

## Most parts of erstwhile Karimnagar to soon be under various Urban Development Authority jurisdictions

Karimnagar: Except for a few villages, almost all areas in the erstwhile Karimnagar district will soon be under the jurisdiction of different urban development authorities (UDA) with the State government deciding to set up more UDAs. Besides constituting the Ramagundam Urban Development Authority, GOs were issued for the expansion of Karimnagar's Satavahana Urban Development Authority and Vemulawada Temple Development Authority. The government is also considering the idea of setting up the Jagtial Urban Development Authority.

GO 188 was issued by merging 147 villages in SUDA, which existed with Karimnagar Municipal Corporation and Kothapalli municipality. According to the new GO, Huzurabad, Jammikunta and Choppadandi municipalities would also come under SUDA. Besides these municipalities, 147 villages would also come under it. Similarly, Vemulawada Temple Development Authority (VTDA), which was constituted for the development of Vemulawada temple, has been expanded to the entire Rajanna-Sircilla district. Besides Vemulwada municipality, 11 villages

existed in VTDA. GO 184 was issued by merging Sircilla municipality as well as 152 revenue villages falls under Vemulawada rural, Boinpalli, Ellanthakunta, Yellareddypet, Veernapalli, Mustabad, Ghambiraopet, Chandurthy, Rudrangi and Konaraopet mandals. On the other hand, the Ramagundam Urban Development Authority (RUDA) was constituted along with the entire Ramagundam assembly constituency and some areas in Peddapalli, Manthani and Dharmapuri segments. In this regard, GO 165 was issued.

Besides Ramagundam Municipal Corporation, Peddapalli, Sultanabad and Manthani municipalities and 198 villages falls in Peddpalli, Julapalli, Anthergoan, Palakurthy, Dharmaram, Eliged, Oded, Sultanabad, Manthani, Ramagiri, Kalwasirampur, Mutharam and Kamanpur mandals would come under RUDA. The proposal to constitute the Jagtial Urban Development Authority is with the government. The government may take a decision very soon. When compared to gram panchayats, taxes will automatically go up in urban development authorities, a former sarpanch of a model gram panchayat in



Peddapalli district said, adding that the new urban development authorities were seen as attempts by the State government to increase its revenue.

## Mahabubnagar CI thrashes man for questioning CM Revanth Reddy on social media



“He was summoned to the police station and after questioning, he was let off. He was not physically assaulted. Ours is a communally sensitive area. He was posting comments which could provoke people, hence he was given warning and left. In the past too, he was asked not to share such posts, but he continued to do so. Hence we summoned and reprimanded him,” the CI claimed.

Hyderabad: In yet another incident of police highhandedness, a man, who allegedly shared posts on social media questioning Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy on his poll promises, was detained and brutally thrashed by Mahabubnagar Circle Inspector Appaiah on Tuesday. According to reports, Varda Bhaskar Mudiraj, a social media activist, was picked up from his residence in Mahabubnagar One Town in the wee hours of Tuesday without even giving the reason behind his arrest. Later at the police station, Bhaskar was allegedly thrashed by CI Appaiah with a rubber belt.

Bhaskar tried to explain to the CI about the social media posts, but he did not listen to him and physically assaulted him. Bhaskar had been questioning the Chief Minister about the poll promises through his WhatsApp posts, which reportedly angered local Congress leaders and it was reportedly based on their instructions, the

CI detained and thrashed him. However, the CI denied the allegations and claimed that Bhaskar was summoned to the police station for questioning with regard to a social media post. “He was summoned to the police station and after questioning, he was let off. He was not physically assaulted. Ours is a communally sensitive area. He was posting comments which could provoke people, hence he was given warning and left. In the past too, he was asked not to share such posts, but he continued to do so. Hence we summoned and reprimanded him,” the CI claimed. After learning about the incident, former minister V Srinivas Goud along with BRS leaders took out a rally till the police station and protested against the detention and physical assault of Bhaskar. Meanwhile, BRS working president KT Rama Rao spoke to Bhaskar over phone and assured him that his party would stand by him and help him in all the possible ways.

