naveed Iqbal

arrangement, the Congress's principal opposition in the constituency is National Conference (NC) candidate Haji Hanifa Jan.

Karbalai's attack on the BJP is sharp and firm. "The Congress has never pushed the Hindu-Muslim narrative, the BJP is a divisive party and all they want is to further disempower our society," he says.

The control of the hill council, some leaders say, is imperative to safeguarding the interests of the region "from the control of the Centre through the L-G (Lieutenant-Governor) administration."

On the streets of Kargil, young voters say their biggest challenge in the last four years has been the lack of jobs that

they had access to when Ladakh was part of the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir.

"We had a stake in the government, we had a reservation under the ST (Scheduled Tribes) category and we could apply for the state's civil service. Now that we don't have a Public Service Commission, people who are finishing degrees are stuck for a lack of opportunities," says Zainab Ali, a student at the Government Degree College.

With the work season in Ladakh lasting four to six months, private opportunities are also few and far between. "There isn't even a UT-level recruitment board," she says.

FULL REPORT ON
www.indianexpress.com

MHA HOLDS MULTI-AGENCY MEETING

Agencies asked to find details of terror-related activities in Pakistan

MAHENDER SINGH
 MANRAL
 NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 2

THE MINISTRY of Home Affairs recently held a meeting of multi-agency centre (MAC), a common counter-terrorism grid, and sought details of specific instances of radicalisation in mosques/madrasas in Pakistan, misuse of NGOs and civil society organisations to raise funds for terrorist purposes in Pakistan, sources of mobilisation of funds from Pakistan to the cadres of terror outfits from Afghanistan, Pakistan and PoK, it is learnt.

The meeting of MAC, which functions under the intelligence bureau, last month was attended by senior officials of Military Intelligence, BSF, National Investigation Agency, Intelligence Bureau and Research and Analysis Wing (R&AW). "They were directed to find out the details of safe houses of Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM), Al Qaida and Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL)-associated groups in Pakistan, along with the details of Pakistani nationals who perform/have performed command roles in various listed terror groups targeting India and Afghanistan and their link with ISI," an official said.

A senior official of the intelligence establishment said they had discussed several issues in the meeting and shared multiple security-related inputs with each other. "It was directed by a senior official of the intelligence establishment in the meeting to all the officials to get all the details related to Pakistan. They were directed to find out all the instances of meetings with the leaders of Al Qaida, Taliban, ISI or their handlers, emerging operational and strategic alignment among these vectors," the official said.

"The officials of all the agencies were directed to find out details of the extent of relationship/links between different Pakistani agencies, madrasas, clerics, NGOs, and various terrorist groups targeting Afghanistan and India. They were also directed to get the specific details on link between Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and Jamaat-ul-Ahhar (JuA) with Pakistani establishment and details on collaboration between the leaders and cadres of AQ, LeT, JeM, Haqqani network and Taliban," the official said.

Another official said the purpose of getting the details was not clear, but they were told in the meeting to send all the details to the Ministry of External Affairs in the coming days. The officials indicated that they were collecting details to expose Pakistan at a global platform.

CAUVERY ROW

Former CM Bommai slams Shivakumar for 'misleading' the public

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
 BENGALURU, OCTOBER 2

FORMER CHIEF Minister Basavaraj Bommai on Monday slammed Deputy CM and Water Resources Minister D K Shivakumar for misleading the people of Karnataka regarding inflows to Cauvery river. Speaking after participating in a protest held at Mandya over releasing water to Tamil Nadu, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader said that officials were pegging the inflow to Krishnarajasagar (KRS) reservoir at 2,000 cusecs. "Shivakumar was misleading people by saying there was a large inflow (towards Tamil Nadu)." Why is he talking so lightly?" he said.

Bommai's remark came a day after Shivakumar said that there was no need for Karnataka to release water from KRS as the rainfall in Bengaluru and surrounding districts had surged the outflow to Tamil Nadu to around 6,500 cusecs. "Though the state has not released any water to Tamil Nadu through the KRS dam, 6,500 cusecs of water was flowing due to rainfall in Bengaluru and other districts," the DyCM said Sunday. Earlier on Monday, Shivakumar accused the BJP of politicising the Cauvery row, rather than putting pressure on the Central government for a solution. "If they (BJP) leaders are concerned about the welfare of the state, let them get a clearance from the Central government to implement the Mekedatu project," he said.

In Jalandhar, couple kill 3 daughters, stuff bodies in trunk

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
 JALANDHAR, OCTOBER 2

A MIGRANT labourer and his wife killed their three daughters allegedly as they could not raise them because of poverty in Punjab's Jalandhar, police Monday said.

The couple confessed their crime hours after the bodies of three sisters were found inside a trunk in their house in Kanpur village, they said.

Sunil Mandal and his wife Manju Mandal, both daily wagers, gave their daughter milk mixed with pesticides on Sunday, stuffed their bodies inside the trunk and went about their daily routine.

The man who had rented out the accommodation to the couple called the Maksoodan Police Station around 11pm and reported that the girls - Vaasu (3), Kanchan (7) and Amrita (9) - were missing. The landlord told the police that the couple found the girls missing after they returned home at 8pm and had informed him.

The police launched a search but no leads were found. On Monday morning, Mandal was seen moving out of his house with a trunk. Upon opening it, people discovered the bodies of the three girls.

The couple had five children, Station House Officer (SHO) Inspector Sikander Singh of Maksoodan police station said, adding Sunil is an alcoholic.

During questioning, the couple confessed that they poisoned them as they could not bring them up because of poverty and concocted the story of girls going missing after killing them, said Rural Senior Superintendent of Police Mukhwinder Singh Bullar.

Naveen dubs Opp 'anti-development'; BJP, Cong say people's faith 'dwindling' in CM

SUJIT BISOIYI
 BHUBANESWAR, OCTOBER 2

BJD PRESIDENT and Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik on Monday launched the party's annual padyatra (foot march), its largest people-connect exercise, from Bhubaneswar on the occasion of Gandhi Jayanti.

The padyatra, organised to take the development and welfare initiatives of the government to the people, will continue till October 11, the birth anniversary of Jayaprakash Narayan.

Patnaik, who will seek a sixth straight term in the Assembly polls due in April-May next year, also set the ball rolling through the padyatra which will be held across all panchayats and local bodies.

At the launch of the event, Patnaik spoke about the achievements of his government and dubbed the Opposition as "anti-development" and "anti-people".

"Be it food security or disaster management or sports or information technology, Odisha has been creating benchmarks for others. Odisha has secured second position in

the country in attracting investments. There have been new employment opportunities. The Opposition parties are not happy with the development journey of Odisha," said Patnaik.

In a sharp attack on the BJP and the Congress, Patnaik said their habit is to obstruct development. "Their only work is to mislead people with wrong information. They indulge in such activities when elections are around. Because of this, the people of Odisha have been rejecting them. The people also understand their anti-people and anti-development strate-

gies," he said.

Accusing the Opposition of trying to stall the redevelopment of Puri Jagannath Temple and Lingaraj Temple in Bhubaneswar - two of the top priority areas of the BJD government - Patnaik said people will "never forgive them for their conspiracies".

Reacting to Patnaik's "anti-people" barb, former BJP state unit president Samir Mohanty said the CM's statement shows that people's faith in his government has been dwindling. Mohanty said calling the Opposition "anti-people" is not good in democracy.

Jharkhand to ISRO: For 25 schoolgirls, a trip to remember

ABHISHEK ANGAD
 GUMLA, OCTOBER 2

HAVING LIVED all her life in a Jharkhand village, Manisha Kumari (15) had never seen a train or ventured outside Gumla, one of the poorest districts in the state. That was until last week, when she was among 25 school girls from the district to embark on a 1,700 km journey by air to Chennai, and then by road to Sriharikota, where they visited the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) campus as part of an initiative to expose them to the field of scientific education and research.

"Now, I feel like a confident young woman," Kumari told The Indian Express after returning.

Kumari is a student of Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV), a girls-only residential school in Palkot block of Gumla district. Her home in the village of Banaidega Karamtoli in Jhikima panchayat



The students during their visit to Sriharikota. Express

is 14 km away.

Along with her two sisters and a brother, Kumari is a first-generation school-goer. The death of her parents from illness six years ago left her ambitionless, she said, but that has changed now - today, Kumari aspires to study science.

"We had the opportunity to witness the launch site of Chandrayaan-3 up close, with

scientists explaining the mission's importance, the successful moon landing, and the lunar rover. Since then, I've been trying to define my goals, though they aren't entirely clear yet. But now I know I am interested in studying science," she said from the Gumla Deputy Commissioner's residence on Saturday.

Gumla DC Karn Satyarthi,

who took the initiative, felicitated the students at his residence on their return.

He said that of all girls' residential schools in the district, only the KGBV in Gumla town imparts higher secondary education in science subjects.

More than 65 per cent of the population here is tribal, and economic activities are limited to monocropping agriculture. Many migrate to other parts of the country for work.

Preparations began a month in advance, and the first step was to get a go-ahead from ISRO. On August 28, Satyarthi wrote to ISRO Chairman S Somanath: "Many students are first-generation school-goers and are deprived on multiple levels. A visit to an institution like ISRO will not only be the greatest adventure of their lives, but will also give wings to their imagination. It will also help us flame scientific education in the district."

The district administration asked various government

schools to nominate one girl each. Then, District Superintendent of Education (DSE) Muhammad Wasim Ahmed did a video conference with the girls to ensure that those selected have an interest in science.

"Twenty-five girls were brought together for five-day residential training. The girls were curious, and we explained to them the various aspects of ISRO and the recent launch of Chandrayaan-3," Wasim told The Indian Express.

Students were equipped with basic amenities and made to undergo medical checks. "Some students, including Manisha Kumari, had low haemoglobin, and I am glad it got detected through this programme. We gave them medicines and they are better now. The district administration also decided to give a custom tailored uniform and a basic amenities kit so they wouldn't have to arrange things on their own," Wasim said.

UP hospital sealed, director arrested for 'aborting pregnancy without consent'

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
 LUCKNOW, OCTOBER 2

A PRIVATE hospital in Tundla town of Uttar Pradesh's Firozabad district was sealed and its director was arrested for allegedly terminating the pregnancy of a woman patient in her thirties without her or family's knowledge, police said.

Chandni Yadav, who was four months pregnant, was taken to Gopi Ram Hospital last Wednesday after she complained of pain in her lower abdomen, it is learnt.

Chandni's family claimed that Dr Rohit Chak, the hospital director, examined and discharged her after the treatment the same day. But hours after reaching home, she had excessive bleeding and her family members rushed her to Agra, they claimed.

"After examining her, doctors at the Agra hospital informed the family that the foetus had been

aborted and her uterus was damaged," said Tundla SHO.

The family members came to Firozabad and created a ruckus at the Gopi Ram Hospital, blaming Dr Chak for her condition.

The family then approached the police and an FIR was registered under Section 313 of IPC (causing miscarriage without woman's consent) against Dr Chak. Chandni is undergoing treatment at the Agra hospital, the family said.