# Why are swing States critical in this U.S. election?

Around 24.4 crore people are eligible to vote for the U.S. presidential election slated for November 5. In 2020, two-thirds of the eligible voters voted. The next President of the U.S. will be decided less by these national numbers than by a few thousand voters in some key places, which are called battleground or swing States, thanks to the unique features of the country's electoral system.

What transpired in the last two elections?

The last two elections of 2016 and 2020 demonstrated the outsize impact of the swing factor in several States, even as the country became more polarised. In 2020, President Joe Biden had a national lead of around 70 lakh votes over Donald Trump, but what mattered more were the small margins with which he won key States. Of around 67 lakh votes cast in Pennsylvania, Mr. Biden led over Mr. Trump by 81,660; in Michigan, he had 1.54 lakh more, of the total 54 lakh polled; in Wisconsin, Mr. Biden led by just 20,682 votes in a total of more than 32 lakh votes. In 2016, Mr. Trump had trailed his Democratic opponent Hillary Clinton by two percentage points, which was in excess of 20 lakh votes, but he could still emerge as the winner because he won key swing States. For instance, he won Pennsylvania by 44,292 votes of the total 61.7 lakh votes polled; Wisconsin by 22,748 of the 30 lakh votes; and Michigan, by 10,704 of the 48 lakh votes polled.

How is the winner chosen?

The winner of the U.S. presidential contest is selected not by a majority of national popular votes, but by a majority in the electoral college of 538, which is 270. Members of the electoral college are apportioned between the States. Most U.S. States have a "winner-takes-it-all" system that allots all electors to the candidate who gets more popular votes. So, whether a candidate has one or one million votes more than their opponent in California, for instance, all 54 electoral college votes of the State, will be awarded to him or her. Similarly, all 19 electoral college votes of Pennsylvania will be awarded to the winner of the popular votes within that State, regardless of the margin. This system could create the anomaly of a candidate winning the election, without winning more popular votes than the opponent, nationally. That is also why the main opponents this time, Mr. Trump and Democrat Kamala Harris, are trying to turn the battleground States in their favour in the last lap of campaigning ahead of election day.

Which are the key States that will play a role in picking the winner?

Pennsylvania, Michigan, Wisconsin, Georgia, Nevada, Arizona, and North Carolina are the battleground States of 2024; and the contest between Mr. Trump and Ms. Harris is a dead heat, going by all opinion polls. The average polling error for more than five decades in the U.S. is 3.4%. In all the seven swing States, in nearly all the polls, the leading candidate has a lead well within this margin. Like the last two

elections, the margins could be very narrow and these States will decide who will be the President for the next four years. It is also possible that most of these States could swing to either side, as it happened in the last two elections, rather than being evenly divided between the two. Even a minor swing among significant voting blocs in these States could turn the tide either way. Both candidates are trying to tailor their messages, particularly targeting these States. For instance, Latinos make up nearly a quarter of Arizona's voters. That possibly explains Mr. Trump's recent attempts to portray his opponent as being disrespectful of the Catholic church. In Georgia, Black votes count considerably, and Mr. Trump has been trying to mobilise them behind his anti-immigration politics. Latest polling figures show Mr. Trump gaining more ground among Latinos and Blacks. Michigan, a State that turned Republican in 2016 and Democrat in 2020, has around two lakh Muslim voters. Democrats, and Ms. Harris, face a crisis of credibility among them, against the backdrop



of the conflict in West Asia. They may not vote for Mr. Trump but could turn indifferent towards Ms. Harris. Mr. Trump had won North Carolina in 2016 and 2020, but Ms. Harris is making some new inroads, according to polls. In the last stretch, there will

be further concentration of firepower by both sides on the small numbers that count as big in the elections.

Catching the swing voters in these States is what both candidates are focusing on now.