The Tundla hospital was sealed by the district health authorities after taking note of the incident while the patients admitted there were shifted to another facility, Firozabad Deputy Chief Medical Officer BD Agarwal said.

Tundla Circle Officer Anivesh Kumar Singh said Dr Chak was produced in a local court which has sent him to judicial custody.

Dr BD Agarwal said the family of another woman has also filed a complaint with similar allegations against the hospital.

IN REMEMBRANCE

Corps of Signals salutes its following Signallers who left us for their heavenly abode during the month of Sep 2023.

(a) 15708493A	Havildar	Sombir
(b) 15715909P	Lance Havildar	Pawan Shankar
(c) 15739157X	Naik	Santosh Yalagud
(d) 15730715K	Lance Naik	Sanjeev Bagali
(e) 15725705W	Signalman	Sunil Nath S
(f) 15743755K	Signalman	Mannu Kumar Sharma

On behalf of the Corps, we sincerely pray to Almighty for peace to the departed souls & strength to the bereaved families to bear this irreparable loss.

10 THE WORLD

MECHANISM FOR AUSTRALIAN INDIGENOUS PEOPLE TO ADVISE HOUSE INDIGENOUS VOICE: EARLY VOTING STARTS

EARLY VOTING also began in some parts of Australia in a referendum that would enshrine in Australia's constitution a mechanism for Indigenous people to advise Parliament on policies that affect their lives. Some 98% of eligible Australians have signed up to vote in the referendum. AP

TOP OF THE WORLD



A project under China's Belt & Road initiative, it will reduce travel time between two key cities

INDONESIA SE Asia's first high-speed railway launched

Jakarta: Indonesia's President Joko Widodo inaugurated Southeast Asia's first high-speed railway Monday as it was set to begin commercial operations, a project under China's Belt and Road infrastructure initiative that will reduce the travel time between two key cities. The \$7.3 billion project, largely funded by China, was constructed as a part of a joint venture between an Indonesian consortium of four state-owned companies and China Railway International Co. Ltd. AP

MEXICO Church roof collapse kills nine, injures 40

Mexico City: A church roof collapsed during Sunday Mass in a northern Mexican city killing at least nine people and injuring 40, authorities said, as rescuers worked, desperately looking for another 30 people believed to be trapped under the rubble. Working under floodlights, military personnel supported emergency services using rescue dogs & earth moving equipment to identify and dig out survivors from the ruins of the church in Ciudad Madero. Nine people died and another 40 were taken to nearby hospitals. REUTERS

CANADA Two killed in bear attack at national park

Ottawa: A grizzly bear is believed to have attacked and killed two people at a national park in southwest Canada, park officials said. Parks Canada said it learned of the attack via an alert from a satellite device inside Banff National Park in Alberta, Canada. The team, which specialized in responding to wildlife attacks, arrived at 1 am Saturday to find the two dead people, as well as a grizzly bear that was displaying "aggressive behavior." They euthanized the bear on-site "to ensure public safety." The police helped transport victims to a town. NYT

FRANCE Vaccination for Bird flu starts despite trade risk

Paris: France started vaccinating ducks against bird flu on Monday to try and stem the virus that killed millions of birds around the world, a move that prompted United States to impose trade curbs on French poultry imports. The first shots were given Monday morning to ducks on a farm in the Landes, a region in southwestern France, in the presence of French Agriculture Minister Marc Fesneau. France has been among the countries worst affected by a global spread of highly pathogenic avian influenza, commonly called bird flu. REUTERS

ACCUSED OF INFLATING ASSET VALUE, NET WORTH FROM 2011 TO 2021

Trump arrives in New York court for trial in civil fraud case, calls it 'scam'

Lawsuit seeks \$250 mn in fine, business ban on Trump, his sons

JACK QUEEN & LUC COHEN
NEW YORK, OCTOBER 2

A CIVIL fraud trial that could deal a major blow to Donald Trump's real estate empire began on Monday, with a New York state lawyer accusing the former president of generating more than \$1 billion by lying, and Trump blasting the case as a "scam."

The trial in a downtown Manhattan courtroom case concerns accusations by state Attorney General Letitia James that Trump inflated his assets and his own net worth from 2011 to 2021 to obtain favorable bank loans and lower insurance premiums.

James is seeking at least \$250 million in fines, a permanent ban against Trump and his sons Donald Jr and Eric from running businesses in New York and a five-year commercial real estate

EXPLAINED One more hurdle

JAMES' LAWSUIT is one of several legal headaches for Donald Trump as he campaigns for a return to the White House in next year's presidential elections. He has been indicted four times since March, accused of plotting to overturn his 2020 election defeat, hoarding classified documents and falsifying business records related to hush money paid on his behalf.

ban against Trump and the Trump Organization.

Trump looked on with his arms crossed as Kevin Wallace, a lawyer in James' office, called Trump "materially inaccurate" in describing his finances to banks and insurers.

"This isn't business as usual, and this isn't how sophisticated parties deal with each other," Wallace said in his opening



Donald Trump at the New York Supreme Court on Monday. AP

statement. "These are not victimless crimes."

Christopher Kise, a lawyer for Trump, countered in his opening statement that the financials for Trump and the Trump organization were entirely legal.

"It is one of the most highly successful brands in the world, and he has made a fortune literally being right about real estate investments," Kise said. "There

was no intent to defraud, there was no illegality, there was no default, there was no breach, there was no reliance on the banks, there were no unjust profits, and there were no victims."

Trump's trial is overseen by Justice Arthur Engoron, who will hear evidence without a jury.

It concerns penalties that Trump, his sons and 10 of his firms must face after Engoron last week

found them liable for fraud.

In his September 26 decision, Engoron described how the defendants made up valuations. That included Trump calculating the value of his apartment in Trump Tower as if it were three times its actual size, and listing his Mar-a-Lago estate as being worth up to \$739 million though deed restrictions capped it at \$28 million. REUTERS



EU Foreign Policy Chief Josep Borrell and Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba in Kyiv on Monday. Reuters

Kyiv brushes off US and Slovakia wobbles as EU leaders convene

OLENA HARMASH
KYIV, OCTOBER 2

EU FOREIGN ministers convened in Kyiv for their first ever meeting outside the bloc on Monday, broadcasting their support after a pro-Russian candidate won an election in Slovakia and the US Congress left Ukraine war aid out of its spending bill.

Kyiv brushed off the wobbles on both sides of the Atlantic, especially the prospect that the US Congressional vote, which excluded aid to Ukraine from an emergency bill to prevent a government shutdown, represented a deeper change in policy.

"We don't feel that the US support has been shattered... because the United States understands that what is at stake in Ukraine is much bigger than just Ukraine," Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba told reporters as he greeted the EU foreign policy chief, Josep Borrell.

As for the election win of pro-Russian Slovakian ex-Prime Minister Robert Fico, Kuleba said it was "too early to judge" impact on politics there, noting that a new leader would still have to form a coalition.

Monday's meeting in Kyiv was touted by Borrell as an historic first, and provided striking photo opportunities for a succession of ministers in front of EU flags in the war-time capital.

German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock called for ef-

Russia may be planning to test nuclear missile

Moscow: Satellite imagery and aviation data suggest that Russia may be preparing to test an experimental nuclear-powered cruise missile — or may have recently tested one — with a theoretical range of thousands of miles. Movements of aircraft and vehicles at and near a base in Russia's remote Arctic region are consistent with preparations that were made for tests of missile, known as the Burevestnik or SSC-X-9 Skyfall, in 2017 and 2018, according to a *New York Times* analysis. NYT

orts to prepare Ukraine for winter after Russia bombed Ukraine's energy infrastructure last year.

Moscow touted the congressional vote in the United States as a sign of increasing division in the West, although the Kremlin said it expected Washington to continue its support for Kyiv.

Meanwhile, US President Joe Biden pressed Republicans to back a bill for more aid to Ukraine, saying he was 'sick and tired' of the political brinkmanship that nearly led to a government shutdown. REUTERS

PAK INFLATION SOARS

Pakistan's inflation rate year-on-year in September rose to

31.4%

from 27.4% in August, statistics bureau data showed on Monday, as the nation reels from high fuel, energy prices.

■ On a month-on-month basis, inflation climbed 2% in September, compared to an increase of 1.7% in August.

■ Interest rates have also risen to highest at 22%, and rupee hit all-time lows in August before recovering in September to become the best performing currency after a clampdown on unregulated FX trade. Reuters



PAK KICKS OFF ANTI-POLIO DRIVE

A police officer stands guard as a health worker administers a polio vaccine to a child at a neighborhood of Peshawar, Monday. The country launched its second anti-polio campaign of the year in an effort to inoculate its 44 million children under the age of 5, amid signs of eradication of the disease. The five-day campaign will see 350,000 health workers go door-to-door to administer vaccine drops to children. AP

China's lunar mission to carry payload from Pak

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
BEIJING, OCTOBER 2

CHINA'S NEXT lunar mission scheduled for 2024 will also carry a payload from Pakistan, the country's space agency has said, as the two all-weather friends step up cooperation in the space sector.

The Chang'e-6 lunar mission is currently undergoing research and development work as planned, state-run news agency Xinhua reported on Friday quoting China National Space Administration (CNSA).

The Chang'e-6 mission, with the launch scheduled for 2024, is tasked with bringing back samples from the far side of the moon.

To date, all 10 lunar sampling missions conducted by humans

have taken place on the near side of the moon, *The Global Times* newspaper reported.

The far side is generally older and contains the Aitken Basin, one of the three major lunar landforms, making it of scientific value, the report said, quoting CNSA.

The Chang'e-6 mission aims at landing the South Pole-Aitken Basin on the far side to explore and collect lunar samples from different regions and ages.

To promote international cooperation, the Chang'e-6 mission will carry payloads and satellite projects from different countries and regions - France's DORN radon detection instrument, European Space Agency's negative ion detector, Italy's laser retroreflector, and Pakistan's CubeSat, the CNSA said.

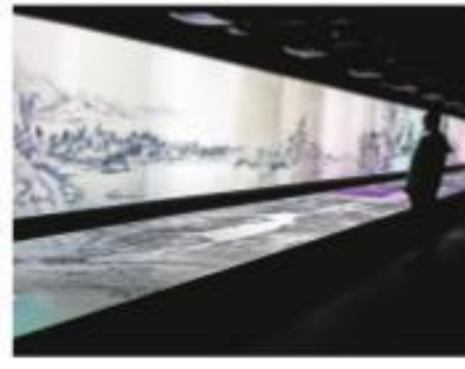
Chinese military releases short film on Taiwan 'reunification'

REUTERS
BEIJING, OCTOBER 2

THE CHINESE military released an animated short film on National Day showing pieces of a scroll painting torn in two more than 300 years ago being reunited, in a show of the mainland's determination to bring self-ruled Taiwan into the fold.

The pieces of the "The Dwelling in the Fuchun Mountains", one of China's best-known ancient paintings, are kept separately in museums in China and Taiwan, the democratically governed island that Beijing claims as one its provinces, and which it reserves the right to take over by force.

On National Day on Sunday,



An interpretation of 'Dwelling in the Fuchun Mountains'. Reuters

the People's Liberation Army's Eastern Theatre Command, known for belligerent videos of exercises around Taiwan, released an animated short film called "Dreams Come True on Fuchun River", appealing to the shared cultural roots of people on

both sides of the Taiwan Strait.

The film featured two elves, representing the two pieces of the painting by Yuan dynasty master Huang Gongwang, which was torn apart in the 17th century by one of its owners.

At the end of the movie, the two characters came together, making the painting whole again.

The shorter piece of the scroll, known as *The Remaining Mountain*, about 51 cm long, is at the Zhejiang Provincial Museum. Taiwan's National Palace Museum has kept the 640-cm long *Master Wuyong Scroll* since the 1950s.

The two pieces were reunited in 2011 when China lent fragment to the Taiwanese museum for two months during warmer ties as Taiwan pursued policy of economic rapprochement with China.

'I WANTED THERE TO BE A BLACK ENVIRONMENT... I WANTED THERE TO BE A TEACHER THAT LOOKED LIKE ME'

London's Pointe Black ballet school aims to break racial barriers

ALISHIA ABODUNDE & MUVIJAM
LONDON, OCTOBER 2

IT WAS a pointed comment about her Afro-braided hair that spurred Ruth Essel to carve out what she calls a safe space for Black dancers.

The founder of Pointe Black Ballet School in London said when she was a child, teachers and assistants all but punished her for not fitting the traditional ballerina mould, as if she was using her race as some kind of rebellion.

"I'll never forget my first time about to dance on a West End

stage," said Essel, describing when, aged 10, she started a final rehearsal at a theatre proudly wearing the braided bun her single mother had spent her last 100 pounds on.

Her pride turned to shame when her teacher pointed at her in the lineup of an almost all-white group of dancers, saying, "You're going to take all of those zigzaggedy things out of your hair because it looks a mess."

That was just one of several instances when Essel was made to feel that being different was "like a defiant choice by me," she said. "These are all things that happened before I was 16 years

old, and I didn't know any better."

Those challenges inspired Essel, a deputy programme manager at a unit of the Royal College of Psychiatrists, to establish Pointe Black in 2020 at the age of 26.

"I wanted there to be a Black environment. I wanted there to be people who looked like me. I wanted there to be a teacher that looked like me," she said.

It was empowering, she recalled, to finally wear black tights and shoes, rather than the traditional pink for ballerinas, "because it was closer to my colour."

The iconic image of a ballet dancer remains light-skinned, even though the artform - which

originated in the Italian Renaissance as court entertainment - has expanded globally with stars from Asia, South America and Cuba. And classical ballet companies strive for a uniform look especially in works like "Swan Lake," making it harder for dancers of colour to get hired or promoted.

Some 2.2% of dancers at the UK's top four ballet companies are of Black heritage - roughly consistent with the country's Black population at 3%, said Sandie Bourne, a committee member of Britain's Society for Dance Research, in her 2017 doctoral thesis.



Ruth Essel, 30, founder of Pointe Black Ballet School, during her ballet lesson in London. Reuters

Essel wants to speed up change by disrupting the status quo. "We incorporate African steps and music styles in our shows," she said. "I have afro. I have puffs. I have perm rolls. I have twist. I have Afro puff buns. And it's really just about celebrating the person no matter where they come from."

Essel, who teaches all the classes in her school, sees it as a safe space for Black dancers to get counselling, and a way to create a community-based network of studios, dancers and teachers.

"Everything about my school is what my younger self would have wanted." REUTERS

ECONOMY

SENSEX: 65,828.41 ▲ 320.09 (0.49%) NIFTY: 19,638.30 ▲ 114.75 (0.59%) NIKKEI: 31,759.88 ▼ 97.74 HANG SENG: 17,809.66 ▲ 436.63 FTSE: 7,569.05 ▼ 39.03 DAX: 15,331.25 ▼ 55.33

GOLD	USD RATE	OIL	SILVER
₹56,910	₹83.07	\$97.03	₹75,500
<small>Note: Gold, silver rates at Delhi spot market, gold per 10g, silver per 1 kg; Crude oil (Indian basket) as of September 28</small>			

International market data till 19:00 IST

BEHIND STATE GOVERNMENTS DEMANDING BETTER PENSION PAYMENTS

State govt employees regularised mid-career blame NPS for lower pay

AANCHAL MAGAZINE
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 2

AMID THE ongoing debate over the switch to the Old Pension Scheme (OPS), states are learnt to have flagged concerns over a high number of government employees who were regularised into government service mid-career, resulting in a lower pension payout due to less amount of contributions, compared with full-service government employees.

Some states, such as Himachal Pradesh, Chhattisgarh are facing this issue as they have a large number of employees whose total years of service is around 10 years, an issue that has also been raised in the discussions of the Centre-appointed committee to look into improving the National Pension System (NPS) for government employees, people in the know said.

This is being viewed as one of the significant reasons for an inaccurate representation of the estimate of the returns and the pension payout under the NPS amid rest of the government employees, especially serving employees who are yet to retire. Concerns have been triggered af-



Some states have now specifically made demand for an assured pension linked to the minimum of pay level. *File*

ter the regularisation of employees, such as panchayat workers, teachers as regular government employees is seen to be the reason for a surge in the number of estimated beneficiaries from the pension scheme in the states. The contention is that the regularised employees have a lower contributory period for availing the pension and hence, will get a lower payout as against the regular government employee.

"In many of the states there are Panchayat employees, teachers etc who originally were not government employees and then at some point they get regularised or converted into government employees. So they come

into government service, let's say, at the age of 50 years. If you come in at 50 years and you retire at 60 years, then in a contributory scheme, you will obviously get a very low pension compared to a flat 50 per cent for a full service. The normal government employees get recruited by examination and come at an age of let's say 30 years or below...they usually have a minimum 25-year career. The outcome of NPS with a 25-year career is very different from the outcome of an NPS when somebody has a very short career of a few years. But the people who have actually retired till now are people with very short services and those with NPS,

which came in 2004, would not have retired as of now...many people are comparing the pension of NPS with this and saying it is much lower than the normal pension. The point is these are people who have only 5-10 years of service. Obviously, their pensions will be very low," a person aware of the discussions said.

About two-three states including Chhattisgarh, Himachal Pradesh are learnt to have provided their insights on the issue of the regularisation of government employees and the low pension payouts to such employees in their discussions. People aware of the Centre-state discussions insist this issue is different from the debate over the assured returns and market uncertainty for returns under the NPS.

"On an average they might actually get a decent pension (under NPS). But the people who have less than the full service, it is in the nature of a contributory scheme that if you don't contribute for enough years, you won't get a good pension. So the problem seems to have become more noticeable for people because they are seeing these examples (of regularised employees) and those examples have very low pensions compared to

OPS. They (regularised employees) are the ones who are retiring of late, nobody from NPS would have retired yet as the system itself came into place in 2004. They give their example to somebody saying they are getting only some amount of pension, which creates a sense of alarm among the serving people. But it may not be that bad for a full career government employee. For the majority of the employees, it will be much better," the person said.

The demand for switching to the Old Pension Scheme has flared up again ahead of assembly polls scheduled in several states and Lok Sabha elections next year.

Thousands of government employees — teachers, doctors, clerks, peons — and those working in the PSUs from Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Himachal Pradesh, Haryana, and other states participated in the "Pension Shanknaad Rally", organised by National Movement for Old Pension Scheme (NMOPS) at Ramlila Maidan in Delhi on Sunday urging the BJP-led NDA government to reinstate the Old Pension Scheme before the polls.

SEBI extends deadline for listed companies to confirm or deny market rumours

ENSE ECONOMIC BUREAU
MUMBAI, OCTOBER 2

THE SECURITIES AND Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has extended the deadline for listed companies to confirm or deny market rumours to February 1, 2024 as part of mandatory disclosure requirements. The deadline has been extended for the top 100 listed companies by market capitalisation to February 1, 2024, from October 1 this year at present, according to the latest circular by the Sebi.

According to SEBI, for the top 250 listed entities, the rule will kick in on August 1, 2024, from the current requirement of April 1, 2024. The rule is aimed at strengthening the corporate governance of listed entities. These were many instances in the past where manipulators floated rumours in the market to rig share prices.

"It has been decided to extend the effective date of implementation of...the LODR (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) rules for top 100 listed companies by market capitalisation to February 1, 2024, and for top 250 listed companies by market capitalisation to August 1, 2024," SEBI said. Earlier in June, SEBI notified rules asking these listed companies by market capitalisation to confirm, deny, or clarify any market rumour reported in the mainstream media.

EXPLAINED

Verifying rumours

AS PER SEBI, for the top 250 listed firms, the rule will kick in on August 1, 2024, from the current requirement of April 1, 2024. The rule is aimed at strengthening the corporate governance of listed entities.

ify any market rumour reported in the mainstream media. These companies will have to confirm, deny or clarify any reported event or information in the mainstream media, which is not general in nature and which indicates that rumours of an impending specific material event are circulating amongst the investing public within 24 hours from the reporting of the information.

The Industry Standards Forum, led by K V Kamath, worked on pilot basis on some of the provisions of SEBI LODR Regulations and submitted the first set of draft recommendations last week. The engagement will continue to include consultations with industry members, facilitated by the NSE and the BSE, in-

dustry bodies said in a joint statement. After the receipt of draft recommendations of the Industry Standards Forum, the regulator has decided to postpone the implementation of the provision pertaining to rumour verification, which was to come into effect from October 1, 2023. The consultation process with the regulator on the draft recommendations will now continue further, industry bodies said.

In a joint statement, Ajay Singh, President, ASSOCHAM, R Dinesh, President, CII, and Subhrakant Panda, President, FICCI, said, "We appreciate the unique initiative taken by the SEBI to form the Industry Standards Forum and involve industry bodies to design the implementation standards for various regulations. It is a constructive and inclusive approach designed to foster collaboration and enhance ease of doing business, thereby leading to better compliance."

In August, SEBI had invited the three leading industry associations together to work in consultation with the regulator to assist in designing the implementation standards on a pilot basis in coordination with the stock exchanges. Pursuant to the invitation, ASSOCHAM, CII and FICCI came together and constituted an Industry Standards Forum under the Chairmanship of KV Kamath.

India Inc salary bill up 14.3%, sees fastest jump in 10 years

ENSE ECONOMIC BUREAU
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 2

INDIA INC'S total salary bill went up by a good 14.3 per cent to about Rs 9.4 trillion in FY23, the fastest increase in 10 years. Moreover, the average salary in the organised sector rose by nearly 10 per cent, an eight-year high and much above the rate of retail inflation in the country.

A study of 7.5 million employees across 1,800 listed entities by Jefferies revealed the increase has happened on the back of substantial pay hikes by the IT sector. Excluding for salaries in the IT sector, the rise in pay packets drops to 6.8 per cent, which is in line with the 10-year average.

The estimated increase in salaries per employee is even higher at an effective 15.6 per cent,

also an eight-year high, when the data is adjusted for the recruitment of juniors and retirees.