## What is the flight protocol for a bomb threat?

Over nearly two weeks, almost all Indian carriers including the Tata group airlines — Air India, Vistara, and Air India Express — as well as Indigo, Alliance Air, and Star Air have faced a wave of threats, resulting in emergency responses and re-routing. There has been military fighter jet interception of some of the flights when they were in international airspace after the crew squawked an emergency transponder code. While all the threats have been determined to be a hoax, they have still led to significant flight delays and financial losses to the airlines, about ₹13 lakh-₹17 lakh an hour.

What do we know about the threats?

According to the Union Civil Aviation Minister, Kinjarapu Rammohan Naidu, most threats have been through social media. Intelligence agencies are looking into the issue and there is a strong possibility of cases being registered. As the threats are largely of an online nature, the tracking of IP addresses and virtual private network use are in focus. The Minister added that even if intuition was that it could be a hoax, nothing was being left unchecked. India has nearly 4,000 flight operations in a day, he said, and within the timeline since the threats began, this would mean over 275 threats for 48,000 flights. He said that efforts were on to make changes in the aviation laws in order to have a strong framework in place. There has been one detention so far — of a teenager who made hoax calls. Representatives of some of the social media platforms concerned have indicated that they are "committed to crack down on terror threats

being made against Indian flights".

What is the aviation security architecture?

Almost all the main security guidelines and directives are rooted in the International Civil Aviation Organization's (ICAO) Annex 17—Aviation Security (Restricted). An ICAO spokesperson told The Hindu that the formulation and adoption of Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs) for international civil aviation are important, which are detailed in technical annexes to the Convention on International Civil Aviation — also called the Chicago Convention. The ICAO has measures against acts of 'unlawful interference against civil aviation throughout the world'. The SARPs for international aviation security form Annex 17 to the Chicago Convention. There is also the ICAO Aviation Security Manual (Doc 8973—Restricted) which assists ICAO member-states. The spokesperson said that Annex 17 and Doc 8973 are under constant review keeping in mind new threats and evolving technological developments. The spokesperson added that there are restrictions to the information on (member-) state discussions regarding the evolution of security matters, the resulting assessments, and the associated mitigation measures. Specific ICAO guidance on security matters is restricted. In India, the nodal agency concerned is the Bureau of Civil Aviation Security. Its main responsibility is to have in place standards and measures for the security of civilian flights. The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) is concerned with safety. Other agencies involved, directly and indirectly,

include the Airports Authority of India; the Central Industrial Security Force; the National Security Guard; the Intelligence Bureau; the Research and Analysis Wing; the Ministry of Home Affairs, and the higher judiciary. In the context of the threats, amendments could be planned to the Aircraft Act 1934, the Aircraft Rules 1937, and subordinate pieces of legislation to ensure stringent punishment and placing offenders on a 'no-fly list'. The Minister highlighted planned amendments to the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against Safety of Civil Aviation Act, 1982, which would allow legal action even when the aircraft is on the ground. Regulations now focus on in-flight incidents. An official said that in every airport, the operator, airlines, and security agencies have procedures to handle security threats based on approved documents. He said, "Every airport is prepared to handle such situations as the procedures are regularly tested and updated." There are specific documents but they are restricted. Contingency procedures for unusual occurrences include bomb threats (and aircraft isolation), hijacks, radio communication failure, and other emergencies associated with aircraft. A pilot who flies the Boeing 777 aircraft says a threat is taken very seriously and there are procedures for the crew. Air traffic control agencies also have procedures.

How are threats to be handled?

An aviation security expert who served in various geographical domains has told The Hindu that hoax calls are of a specific or non-specific nature. While specific details about the hoax calls in the Indian context might not be publicly available,

# Sealy India Factory Opens In Hyd

The World's No 1 Selling Mattress Brand Opens State-of-the-Art Manufacturing Facility

Sealy, a key player in the global mattress industry, is thrilled to announce the official opening of its first production facility located in Gosaiguda Village, Medchal, just outside Hyderabad. This state-of-the-art 40,000 square-foot factory represents a significant step in Sealy's long-term commitment to the Indian market and aligns with the brand's strategy to expand into high-growth international markets. The inauguration ceremony was attended by prominent global leaders, including GSS Jagannath, General Manager of Sealy India, who welcomed attendees at a subsequent press conference held at Hyatt Hyderabad Hotel in Gachibowli. Among the distinguished guests were Simon Dyer – Executive Chairman & CEO of Sealy International, George Dyer – Managing Director of Sealy International, David Montgomery – EVP of Global Business at Tempur Sealy International, and Bhaskar

Rao – EVP & CFO at Tempur Sealy International. George Dyer emphasized the historical significance of Sealy, stating, "This global brand began in 1881 in a small town called Celina, Texas, USA. Over the last 143 years, we have expanded our operations worldwide. Today, Sealy stands as a testament to quality, operating in markets including America, Canada, Australia, Hong Kong, Singapore, Taiwan, and many others. With approximately twenty thousand mattresses manufactured and sold globally, we are excited to bring our commitment to comfort and support to the Indian market. Sealy mattresses are designed with excellent spine support and technology that provide optimal comfort through spring support and orthopedically correct designs. The design framework we utilize today is rooted in concepts developed over seventy years ago, ensuring we consistently deliver on our promise of a



good night's sleep. As we step into the Indian mattress market, we do so with high

hopes for the future, and we believe our new facility will play a crucial role in that journey."

## Godrej Rashinban Ensures Healthy Chili Flowers, Happy Farmers

In chili farming, flowers are the key to success as they form the key economic part of the chili plant. Recognizing this crucial fact, there is a pressing need for farmers to adopt scientific solutions that protect these vital plant structures.

"Flowering time means Rashinban time," claims N.K Rajavelu, CEO, Crop Protection Business, GAVL. "Chili farmers today need to ensure their crop receives the right nutrients at the right time across the growth cycle, while remaining free from abiotic stress. Unscientific combinations of pesticides can severely impact crops and the environment. This not only affects their yields but also harms the delicate ecologi-

cal balance of their fields. Rashinban addresses these concerns by providing a single, effective solution when used at 45-75 DAT. It offers quick knockdown of a wide range of pests, including thrips, lepidopterans, hoppers, and mites, all in one application. This saves farmers time and effort while protecting the economic value of their crop."

Rashinban's effectiveness on a broad spectrum of pests, both sucking and chewing types, eliminates the need for multiple insecticides and reduces spray frequency. When used at the flowering stage of 45-75 DAT, it assures better yields in the later stages. Rajavelu further added that "With

flowers defining the success of the chili farmer, protecting your flowers with Rashinban is crucial. It is recommended specifically for the active flowering stage of chili plants as it provides holistic efficacy. Along with the already existing product portfolio of Gracia and Hanabi, the addition of Rashinban enables us to serve the entire value chain of chili crops." By adopting this scientific approach - starting with Gracia and protecting your flowers at the critical stage of 45-75 DAT with Rashinban, - chili farmers can look forward to healthier and pest free crops, improved yields, and a brighter future thus maintaining India's position as leading chili exporter



## Google's moneymaking machine still pumping out massive profits despite multiple threats

Google is still thriving while the company navigates through a pivotal shift to artificial intelligence and battles regulators trying to topple its internet empire. The latest evidence of Google's prosperity emerged Tuesday with the release of its corporate parent Alphabet Inc.'s results for the July-September period. Both Alphabet's profit and revenue increased at a brisker pace than industry analysts anticipated, thanks primarily to a moneymaking machine powered by Google's ubiquitous search engine. Alphabet earned \$26.3 billion, or \$2.12 per share during the most recent quarter, a 34% increase from a year ago. Revenue rose 15% from the same time last year to \$88.27 billion. "Our commitment to innovation as well as the long-term focus and investment in AI are paying off," Alphabet CEO Sundar Pichai said during a call discussing the results. The profits would have been even higher if Google wasn't

pouring so much money into building up its AI arsenal in a technological arms race that includes other industry heavyweights Microsoft, Amazon, Apple, Facebook parent Meta Platforms and rising star OpenAI. The AI investments are the primary reason Google's capital expenditures in the past quarter soared 62% from the same time last year to \$13.1 billion.