In absolute terms, employee numbers rose by a reasonably good 4 per cent to 7.5 million on the back of a 7 per cent increase in FY22, a year in which the economy had not fully recovered from the effects of the pandemic.

The study by analysts at Jefferies showed that the deceleration in hiring by IT firms was by and large offset by more recruitment in the BFSI (banking, financial services and insurance) space. The headcount in this sector went up by 8 per cent whereas the increase for the IT sector was 6 per cent.

Between them, the two sectors contributed about 85 per cent to the incremental jobs created in the year. Interestingly, the analysis showed that state-owned un-

dertakings continued to shed jobs in FY23. The rising incomes and employment will boost consumption demand in the coming quarters, economists point out.

While the significantly better growth in private consumption in the June quarter of 6 per cent year-on-year compared with just 2.8 per cent seen in the March quarter, was partly the result of easing inflation, fatter pay cheques have also helped.

The growth in CPI inflation moderated to 6.83 per cent year-on-year in August from a 15-month high of 7.44 per cent in July.

Much of the growth in employment has been driven by the services sector with a boost from higher capital expenditure yet to be seen. For instance, the number of contract workers at L&T stayed at 0.27 million in FY23 and below the peak of FY15. FE

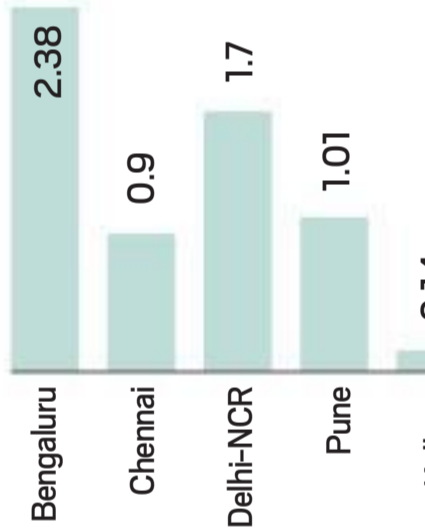
Net office leasing rises 5% to 18-month high in Jul-Sep: JLL

JULY-SEPTEMBER PERIOD	
2022	2023
9.86	10.37
mn sq ft	mn sq ft

India's office net absorption recorded its strongest quarter in an 18-month period, as per JLL India report

NET LEASING OF OFFICE SPACE ACROSS 7 CITIES

INCREASED (mn sq ft)



"India's office market performance in Q3 is a testament to the strong fundamentals of demand and the complete absence of any lasting effects of the global headwinds, except delayed decision-making,"
Rahul Arora JLL India Head Office Leasing Advisory



DECLINE (mn sq ft)
Hyderabad 2.7
Mumbai 1.53
The net absorption is calculated on the basis of new floor space occupied less floor space vacated
Source: JLL India/PTI

Google, HP start manufacturing Chromebooks in India

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 2

GOOGLE IN partnership with HP has started manufacturing Chromebooks in India, the PC maker said on Monday.

The Chromebook devices are being manufactured at the Flex Facility near Chennai, where HP has been producing a range of laptops and desktops since August 2020.

"We're partnering with HP to manufacture Chromebooks in India - These are the first Chromebooks to be made in India and will make it easier for Indian students to have access to affordable and secure computing," Google CEO Sundar Pichai on Monday said in a post on X.

An HP spokesperson confirmed that the production of Chromebooks has started in India.

New Chromebooks are available online from a price range starting at Rs 15,990 apiece.

HP is one of the applicants under the government's Rs 17,000 crore production-linked incentive scheme for IT hardware.

Chromebooks come at a lower price compared to notebooks with proprietary operating system.

A joint statement of Google and HP said Chromebooks are leading devices in K-12 education, helping over 50 million students and teachers across the world.

The local production of Chromebooks expands HP's India-made PC portfolio.

BRIEFLY

WhatsApp bans 74 lakh accounts in August

New Delhi: Meta-owned WhatsApp banned 74 lakh accounts in August, keeping in line with IT rules, according to the latest India monthly report by the messaging platform. Of these, 35 lakh accounts were proactively banned, before any reports from users. The "user safety report" contains details of user complaints received and the corresponding action taken by WhatsApp, as well as WhatsApp's own preventive actions to combat abuse on the platform. PTI

CIL's coal supply rises 3.4%

New Delhi: Supply of coal to the power sector by state-owned Coal India increased 3.4 per cent to 294.8 million tonnes in the first six months of the current fiscal year as the demand for electricity touched record highs in the past two months, the maharatna firm said on Monday. The total amount of coal supplied was 1.8 MT more than the 293 MT demand projected for this period, Coal India Ltd (CIL) said in a statement. Coal is the largest source of electricity in India and CIL produces over 80 per cent of coal. PTI

Investments to determine fuel prices at the pump, says UAE energy minister

REUTERS
ABU DHABI, OCTOBER 2

FUEL PRICES consumers pay at the pump will be driven by a willingness to keep investing in fossil fuels, the UAE's energy minister said on Monday, as oil industry leaders reiterated the need for ongoing investment to smooth the energy transition.

Speaking at the ADIPEC energy industry event in Abu Dhabi, minister Suhail al-

Mazrouei said the OPEC+ producer group cares "that the price is right for consumers, but right for the consumers for a very limited time only is short-sighted".

More investment is needed in oil and gas for prices to be "right at the pump", he added.

When asked whether high crude prices could threaten the health of the global economy, al-Mazrouei said OPEC+ never targets a certain oil price.

The group, which comprises

the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and allies led by Russia, in June agreed to extend their oil output cuts until the end of 2024.

Saudi Arabia and Russia have also extended 1.3 million barrels per day (bpd) of additional voluntary cuts until the end of the year.

That helped push Brent crude prices to above \$90 a barrel in early September, with the futures contract last week ap-

proaching the psychological threshold of \$100 a barrel. OPEC Secretary General Haitham Al Ghaiss said at the same event that he is optimistic about oil demand growth, and that he saw under-investment as a risk to energy security.

"We are... running quite low on spare capacity, we have said this repeatedly, and this requires a concerted effort by all of the stakeholders to see the importance of investing in this industry," he said.

Over 30.75 lakh audit reports filed for AY24 till September 30

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 2

MORE THAN 30.75 lakh audit reports were filed for AY 2023-24 on the e-filing portal till the due date of September 30, the Income Tax department said in a statement on Monday.

This includes about 29.5 lakh tax audit reports filed for AY24, besides other audit reports in Forms 29B, 29C, 10CCB, etc, ensuring timely

compliance. To facilitate taxpayers, extensive outreach programmes were carried out, the I-T department said.

As part of the drive, around 55.4 lakh messages were sent via e-mails, SMSes, social media, besides information messages on the Income Tax portal to create awareness to file tax audit reports and other audit forms within the due date.

Besides, various user awareness videos were uploaded on the Income Tax web-

site to assist people, the I-T department said.

Such concerted efforts have been helpful for taxpayers and tax professionals in filing audit reports within the due date, as per the statement.

The e-filing helpdesk team handled about 2.36 lakh queries in September, the statement said, adding that the support was provided through inbound calls, outbound calls, live chats, webex, and co-browsing sessions.

Adani plans to build 10 GW solar manufacturing capacity by 2027

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 2

BILLIONAIRE GAUTAM Adani's group is planning to build 10 GW of integrated solar manufacturing capacity by 2027, as it looks to capture energy transition business, sources close to the company said. Adani Group currently has a solar manufacturing capacity of 4 GW.

Adani Solar has a confirmed order book of over 3,000 MW in exports that are to be serviced over the next 15 months, they said, adding Adani, recently, raised \$394 million for solar manufacturing from Barclays PLC and Deutsche Banks AG through a trade finance facility.

To change, the government adopted a two-pronged strategy - used trade and non-trade barriers, such as safeguard duty, an approved list of module manufacturers (ALMM), and a production-linked incentive (PLI) scheme. This gave Indian solar manufacturing the necessary impetus to encourage private players like the Adani group to scale up investments in the solar manufacturing sector.

After the success of Adani Green Energy Limited (AGEL) - the listed renewable energy generation entity of the group, Adani Enterprises (AEL) made strides in lining up and incubating solar PV manufacturing with Adani Solar in 2015.

Adani Solar commenced manufacturing in 2016, with a 1.2 GW cell and module manufacturing capacity. In less than 6 years, Adani Solar enhanced its manu-

facturing capacity to more than three-fold to 4 GW module and 4 GW cell capacity today, making it one of the fastest-growing (in terms of capacity expansion) solar manufacturing companies.

Adani has built India's largest solar PV capacity for cells and modules at the Mundra SEZ, sources said, adding since inception, Adani Solar has sold over 7 GW of modules, catering to both Indian and global demand.

As per Mercom's India solar market Leaderboard 2023, Adani Solar ranked amongst the top 3 solar module suppliers in 2022.

Adani Solar is now building the world's first fully integrated and comprehensive solar manufacturing ecosystem of 10 GW in Mundra, Gujarat, by 2027. It will be the group's largest manufacturing set-up and is expected to create over 13,000 green jobs, they said.

Edible oil firms suffer big losses on imports surge; sales fall by 8% on year

VIVEAT SUSAN PINTO & SANDIP DAS
MUMBAI/NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 2

SHARPLY SUBDUED levels of edible oil prices in the global markets for nearly a year, coupled with the government's resolve to pass the benefits on to the consumers, have kept consumption high, but hit the bottom lines of domestic companies hard.

While sales volumes of top brands have grown by 20-25 per cent in the June quarter, combined sales of 11 listed edible oil companies fell by 8 per cent on year, according data compiled by FE. With the sharp drop in price realisation, these companies saw their operating losses of nearly 50 per cent on a combined basis in Q1FY24, while their combined



There has been a surge in edible oil imports, notably refined palm oil. *File*

net losses in the period were over 76 per cent.

While this is for the second consecutive quarter that these companies have suffered losses on a combined basis, the extent of the losses was sharper in Q1FY24 over Q4FY23.

Domestic edible oil companies had suffered losses in Q2FY23 as well, but returned to

modest profitability in the subsequent quarter as prices firmed up briefly. There has been a marginal increase in prices in the September quarter, but it is unlikely that all companies have turned around during the period.

There has been a surge in edible oil imports, notably refined palm oil. With the landed cost of

refined palm oil being below that of crude palm oil, domestic refining has become unviable, forcing companies to urge the government to introduce a meaningful import duty differential between crude and refined oils.

Adani Wilmar, which makes the Fortune brand of edible oils, for instance, posted a net loss of Rs 79 crore in Q1FY24 versus a net profit of Rs 194 crore a year ago.

The company's quarterly revenue declined 12 per cent on year to Rs 12,928 crore, and earnings before interest, tax, depreciation and amortisation (Ebitda) saw a big drop of 71 per cent to Rs 130 crore in the June quarter versus Rs 443 crore reported last year. This is despite a 25 per cent rise in volumes from 1.19 million tonne (MT) to 1.49 MT during the period. FE

NOBEL PRIZE 2023 PHYSIOLOGY OR MEDICINE

They helped protect the world from the coronavirus

ANONNA DUTT
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 2

A problem identified

All vaccines work on the same principle — getting the body acquainted with a non-lethal form of the pathogen so that the immune system learns to fight the real infection.

mRNA vaccines carry the genetic code for the proteins that make up the non-lethal but key parts of a virus. The Covid-19 vaccines, for example, used the codes for the spike protein used by SARS-CoV-2 to enter the body. Once injected, the vaccine uses the body's own protein-manufacturing centre to produce these viral proteins. The immune system then responds by creating antibodies against the viral protein and learns to fight the actual infection.