The AI spending will likely stay at roughly the same level during the current October-December period, and the rise even higher next year, according to Anat Ashkenazi, Alphabet's chief financial officer. But Ashkenazi also emphasised the Mountain View, California, company will act on cost-cutting opportunities in other areas to help boost profits. Alphabet already has trimmed its payroll from more than 190,000 worldwide employees early last year to about 181,000 workers now. In an example of how AI can perform tasks that once required human brainpower, Pichai said the

technology is now writing more than 25% of the company's new computer coding. Investors seemed pleased with the both the performance and what they heard from company executives. Alphabet's stock price climbed 5% in extended trading after the numbers came out and the conference call was completed. Investing.com analyst Thomas Monteiro said Alphabet's showing makes it likely more good news will be coming for Big Tech as this week progresses, with quarterly reports from Microsoft, Meta, Amazon and Apple still to come in the days ahead. But a 4-year-old antitrust case brought by the U.S. Department of Justice has cast a cloud of uncertainty over Google's future. After weighing the evidence presented during a high-profile trial last year, a federal judge declared Google's search engine is an illegal monopoly — a decision that has opened the door for a major shake-up. Earlier this month, the Justice Department suggested it might seek to break up Google as part of

penalties that will be determined by U.S. District Judge Amit Mehta next summer. Besides the legal assault on its search engine, Google also has been ordered to tear down the barriers protecting its Play Store for Android smartphone apps. That ruling came earlier this month after a jury decided that operation also was an illegal monopoly. Google is also nearing the end of another antitrust trial in Virginia revolving around the technology underlying its digital ad network. As if the regulatory headaches aren't enough, Google is also in the midst of a major makeover of its search engine that is putting an increasing emphasis on highlight results produced by artificial intelligence in response to competitive threats to alternative options relying on the same potentially revolutionary technology. The digital ads tied to Google's search engine remained the financial cornerstone. Revenue from that segment climbed 12% from a year ago to \$49.39 billion.

# Why India is at risk of becoming a 'diminishing democracy'

It is rare that the opening sentences of a book grip you, leaving you nodding in silent agreement. Yet this is what happened when I picked up veteran academic and writer Zoya Hasan's new book, *Democracy on Trial: Majoritarianism and Dissent in India*, published by Aakar Books. Its opening sentences read, "India is a thriving democracy when it comes to elections but a diminishing democracy when it comes to equality and freedoms. The very idea of a democracy based on equal rights irrespective of caste, class or faith has changed under the pressure of majoritarian politics which gained ground after the assumption of power by the Bharatiya Janata Party government in 2014." Hasan's words took me back to Sambhal in western Uttar Pradesh where a large section of the electorate, mostly Muslims, were subjected to violence when they came to exercise their franchise in the 2024 Lok Sabha election. Many voters showed their bruises to the media and alleged they were not allowed to cast their vote because of their religion. The allegation could not be proven yet the lingering thought remained: why were most people with injuries from a single community? Were they being wilfully denied their democratic right under an avalanche of majoritarianism with compromised institutions? Failures of Congress

A little later in the book, Hasan provides the answer, writing, "Majoritarianism dominates politics in the current conjuncture." She then analyses how, even as we criticise the right-wing government today, the groundwork for its rise, incredibly, was laid by the Congress. Back in the mid-1980s, when the BJP was gasping for breath after winning two seats in the 1984 Lok Sabha election, the Congress' politics gave the still nascent BJP the lifeline it needed. It came with the party's dubious role in the entire Ayodhya saga; first the opening of the mosque's lock in 1986, then the destruction of the Babri Masjid in 1992 with Prime Minister Narasimha Rao at the helm. As Aakar Patel analysed in *Our Hindu Rashtra* (Penguin), "In 1986... the court ordered the opening of the mosque to Hindu worshippers with the acquiescence of the Rajiv Gandhi government." Three years later, Rajiv Gandhi allowed the Vishwa Hindu Parishad to lay the foundation stone of "a future Ram temple". Hasan doesn't hold back, writing, "The party's ill-advised actions and inactions ended up creating a space for the Hindu right to play a more central role in public life. This undermined its own monopoly over political power." Since 1992, the Congress has not formed the government at the Centre on its own. In 2014, the party notched up its worst numbers.