Kariko and Weissman realised that the immune system recognised laboratory-developed mRNA molecules as foreign substances, which led to an inflammatory reaction in the body. However, this did not happen when mRNA derived from animal cell culture was used. This led them to look for properties in the lab-developed mRNA molecules that were triggering the immune system.

They found that the mRNA derived from the animal cell assays frequently contained modifications that were not seen in the lab-developed uniform mRNA molecules.

A solution found

To tackle the inflammatory response, Kariko and Weissman produced different

'ENABLED THE DEVELOPMENT OF MRNA VACCINES AGAINST COVID'

'Findings have fundamentally changed our understanding of how mRNA interacts with our immune system'



KATALIN KARIKÓ, 68

Professor at Szeged University, Hungary; Adjunct Professor at Perelman School of Medicine, University of Pennsylvania



DREW WEISSMAN, 64

Roberts Family Professor in Vaccine Research and Director of the Penn Institute for RNA Innovations



ON TUESDAY: Nobel Prize in Physics

IN 2022: The Nobel Prize in Physics was awarded to John Clauser, Alain Aspect, and Anton Zeilinger for separate 'groundbreaking experiments using entangled quantum states, where two particles behave like a single unit even when they are separated'.

variants of mRNA with chemical alterations. When they used these altered mRNA, the inflammatory response was entirely eliminated.

In addition, subsequent studies by the two also showed that the altered mRNA generated more proteins efficiently than the uniform ones. These discoveries eliminated critical

obstacles to clinical applications of mRNA.

"There was a long haul from discovery to application. Katalin Kariko and Drew Weissman recognised different types of mRNA and how to modify them to reduce inflammation and still produce an immune response. This was 15 years ago. Several

mRNA vaccine candidates did not progress before the spectacular success in rapid development of vaccines during the pandemic. Kariko and Weissman were pioneers and have changed the world of prevention and treatment by giving us a platform that will go beyond vaccines to therapeutics," Gagandeep Kang, Director (Enterics, Diagnostics, Genomics and Epidemiology) at the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, told *The Indian Express*.

Vaccines before the pandemic

There are two types of vaccine that use the complete virus — live, attenuated vaccines use a weakened version of the pathogen, like in the case of the commonly used oral polio vaccine, while an inactivated vaccine uses killed pathogens to elicit an immune response. The rabies vaccine is one such.

With the progress of molecular biology and techniques to edit genetic codes, vaccines using small, non-lethal parts of the pathogen have been developed. These are called sub-unit vaccines.

Some vaccines also encode these non-lethal parts to another pathogen that carries and distributes it throughout the body. An example of this was the AstraZeneca vaccine available in India as Covishield, which used parts of the Covid-19 virus attached to an adenovirus. These are called vector vaccines.

Why new vaccines worked

The challenge with all these types of vaccine is the need for animal cell culture, making them time-consuming and expensive to scale up. An additional problem with vector vaccines is that the immune system develops responses to the carrier virus as well, making the booster shots not as effective.

Initially, the lab-based mRNA molecules were considered unstable and challenging to be delivered into the body, apart from the inflammatory response problem.

In addition to the research by Kariko and Weissman in solving the issues of the inflammatory response, development of efficient fat-molecule shells to carry the mRNA inside the body was also key to the creation of Covid-19 vaccines.

Not only are nucleic acid-based vaccines easy to manufacture, they are also flexible since the sequence can be easily modified for different pathogens. In fact, the Covid-19 mRNA vaccines have been modified to protect against the newer variants. An additional advantage with mRNA vaccines is that the delivered genetic code cannot influence the human genome, making it safer than DNA vaccines.

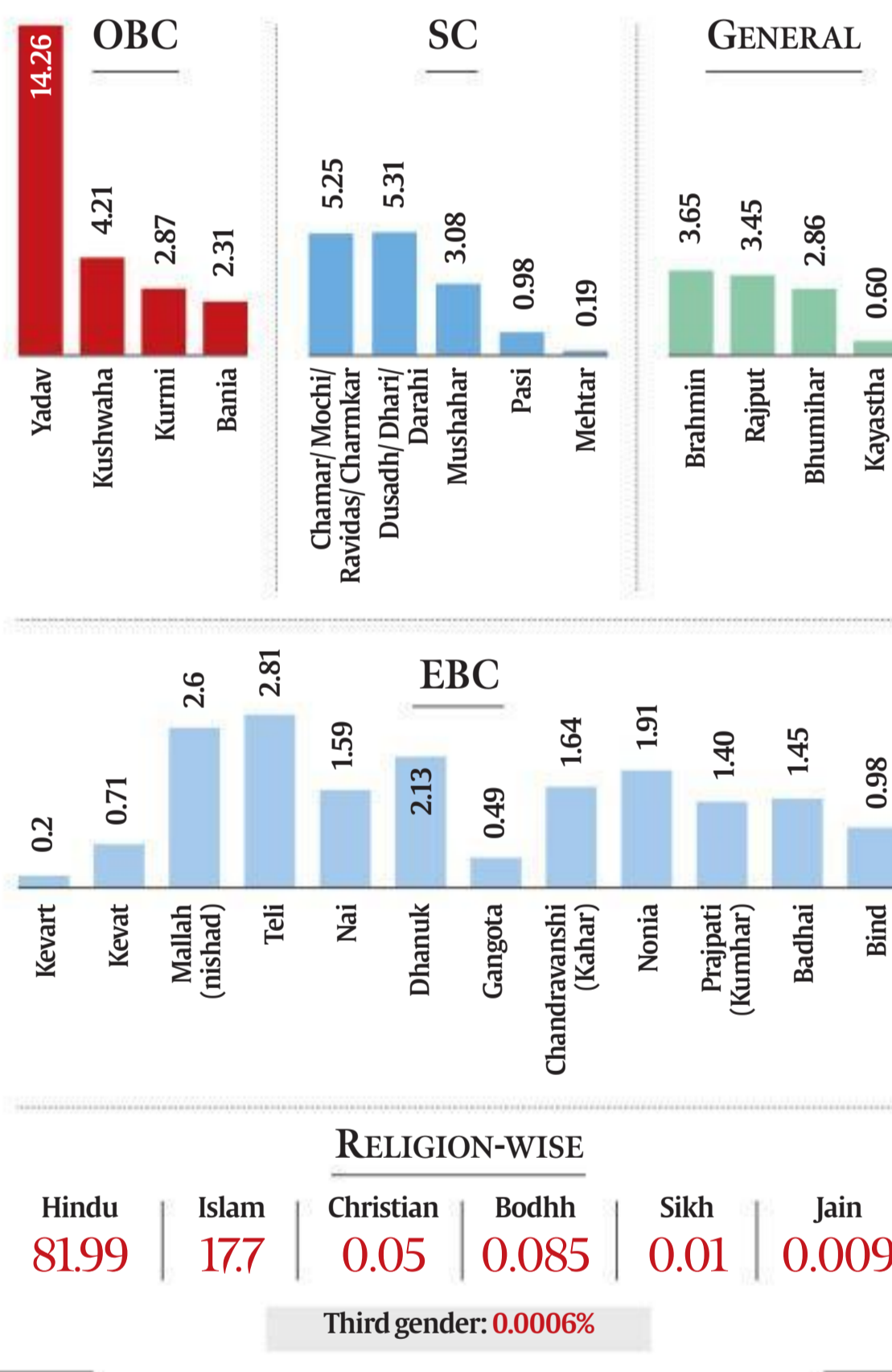
In the future, the technology may also be used to deliver therapeutic proteins and treat some cancer types.

(WITH ANURADHA MASCARENHAS)

TELLING NUMBERS

How major groups stack up in Bihar

(figures in %)



EXPLAINED POLITICS

4 takeaways from Bihar survey

The data are not surprising — and are immensely significant. They carry the potential of new battles in Bihar, and could be the big idea that can mount a challenge to the BJP's Hindutva-plus-welfare pitch

SANTOSH SINGH
PATNA, OCTOBER 2

THE BIHAR government has released the results of its survey of castes in the state, which puts the share of Extremely Backward Classes (EBCs) and Other Backward Classes (OBCs) cumulatively at more than 63%. The "unreserved" category of so-called "forward" castes is about 15.5%.

Nationwide data on caste numbers were last released after the census of 1931. Enumeration of castes has for long been a political hot potato linked to demands for reservation, and the BJP's central leadership has resisted a caste census in the face of loud clamours from the Opposition.

1 What are the key findings of the Bihar caste survey?

The EBCs are the biggest social group comprising 4,70,80,514 individuals, or 36.01% of the state's population. The OBCs number 3,54,63,936 (27.12%), and the Scheduled Castes (SCs) 2,56,89,820 (19.65%).

Scheduled Tribes (STs) number only 21,99,361 (1.68%), the bulk of the tribal population having become part of Jharkhand after the bifurcation of the state in 2000. The "unreserved" category comprises 2,02,91,679 individuals (15.52%).

Bihar's population, according to the survey, is 13,07,25,310, compared to the 10.41 crore recorded in the 2011 census. Hindus comprise 81.99% of the population, and Muslims 17.72%. The populations of Buddhists, Christians, Sikhs, Jains, and other religious denominations are minuscule.

2 When and how was the survey undertaken?

Following an all-party meeting, Chief Minister Nitish Kumar announced on June 1, 2022 that all nine parties, including the BJP's Bihar unit, had unanimously decided to go ahead with the "caste census". The government subsequently allocated Rs 500 crore from its contingency fund for the exercise.

In the first phase of the survey, carried out between January 7 and 21, the number of

THE EBCS & WHY THEY MATTER

THE EBCs are a group of 130-odd castes that occupy the lower rungs of the OBC spectrum that is dominated by the Yadavs and Kurmis. Among the EBCs are Mallah, Nai, Nonia, Dhanuk, Kahar, etc.

KARPOORI THAKUR, who was Chief Minister of Bihar for a few months in 1970-71 and then from 1977-79, pioneered the politics of EBC. He was the first to announce quotas within quota, earmarking 12% for EBCs and 8% for OBCs. Karpoori's government did not last long, but the politics of EBC remained and grew stronger over the decades. Lalu Prasad appealed to a wide section of EBCs until the 1995 elections.

households was counted. The second phase, which began on April 15 and was to be completed in about a month, was intended to collect data on castes, religions, and economic backgrounds, as well as on aspects such as the number of family members living in the state and outside.

However, the exercise was paused by the Patna High Court after five PILs were filed against it. The court initially said the state government was not competent to conduct what appeared to be a census, but allowed it to go ahead in August after the state submitted it was a "survey", and assured that no one's data would be divulged.

More than 3 lakh people, mainly teachers, went from door to door with a 17-question form on caste, religion, and economic status. An app was used to collect the data for tabulation and processing.

3 What is the significance of the survey findings?

The politics of identity based on reservation and backward caste assertion that allowed socialist parties like Nitish's JD(U) and Lalu Prasad's RJD in Bihar, and Mulayam Singh's SP



NITISH KUMAR, after coming to power in 2005, cultivated the EBCs, announcing more than a dozen welfare schemes for

them. Nitish's own caste has a small base, and the EBC support has been crucial to his staying in power for so long.

in UP, to dominate these states for a quarter century, has all but run its course. The *Mandal-kamandal* dichotomy was blunted by the arrival of Narendra Modi on the national scene, and the new BJP reached out to the OBCs with its mix of Hindutva and welfareism.

The results of the caste survey in Bihar could present the JD(U)-RJD with an opportunity for renewed backward class mobilisation. The Opposition INDIA alliance could use the survey to pressure the BJP to hold a nationwide caste census in the coming days.

The survey results will amplify the clamour for increasing the OBC quota beyond 27%, and for a quota within quota for the EBCs. The Justice Rohini Commission, which had been examining the question of "sub-categorisation" since 2017, submitted its report at the end of July — its recommendations are not yet public. The Bihar survey may well push other states to carry out similar exercises.

The survey data will also reopen the long-standing debate over the 50% ceiling on reservation imposed by the Supreme Court in its landmark ruling in *Indra Sawhney v Union of India* (1992). The ceiling was imposed to ensure "efficiency" in administra-

tion, and courts have since blocked several attempts by states to breach it.

4 How can the findings impact the coming elections to Lok Sabha and the Bihar Assembly?

Lalu and Nitish, along with the Congress, showed the potential of the mutual transfer of votes to win 178 out of 243 seats in the Bihar Assembly elections of 2015. According to the survey data, EBCs, OBCs, and SCs together account for more than 82% of the state's population, a vote bank for which fierce battles will be fought.

In Bihar, Lalu and Nitish are still considered the primary leaders of OBCs, EBCs, and Dalits. The BJP can be expected to harp on the Prime Minister's OBC background along with the achievements of his government — however, the complex caste dynamics of the state will not make it an easy sell.

Nitish, whose national ambitions are well known, has of late been lying low in the INDIA bloc. Given the importance of the EBCs across the Hindi heartland, he will be hoping that the survey emerges as the masterstroke that rebooted his hopes.

How Gandhi's relationship with music found an echo in his politics

SUANSHU KHURANA
NEW DELHI, OCTOBER 2

IN A public address in Ahmedabad in 1926, Mahatma Gandhi said, "To know music is to transfer it to life. The prevalent discord of today is an indication of our sad plight. There can be no swaraj where there is no harmony, no music".

While the profundity and technique of Indian classical music — Hindustani and Carnatic — did not appeal much to Gandhi, who called it "a prerogative of the few", he identified the power music could wield as a communication tool during the freedom struggle by bringing people together.

Roots in devotional songs

The root of Gandhi's interest in music

went back to his childhood in a Vaishnav home, where he would hear his mother sing *bhajans* and a devotee of Ram recite the *dohas* (couplets) and *chawpais* (quatrains) of the *Ramayana* musically.

Later, he also witnessed the Christian community's hymn-singing in the UK and South Africa.

Music as a uniting project

Distinct from the simplicity of the concept of spinning, using music to unite people could be effective, but it was also complex. There were different regions with different music, castes that practiced different forms, besides music being perceived differently by those who performed it and those who heard it. But the idea of prayer stayed with the Mahatma.

In South Africa, where Gandhi bought

about 100 acres of land to attempt his first experiments with communal living and manual labour, he decided to use the idea of prayer to put out the message of spirituality and oneness. He carefully drafted a list of hymns — including his favourites *Lead, Kindly Light*, and *Abide with Me*, besides *bhajans* from Hindi and Gujarati. He figured that men, women and children singing together did not just allow a sense of community and consonance, it also projected homogeneity despite the participants coming from different communities.

Prayer services found a resonance in the Sabarmati Ashram too, and later in the entire freedom movement.

The Ashram Bhajnavali, comprising about 250 pieces, was created with some

shlokas and 'Bapu's bhajans', which included 15th-century bhakti poet Narsinh Mehta's *Vaishnavajana toh taine kahiye* and Tulsidas's famed *Ramdhun: Ishwar allah tero naam, sabko sanmati de bhagwaan*, which was composed by noted musician Pt Vishnu Digambar Paluskar. Gandhi also brought in Narayan Moreswar Khare, Paluskar's disciple, to lead the prayers at the ashram so that the songs were taught and sung properly.

The Bhajnavali later went on to include passages from the Quran, shabads from Guru Granth Sahib, and poetry by Bulle Shah, Meera, and Kabir.

Gandhi chose bhajans that could be easily hummed, sung, and remembered and were likely to appeal to the common man as well as the elites.

EXPLAINED HISTORY

The coming up of the gramophone and radio broadcasts also helped in music being identified as a significant weapon.

While songs were a significant part of the Dandi Yatra, they became the leitmotif of the prabhakar pheris — musical processions at dawn where small groups roamed the streets singing patriotic songs and prayers. He had written, just before the salt march, in 1929, "Music has given me peace... it has tranquillised my mind when I was greatly agitated over something. It has helped me to overcome anger."

In the second half of the 1940s, inundated with the communal violence and bloodshed of the Partition, Gandhi found alleviation in music. By this time, there were some singing voices that appealed to Gandhi more than others. Vocalist MS Subbulakshmi was one of them.

A few weeks after the Partition, he asked Subbulakshmi to record Meera's famed bhajan *Hari tum haro jan ki peer*. Sadashivam, Subbulakshmi's husband, wrote to Gandhi that his wife did not know the piece properly and wouldn't want to sing a half-baked rendition. Gandhi wrote back saying he'd rather have MS say the words than someone else sing them.

The song was recorded at All India Radio (AIR) studios in Chennai on the night of October 1, 1947, and completed at 2 am on October 2. The recording was airlifted to Delhi, where it was played to Gandhi on his 78th birthday, October 2, 1947. On January 30, 1948, Gandhi was assassinated. AIR's announcement of his death was followed by Subbulakshmi's rendition of *Hari tum haro*.

LONGER VERSION

indianexpress.com/explained

WARM UP GAMES



England's Joe Root got some time out on the pitch batting. Reuters

England: Game time for Root, overs for Wood

Batting: Regardless of the runs he scored, the biggest takeaway was the time Joe Root spent in the middle. Moeen Ali's innings at No. 7 showed England have firepower down the order.

Bowling: Mark Wood bowled just three overs, and with Jofra Archer not in the squad, as of now, England would consider the speedster their point of difference on flat pitches. Spinners Adil Rashid, Moeen and Liam Livingstone all got a bowl.

Bangladesh: Looking for best combination

Batting: They tried Mehidy Hasan Miraz up the order in the Asia Cup, and the experiment worked. With no Tamim Iqbal in the squad Tanzid Hasan threw his hat in the ring.

Bowling: Their pacers, even though they went for runs, got a reasonable workout and got some help from the wicket and a few wickets as well.

Brief scores: Bangladesh 188/9 in 37 overs (Mehidy Hasan Miraz 74, Tanzid Hasan 45; Reece Topley 3/23) lost to England 197/6 in 24.1 overs (Moeen Ali 56; Mustafizur Rahman 2/23) by four wickets (DLS method)

New Zealand: Kane gets time in middle, Boult fires

Batting: Getting Kane Williamson time in the middle is the biggest takeaway while Devon Conway, Tom Latham and Glenn Phillips also got some runs.

Bowling: Trent Boult has lost none of his wicket-taking ability while Matt Henry and James Neesham also had useful outings. The Kiwis will be keen to have the experienced Tim Southee back.

SA: Quinton gets going, pacers give hope

Batting: Quinton de Kock and Rassie van der Dussen showed how crucial they are for the Proteas, while Heinrich Klaasen displayed his x-factor.

Bowling: Marco Jansen and Lungi Ngidi gained some confidence and they will hope Kagiso Rabada hits his straps soon. Keshav Maharaj had a decent outing.

Brief scores: New Zealand 321/6 in 50 overs (Conway 78, Latham 52; Ngidi 3/33) beat South Africa 211/4 in 37 overs (De Kock 84 not out, Van der Dussen 51; Boult 2/20) by 7 runs (DLS method)

As the World Cup caravan is set to roll, a question arises: **How does a place and its social milieu shape a cricketer and influence their game?** Could Virat Kohli have been the same player were he born in Guwahati East and not in West Delhi? Or what would have happened to Kuldeep Yadav had he been from Colaba in Mumbai?

Kohli, the Wild West Delhi boy

A partition refugee rehabilitation area it might've started out as, but this corner of the capital teems with the 'we can make something out of nothing' spirit that Kohli personifies

SRIRAM VEERA

VERY EARLY in the conversation, historian Ravinder Kaur, who has written a book 'Since 1947: Partition Narratives among Punjabi migrants of Delhi', calls West Delhi the Wild West. She knows what she is talking about, Ravinder grew up here.

She talks about how the Partition refugees were settled in various camps in West Delhi and some like Vikaspuri, where Virat Kohli's parents moved decades ago, carved out a few years later. The socio-cultural milieu of the region, its demographics has shaped a generation of people in West Delhi to an extent, she feels. "A West Delhiite has certain character traits that are different from the rest of Delhi. I remember feeling so out of place, as a teenager when I stepped out of West Delhi to the rest. It seemed like a different world."

After due caution about stereotyping and not generalising, she explains the psyche of West Delhi populace. "There certainly is a bit of wildness in West Delhi people that has not been tamed. There is a certain kind of brashness in West Delhi. A bit of our switches are uncontrolled. A few months ago, someone was scolding other people at the IHC for talking too loudly. I burst out laughing. Pretentious whispers. That's not happening in West Delhi. People like to think about themselves: we are energetic, we can make something out of nothing. Virat Kohli seems to be from that background. People were thrown into this kind of homelessness but some did prosper or survive. All around me in the 80's to the turn of the century, I would see that spirit, the never-say-die if you will."

Senior Kohli certainly did try his best. He attempted different businesses, even tried his hand at stocks, but despite the financial jolts, he kept doing this and that. Some of that fighting spirit, even if not the historical baggage, is seen in Virat, by his own admission.

The world knows about Virat's traits as a batsman and fiery character who doesn't take a back step. Australian cricket world saw their own reflection in him; and so did Pakistan, whose legendary former players gush in awe about him, using "but Virat ko dekho" to mock their own players. He can show the middle finger to the Australian crowd, he can mouth invectives with the South Africans, he can taunt James Anderson's age, he can share a slew of sledges with Pakistanis, and still have all of them dreaming to take his wicket as a prized trophy.

"That untamed wildness I talked about earlier can be seen in Kohli at times. It can also be interpreted as a young man who is super ambitious, who won't take defeat. Even when we began to move around with the sophisticated crowd, we retain that. The best among us, can inhabit different worlds with ease," smiles Kaur, who these days is based in Copenhagen as associate professor of Modern South Asian Studies.