For all its paradoxical attitude towards minorities, the decline of the Congress has given a free run to majoritarian politics with the BJP using every trick in the book, and many outside the book, to ride roughshod over democratic norms, particularly, the pluralist ethos of the country. For instance, Hasan brings up the increasing political subjugation of the media. For long, India had a tradition of free press, broken only

briefly during Indira Gandhi's ill-advised Emergency. Yet, the media houses objected to many of her manoeuvres, unlike today when, as Hasan puts it, "Media (is) on government duty". It is, of course, partly caused by the widely prevalent corporate ownership of media houses, as she points out. "Indian news media landscape is vast but this vast landscape is owned by a few corporate houses. This trend started when Mukesh Ambani-owned Reliance Industries entered the media sector taking over Network 18, and several television channels, including CNBC TV 18, CNN-IBN and CNN Awaaz as well as online websites." Needless to say, most media house owners have close ties with the government. It translates to prime-time anchors working like the government's cheerleaders. This works for the corporate house, and it works for the government.

Shaheen Bagh and CAA The passage of laws like the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, 2019, which introduces religion as a factor in granting Indian citizenship, and its links to a National Register of Citizens contradicts the protections provided to all communities in the Constitution, like the right to equality enshrined in Article 14. Hasan has discussed this constriction of rights threadbare in another of her recent works, *When People Rise in Protest*, co-authored with Avishek Jha and published by Three Esays Collective. Tracing what came to be called the Shaheen Bagh movement led by the homemakers of a south-east Delhi colony, Hasan contends that "the Shaheen Bagh protests were largely organised, led,



and sustained by Muslim women who previously did not have an autonomous or significant presence in public life." Hasan says Shaheen Bagh was a powerful symbol of civil disobedience in the face of countless pressures. The government, on its part, refused to talk to the protesters, and some of the statements from its top Ministers targeting minorities did not help. The Uttar Pradesh government used disproportionate force. The disengagement with a section of the citizenry was complete. Rahul Bhatia's new book, *The Identity Project* (Westland Books), also does not hold back on the controversial Act, stating, "The CAA gave refuge while the NRC took it away." Earlier, in 2020, Seema Mustafa had edited a volume on the protests in Shaheen

Bagh and the Idea of India (Speaking Tiger Books) in which Hasan contributed an essay on 'Occupying Streets: Women in the Vanguard of the Anti-CAA Struggle.' In the Introduction, Mustafa points out that a group of women, led by elderly women in their eighties, "came out of their homes to safeguard their homes." They wanted to ensure that their citizenship was not brought into question, that their youth remained assured of a future as equal citizens of India, and that their menfolk remained safe and secure, she writes. Hasan's books — like the tomes of Bhatia, Patel, and Mustafa — hold a mirror of Indian society and polity. They warn readers that India is at risk of soon having a democracy in body but not in spirit.

## As Bitcoin nears all-time high, WazirX investors are in pain over their locked crypto funds

Bitcoin (BTC), the leading cryptocurrency by market capitalisation, hit a price of around \$73,544 early on October 30, coming less than \$500 short of the all-time-high price of \$73,750.07 that the coin hit in March this year, according to CoinMarketCap. The leading cryptocurrency is up by 111.46% in the past one year, after starting 2024 in the \$42k range. The rise in price is a moment of excitement for crypto users across the world who are investing in a bull market and the coin's ascent. However, investors who used the WazirX exchange are unable to take part in this, as their crypto funds have been locked since a cyberattack against the exchange in July that led to the loss of more than \$230 million. After the cyberattack and subsequent crypto withdrawal freeze, WazirX has applied for a moratorium through the Singapore courts to protect it from legal action as it pushes for restructuring. In the Telegram group 'Justice for WazirX Users,' with over 2,000 members ranging from investors to well-wishers and legal agents, many expressed their distress at being unable to access their crypto during such a crucial time. Others