Virat's friend and long-time room partner Pradeep Sangwan takes that dual-world aspect further. "I met him recently at some function, *mujhe laga change hua hoga*," Sangwan wrote in this newspaper last year. "As soon as Anushka [Sharma] crossed over to the other side of the room, *bhai chalu ho jaate* (with his pranks). The moment his wife returned, he became a nice boy. As soon as his wife went to meet someone, Delhi ka Virat Kohli was back to talking in the same



Illustration: Suvajit Dey

old style."

Of all the Indian players that the social Historian Ram Guha says he interacted with, he rated Virat as the most articulate and a man with aura. Guha has talked in the past about the power Virat wielded, especially in the episode of the displacement of Anil Kumble from coach.

Surender Khanna, former India cricketer who is currently in an advisory role with Delhi cricket, is an old Delhi hand, who more than

most understands where Kohli comes from. "There is an old saying that elders in my family used to often repeat: *Jab chal rahi ho, chalana chahtye, aur na chalya voh murkh. Jab na chal rahi ho, tab chalya ki koshish karta hai, voh maha murkh hai*. Kohli is a very intelligent smart man; he knows where, when to push and when to back out. He stepped down from captaincy when he saw which direction the wind was blowing. Look at his achievements in Test cricket. Look at his

That untamed wildness can be seen in Kohli at times. It can also be interpreted as a young man who is super ambitious, who won't take defeat. Even when we began to move with the sophisticated crowd, we retain that

RAVINDER KAUR
HISTORIAN

Kohli is an intelligent, smart man; he knows where, when to push and when to back out. He stepped down from captaincy when he saw which direction the wind was blowing. He is huge. And yet he hasn't forgotten his roots.

SURENDER KHANNA
FORMER INDIA CRICKETER

reach in the outside cricketing world. He is huge. And yet he hasn't forgotten his roots. He has time and respect for old cricketers or his childhood coach; he never forgot the coach's contribution, did he?"

Kohli isn't someone who is ashamed of his roots. Not everyone from West Delhi is like that, avers the historian Kaur. "There is a certain sense of inferiority complex in some who have moved away from West Delhi and absolutely stopped mentioning that they

spent 20 years of their life there. It's erased. Class's side-effects, that complex."

The West Delhiites, who don't share that complex, are pretty proud of a culinary dish that they swear emerged from their old bazaars: the Soya Chaap, the mock vegan meat made with soya beans, and stuck in thin sticks as if they were real meat. Befittingly, their most famous son Kohli has turned away from meat products and presumably is still a lover of these Soya Chaaps. These days, West Delhi markets also throw up a slew of yum Afghan momos, another side-effect of their inherent cosmopolitanism.

Kaur has no qualms in saying that among the successful in West Delhi is a survivor's fighting spirit that imagines a way out of cul-de-sacs in life. "That we can make something out of nothing is a kind of strange belief." Like

Kohli displayed in the last T20 world cup when he and India found themselves in a blind alley against Pakistan. It came down to the penultimate over - to the last two balls; if sixes weren't smacked the final-over target would probably have been out of bounds. But it was Haris Rauf bowling; somehow Kohli conjured two out-of-world shots to deflate Pakistan. Much of India's hopes in the World Cup has been laid on the flashy shoulders of youngsters, but it's difficult to see light without Kohli's passionate guiding hand in the middle order. Sachin Tendulkar gave that calm in 2011. Mohinder Amarnath in 1983. That dream-materialising baton is now in the hands of ambitious Kohli.

Professor Kaur zooms into a certain aspect of Kohli's charm. "What was the social aspiration of the west Delhi youth in those days? To have a large house, two cars, servants, drivers. Virat Kohli just doesn't attain this kind of thing but he goes all the way up - and he marries a film star! For a story of a west Delhi kid who has made it, he is there where one can only dream of. Part of his charm lies there as well, I suspect, for many of us." From a West Delhi boy who dreamt big, Virat became the dream itself.

PREPARING FOR THE BIG DAY

Chepauk takes no chances before India opener; imports 4 super-soppers

VENKATA KRISHNA B
CHENNAI, OCTOBER 2

EVEN THOUGH the rain that lashed Chennai over the past week has relented and the forecast continuing to improve, the Tamil Nadu Cricket Association (TNCA) is taking no chances ahead of India's opening World Cup fixture against Australia and has imported four new super-soppers from Australia.

The met office is predicting only a 10 percent chance of rain on the day of the game, excessive heat is expected throughout the week, which could bring about showers from time to time.

Over the past three weeks as the city witnessed widespread rain, the TNCA had to postpone its league matches at least on three occasions. The scenario was no different over the weekend as the scheduled games were played on Monday. Chennai receives heavy to very heavy rainfall from the north-east monsoon which usually picks up pace in October-November. While the met office said prevailing conditions are favourable for the withdrawal of the

south-west monsoon, the prevailing heat tends to bring thunderstorms and showers in the region.

With just five days to go for the fixture, work was in full swing at the MA Chidambaram Stadium on Monday, which is scheduled to host four more matches after the India-Australia game. "We have bought four new advanced super-soppers for the World Cup because we don't want to take any chances. We have also replaced all the old covers with new ones, including heavy ones so that we have all bases covered," a TNCA official said.

Unlike the Eden Gardens and venues in Sri Lanka, which have a habit of covering the entire field, at Chennai thanks to the good drainage facility only the square and run-up areas would be covered in case of rain.

The outfield has a herring-bone subsoil drainage system in place to suit the three-foot slope, which helps in getting rid of the water quickly. The herringbone system usually has one main pipe which is connected to several ones along the slope which results in water levels receding quickly.



MA Chidambaram Stadium ahead of the India-Australia opener.

Dealing with dew

Despite the rain over the past two weeks, the Chepauk outfield remained dry with the groundstaff busy giving final

touches to the pitches.

The Indian Express understands that three pitches are being prepared for India's first match and the final call would be taken

48 hours before the game. The venue has historically been a spin-friendly one and there have been only five totals in excess of 300, with four coming in the Afro-Asia Cup in 2007.

India are yet to touch 300 at the venue and all indications point to a contest with a good balance between bat and ball. On Monday, the pitch did have a green tinge to it with the grass cover holding the surface together in the excessively hot conditions.

With the World Cup being held in October-November, there is a fear of dew playing a huge role in the outcome of matches. In such situations, the toss ends up being a crucial factor as teams that bat second tend to have an advantage. However, thanks to the rain factor, dew is unlikely to have any effect on Sunday's fixture.

It is understood that ever since pitch preparation began a couple of weeks ago,

there has been no sign of dew, which will be good news for India.

In such a case, the hosts would keep their options open about their bowling combination and could even field three spinners should conditions remain dry.

The last time India played Australia at Chepauk in March, Adam Zampa and Ashton Agar played a winning role for the five-time world champions.

During the 2011 World Cup, the groundstaff at Chepauk had to install canopies temporarily over the square to prevent the pitch from breaking under the heat. In that edition, India's total of 268 against the West Indies was the highest at the venue which hosted four matches. Since then, the Chepauk square has been re-laid twice and off late, the pitch has shown signs of regaining the bounce which was one of its traditional characteristics.

The met office is predicting only a 10 percent chance of rain on the day of the game, excessive heat is expected through the week, which could bring about showers from time to time

MEDALS TALLY				
Country	G	S	B	Total
1 China	147	81	42	270
2 Japan	33	44	45	122
3 South Korea	31	39	63	133
4 India	13	24	23	60
5 Chinese Taipei	12	10	17	39
6 Uzbekistan	11	14	18	43
7 Thailand	10	7	16	33

INDIA'S DAY 9 HAUL:



3 SILVER
ATHLETICS
 Women's 3000m steeplechase: Parul Chaudhary
 Women's long jump: Ancy Edappilly
 4x400m relay mixed: Muhammed Ajmal, R. Vithya Ramraj, Rajesh Ramesh and Subha Venkatesan

4 BRONZE
TABLE TENNIS
 Women's doubles: Ayhika Mukherjee - Sutirtha Mukherjee

ATHLETICS
 Women's 3000m steeplechase: Priti Lamba

SKATING
 Men's speed skating 3000m relay race: Aryanpal Singh Ghuman, Rajendra Vikram Ingale, Rahul Siddhant Kamble, Anandkumar Velkumar,
 Women's speed skating 3000m relay: Sanjana Bathula, Karthika Jagadeeswaran, Aarathi Kasturi Raj, Heeral Sadhu.

ASIAD CAPSULE

Diving: London Singh finishes lowly 12th

India's London Singh Hemam finished a disappointing 12th in the men's 1m springboard diving event at the Asian Games here on Monday. London finished with total points of 207.80 to draw curtains on his campaign in the event. China's Zongyuan Wang won the gold with total points of 459.50, while another Chinese Jianfeng Peng bagged the silver scoring 442.45 points. The bronze went to Haram Woo of Korea who scored 395.95 points. London will be in action once again on Tuesday in the men's 3m springboard event, which will also feature another Indian in Siddharth Bajrang Pardeshi. PTI

Archery: India make quarters in all six team events

Indian archers showed tenacity and authority in equal measure to storm into the quarterfinals in all the six team events of the Asian Games here on Monday. The Indians played five team elimination rounds and dropped just one set on way to their respective quarterfinal matches in both recurve and compound sections. India have got a bye into the quarters by virtue of topping the qualifications in the women's compound team event. India remained in contention in all five gold medals up for grabs in compound section with all the four archers -- Ojas Deotale, Abhishek Verma, Jyothi Surekha Vennam and Aditi Swami -- progressing to their respective individual quarterfinals in the afternoon session. PTI



F-ANCY LEAP

Ancy Sojan Edappilly after winning the silver medal in the women's long jump final.

Ancy jumps the queue

Long jumper pips Shaili to win silver; Parul-Priti in steeplechase & mixed relay team add to medal tally



EXPRESS AT ASIAN GAMES

MIHIR VASAVDA
HANGZHOU, OCTOBER 2

AFTER THE heavier stuff came the fun bit. Ancy Sojan tapped her feet and caressed her braids, joked about the days she was 'fatty' and described the grind to 'look like an athlete' again. She evoked Dhoni-isms, paraphrasing the former cricket captain's 'control the controllables' mantra in which she sought solace during her lowest phases. And by the end of it all, all she wanted was to slurp an ice cream and bust some moves to Vijay's upbeat and energetic number Na Ready. Loosely translated, the song's essence is, 'I am ready, are you ready for me?' An apt choice on the night she sprang a statement-making performance. Needing a big leap in her last two attempts to consolidate her hold on the second spot, the 22-year-old from Thrissur launched strongly from the takeoff board and landed at a distance of 6.63m on her penultimate jump. It wasn't enough to overtake China's Xiong Shiqi, who won the gold medal with a jump of 6.73m, but the personal best mark ensured a silver medal for the chirpy athlete who first consoled her teammate -- and pre-tournament favourite Shaili Singh -- before breaking into her own celebrations. Shaili finished fourth after managing a best jump of 6.48m, way below her personal best of 6.76m. Instead, the 19-year-old athlete was reduced to tears, wondering where it all went south. The jumper, tipped to surpass Anju Bobby George's national record, made all six attempts legally but could not get the desired elevation from the board; neither the height on the jump nor the lift-off that could carry her further. "I tried my best, but I wasn't feeling that energy from within," she said, breaking down. Ancy, who has spent the last few years in Shaili's shadows, walked up to her immediately after the event was over, put an arm around her shoulders and tried to console her. "She was very disappointed," Ancy said. "I told her, 'just be calm'; told her she has a bright future." Ancy's was one of three silver medals India won in track and field after Parul Chaudhary opened the account in the 3,000m steeplechase. Chaudhary clocked 9 minutes, 27.63 seconds to finish the race nearly 10 seconds behind Bahrain's Mutile Yavi. The India-Bahrain duel continued on the

track in the 4x400m mixed team relay but with a massive twist towards the end. Muhammed Ajmal Variyathodi gave India a strong start. Going head-to-head with Bahrain's Musa Ali Musa Isah, Variyathodi stayed close to him for the first 200m before starting to close down and ultimately overtook him on the bend. The Indian finished the first leg with a timing of 43.14 seconds, 0.16 ahead of the Bahraini, who was pushed to the second spot. Vithya Ramraj, who had earlier in the day equalled PT Usha's 39-year-old 400m hurdles record of 55.42 seconds, was occupied in ensuring Sri Lanka's Nadeesha Ramanayaka did not get past her but in the process, conceded India's lead to Bahrain. The trend continued in the third leg as well, with Sri Lanka's Kalinga Kumara pushing Rajesh Ramesh for second, and Bahrain's Yusuf Abbas Ali extending the gap in front. In the anchor leg, Salwa Eid Naser was in a league of her own as Subha Venkatesan conceded second place to Sri Lanka's Tharushi Dissanayaka. India finished the race with a time of 3 minutes, 14.34 seconds. But for a second consecutive day, India's bronze medal was upgraded to silver -- this time, after the Sri Lankan team was adjudged to have committed a lane infringement on the left side of the bend. "Honestly, part of me is a little bit unhappy because we focused on gold, we made some mistakes and that's why we got silver," Subha said. "(But) We are so happy, this is a national record. Definitely, we will qualify for the Olympics." The Olympics were on Ancy's mind as well. After losing several medals by close margins, the long jumper revelled in the afterglow of the silver medal. "Sure, I can do better but with the silver medal and a personal best, I'm very happy," she said. Her upbeat mood on Monday was in sharp contrast to the disappointment of finishing fourth at the Asian Championship, where she 'spent one week feeling sad.' "After the ATF, I put on weight. I became 59 kg (now 55kg) because of menstrual problems. I course-corrected myself in three weeks. Reduced carbs, stopped eating sweets... I am now back in good shape." In those times of despair, she looked at Dhoni for inspiration. "Dhoni once said that whatever you are training, ensure you put that into your performance. You just concentrate on what you can do," she said. With that in mind, she entered Monday's event not obsessed with the results, but just focussing on her process. "Everyone is thinking and worried about the result. As Dhoni said, you just concentrate on what you can do. I just focused on a good run and a good takeoff." And she landed on the podium.

Giant-killers Sutirtha-Ayhika go down after change in strategy

MIHIR VASAVDA
HANGZHOU, OCTOBER 2

THE MUKHERJEEES weren't sure whether to be happy or sad. Ayhika managed a smile. Sutirtha was fighting back tears. Ayhika was feeling 'surreal'. Sutirtha felt 'it could have been better'. They lost a thriller. But won a bronze. They were conflicted and confused. The kind of state they'd left their North Korean opponents in minutes before. At 7-3 in Game 6, Cha Suyong took a step back from the table and scratched her head. The North Koreans had been away for nearly three years before they suddenly emerged at the Asian Games. And Suyong looked perplexed, probably wondering if, during their years of self-imposed exile, the sport that's all about the blurry, hypnotising rallies and mad scrambling had transformed into a slow-burning game of attrition, where chops and blocks were more decisive than the topspins and smashes. For close to 50 minutes, Sutirtha Mukherjee and Ayhika Mukherjee tested

their patience by doing nothing but keeping the ball in play, putting it back on the table and forcing an error out of their opponents. Until, in search of India's first Asian Games final appearance, they shunned the strategy in the decider and with that, let the North Korean pair run away with a win in an anti-climatic end to a seven-game thriller of the women's doubles semifinals. The Indian duo lost 3-4 (11-7, 8-11, 11-7, 8-11, 9-11, 11-5, 2-11) to Cha Suyong and Pak Sugyong and settled for a bronze. But an Asian Games bronze in table tennis weighs as heavy as a gold in most other disciplines. And yet, it could very nearly have been something bigger. Neither the partisanship of the crowd who threw their weight behind North Koreans nor the fierce, attacking reputation of their opponents bothered the Indians. They were comfortable in their own skin, played on their terms and dictated the pace of the game, which bothered Cha-Pak -- who lost the final to South Korea -- from the first point. Theirs was a simple tactic: keep the ball on the table, their returns kissing the net and offering no loop for Cha-Pak



Sutirtha-Ayhika lost 3-4 (11-7, 8-11, 11-7, 8-11, 9-11, 11-5, 2-11).

to work with. Occasionally, Sutirtha would unleash her ferocious backhands but only when the ball was there to be hit. Nothing illustrated this better than the fact that in the first game, Sutirtha-Ayhika hit just one winner; the remaining 10 points

came from the errors they forced from Cha-Pak with their unrelenting style. The North Koreans did not seem prepared for this slo-mo action and coordination, which has its roots in decades of friendship and uniquely multi-rubbered racquets. "They have different rubbers," national coach Mamata Prabhu said. "Sutirtha has long pimped rubber on her forehand and plain on her backhand. Ayhika has pimped rubber on the forehand and anti-spin on the backhand. It's quite a difficult combination with four different rubbers for opponents." Ayhika's backhand rubber, the Dr Neubauer Gorilla, has attracted particular attention for the disruption it's caused in rallies by completely negating the spin factor. The slick-surfaced rubber -- rare and uncommon according to experts -- puzzled the Chinese pair in the quarterfinals as it blocked the topspin and helped Ayhika to keep the ball low after the bounce, thus making it harder to play a return with heavy topspin. And it continued to confound the North Koreans.

Ayhika saw Germany's Petrisa Solja and decided to get it. "I have been playing with this rubber since childhood. My coach told me the anti-spin will suit my style," she said. Ayhika and Sutirtha, friends for 20 years, spoke after every point. Sometimes, Ayhika said, it was to discuss how to play the next point. On a few occasions, they veered onto topics off table tennis to relax their nerves. Until the last game, when they decided to adopt an aggressive approach. Ayhika, who struggled to land her forehand attacks on the table all afternoon, continued to hit long and so did Sutirtha, whose backhand suddenly lost its range. The North Koreans, who were hitting into the net constantly, found their rhythm and landed a few painful blows. A stunning forehand, hit with dollops of topspin and one that went right in between the Mukherjees, eventually broke their resilience as the Indians, who went 4-0 down in the decider panicked. Eventually, the afternoon that began with a lot of promise ended timidly. Historic as it is, for the Mukherjees, this was a bitter-sweet bronze.

TODAY'S SCHEDULE | INDIA WATCH FOR DAY 10

ATHLETICS: MORE MEDALS EXPECTED

Men's decathlon is going to be a fascinating event to track where Tejaswin Shankar enters the second half as the leader but has some less-fancied events coming up. The second session is filled with finals action, where you can keep an eye on Vithya Ramraj in women's 400m hurdles as she looks to break PT Usha's long-standing national record, after having equalled it on Monday.

POOJA - 4:30 PM
MEN'S TRIPLE JUMP FINAL: ABDULLA ABOOBACKER, PRAVEEN CHITRAVEL - 4:40 PM
WOMEN'S 400M HURDLES FINAL: VITHYA RAMARAJ - 4:50 PM
MEN'S 400M HURDLES FINAL: SANTHOSH KUMAR, YASHAS PALAKSHA - 5:05 PM
WOMEN'S 5000M FINAL: PARUL CHAUDHARY, ANKITA - 5:20 PM
WOMEN'S JAVELIN THROW FINAL: ANNU RANI - 5:40 PM
WOMEN'S JAVELIN THROW FINAL: ANNU RANI - 5:40 PM
MEN'S 800M FINAL: KRISHAN KUMAR, MUHAMMED AFSAL - 5:55 PM
MEN'S CRICKET: INDIA VS NEPAL, QUARTERFINAL (6:30 AM)
WOMEN'S HOCKEY: INDIA VS HONG KONG, POOLA (7:45 AM)

SINDHU & Co IN ACTION

Here's a look at the other main India events to track at the Hangzhou Asian Games

WOMEN'S DOUBLES R32: TREESA/GAYATRI - 12:50 PM
WOMEN'S DOUBLES R32: TANISHA/ASHWINI - 2:10 PM
MEN'S SINGLES R32: SRIKANTH - 2:10 PM

ARCHERY (SEMIFINALS LATER IN THE DAY IF QUALIFIED, NO MEDAL MATCHES):
 COMPOUND INDIVIDUAL QUARTERFINAL: JYOTHI SUREKHA VENNAM - 06:10 AM
 COMPOUND INDIVIDUAL QUARTERFINAL: ADITI SWAMI - 06:30 AM
 COMPOUND INDIVIDUAL QUARTERFINAL: ABHISHEK VERMA - 07:50 AM
 COMPOUND INDIVIDUAL QUARTERFINAL: OJAS PRAVIN DEOTALA - 08:10

BADMINTON:
MEN'S SINGLES R32: HS PRANNOY - 08:10 AM
WOMEN'S SINGLES R32: PV SINDHU - 08:50 AM
WOMEN'S SINGLES R32: CHALIHA - 10:50 AM

RECURVE INDIVIDUAL QUARTERFINAL: ATANU DAS - 12:10 PM
RECURVE INDIVIDUAL QUARTERFINAL: DHIRAJ BOMMADEVARA - 12:30 PM

MEN'S KABADDI:
INDIA VS BANGLADESH, GROUP A (6:00 AM)
INDIA VS KOREA, GROUP A (1:30 PM)

SPORT CLIMBING: ANISHA VERMA, SHIVPREET PANNU, AMAN VERMA, DHIRAJ DINKAR BIRAJDAR (9:00 AM ONWARDS)

SPORT CLIMBING: SEMIFINAL ACTION FOR INDIAN MEN'S TEAM (6:30 AM ONWARDS)



SQUASH
 MIXED DOUBLES POOL MATCH: HARINDER & DIPIKA - 08:30 AM
 MIXED DOUBLES POOL MATCH: ABHAY & ANAHAT VS HONG KONG - 10:00 AM
WOMEN'S SINGLES QUARTERFINAL: TANVI KHANNA - 2:30 PM
MEN'S SINGLES QUARTERFINAL: SAURAV GHOSAL - 3:30 PM