hoped they would be able to recover at least 55% of their assets after the restructuring, while some were unclear as to whether a bear market or a bull market would result in better recoveries for them. The volatile nature of crypto prices makes it especially difficult to calculate how investors should be compensated after incidents such as hacks. WazirX has shared a tentative scheme timeline to help users understand when different parts of the re-

structuring proceedings will move forward. Meanwhile, the true cause of the hack is not yet confirmed as WazirX and digital custody services provider Liminal blamed each other. "While WazirX is dedicated to progressing as quickly as possible, certain phases depend on Singapore court schedules, particularly during the holiday season," said the company, which is still embroiled in a separate dispute regarding its business relationship with the international crypto exchange Binance.

# Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel played a pivotal role in unifying India: CM Haryana

Chandigarh (JAG MOHAN THAKEN), October 30: The Haryana Chief Minister, Nayab Singh Saini, said that India's first Home Minister Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel played a pivotal role in unifying India. He said that Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel's diplomatic acumen and vision were instrumental in uniting the Indian states and binding them in the fabric of national unity. CM Saini was addressing the 'Rashtriya Ekta Diwas Pledge' taking ceremony, held on Wednesday, at Haryana Civil Secretariat as a Chief Guest. During the event, Saini also paid floral tribute to Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel on his 150th birth anniversary, honouring his legacy as India's first Home Minister and the Iron Man of the nation. He also administered the oath of 'Rashtriya Ekta' to the officers and the employees. The Chief Minister highlighted the pivotal role Sardar Patel played in creating a unified India. He shared that upon independence, India was divided into 562 princely states, and it was Sardar Patel's leadership that brought them together under one nation, forming what is now known as 'Akhand Bharat'.

Earlier, addressing the officers and employees during the ceremony, he urged civil servants to commit themselves to the values of unity, service. He encouraged all to work tirelessly to meet the needs and aspirations of the people of Haryana. The Chief Minister said that Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel was a leader with extraordinary administrative skills and a dedication to the nation. He highlighted how Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel's life was a model of selfless service, aimed at overcoming national challenges and securing a future where citizens could live freely. Sardar Patel's pivotal role in India's independence struggle and his unparalleled work to unify the nation post-independence will always be remembered, said C M Saini. Meanwhile, acknowledging the sacrifices of freedom fighters, Saini also shared about the struggles endured by many brave hearts who made the supreme sacrifices. The Chief Minister further shared that laws made during British rule were primarily exploitative, designed to suit British interests, often at the expense of Indian citizens. He also praised Prime Minister, Narendra Modi and Home Minister, Amit Shah for repealing outdated colonial laws and modernising the Indian legal framework to better serve the people. The Chief Minister lauded Prime Minister, Narendra Modi's decision to abrogate Article 370 and 35-A, thereby fully integrating Jammu & Kashmir into India. He said that this act served as a tribute to Sardar Patel, who had envisioned a unified India.

The Chief Minister said that the Prime Minister's move not only brought Jammu & Kashmir into the national fold but also addressed the region's longstanding development challenges. Prior to the repeal, India had a dual system with two constitutions, two flags, a situation that contradicted the notion of true independence. With the abrogation, the Prime Minister Narendra Modi led government fulfilled Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel's vision for a united India in true sense. The Chief Minister lauded Prime Minister Modi's efforts in commemo-



rating Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel's contribution to India's unity. He said that the installation of the Statue of Unity in Gujarat, now the world's tallest statue and a symbol of unity for future generations is the true tribute paid to Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. He said that celebrations of 'Rashtriya Ekta Diwas' started by the Prime Minister to coincide with Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel's birth

anniversary, are marked annually with events like the 'Run for Unity' to foster national solidarity. This year, in honour of the 150th anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel's birth, a year-long series of events will be organized across the country to promote awareness of his ideology and inspire the youth toward national unity. The Chief Minister encouraged all civil servants

to renew their pledge on 'Ekta Diwas' to work diligently in service to the people of Haryana, fulfilling their expectations and moving the state forward. He further acknowledged Prime Minister Modi's vision for India to become a developed nation by 2047, stating that Haryana, with its 2.80 crore citizens, would play a vital role in achieving this goal.

## The effects of smoking cigarettes versus vaping on the body over the course of a month

The debate between smoking and vaping has been ongoing, with many believing vaping to be the lesser of two evils. A recent experiment by YouTuber Chris Notap provides a visual comparison of the effects of smoking cigarettes versus vaping over the course of a month. According to LADBible, "When YouTuber Chris Notap put this theory to the test, it provided a gross insight into what goes on in your body when you vape versus when you puff on a ciggie." Using a clear glass dome filled with cotton balls to simulate lungs, Notap's experiment showed the stark differences in residue left behind by both methods of inhalation. While the cigarette side left a brown, tar-like residue, the vape left a white cloud with minor condensation. Although vaping appeared cleaner, Notap cautioned "that vaping should only be used as a tool to wean yourself off nicotine altogether because 'anything you put in your lungs is bad for you' and that it's not for kids to try," LADBible mentioned in its report.

How do the short-term and long-term effects of vaping compare to smoking cigarettes?

Dr Vibhu Kawatra, pulmonologist and allergy specialist, tells indianexpress.com, "Both vaping and cigarette smoking have notable impacts on the respiratory system, but the nature and extent of these effects

can differ." Dr Shivakumar K, MD, respiratory medicine and senior consultant, Respiratory Medicine at Birds Clinic Bengaluru, adds, "When comparing the short-term and long-term effects of vaping versus smoking cigarettes, particularly on lung health and respiratory function, both have harmful impacts, though the mechanisms and extent of damage differ." Both the doctors explain the short-term and long-term effects of both smoking and vaping: Speaking about the experiment by Notap, Dr Shivakumar says, "While Notap's experiment is compelling in demonstrating the stark difference in residue accumulation between smoking and vaping, it is important to recognise its limitations." The experiment, he remarks, focuses on the physical residues left by smoking and vaping, which does not fully encompass the biochemical and physiological impacts. "Vaping may not produce tar, but it still involves inhaling aerosols that contain chemicals and fine particulates that can cause lung inflammation and other health problems over time. Therefore, while Notap's experiment provides a visual and straightforward comparison, it does not capture the full spectrum of risks associated with both smoking and vaping." While vaping is generally considered less harmful than smoking traditional cigarettes, it is not without risks. While



vaping is generally considered less harmful than smoking traditional cigarettes, it is not without risks. Can vaping ever be considered a safer alternative for long-term use? "While vaping is generally considered less harmful than smoking traditional cigarettes, it is not without risks. It may be a useful tool for smokers looking to quit or reduce harm, especially if it leads to complete cessation of smoking. However, for non-smokers and youth, vaping poses its own risks and should be approached with caution," notes Dr Kawatra. Dr Shivakumar agrees. He says, "Research suggests that vaping may be a useful harm-reduction tool for current smokers trying to quit. A study published in the New England Journal of Medicine found that e-cigarettes were more effective than traditional nicotine replacement therapies in helping smokers quit.

# How will LAC agreement pan out on the border?

On October 21, Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri announced that an agreement had been reached with China on "patrolling arrangements" along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in the India-China border areas, leading to "disengagement and a resolution of the issues that had arisen in these areas in 2020."

What is happening on the ground?

Disengagement is under way in full swing at Depsang and Demchok in eastern Ladakh. Armies of India and China are in the process of removing all temporary and semi-permanent structures that were set up since April 2020, Army sources said. The entire process is expected to be completed by October 29. Patrolling will resume in both areas by month-end and both sides will "coordinate" to avoid face-offs. The agreement was reached after a series of talks at the political, diplomatic, and military levels. A broad framework agreement was reached first at the diplomatic level before a detailed technical agreement for ground implementation was concluded between the Corps Commanders of the two countries last Monday (October 21, 2024). This is only with respect to the last two remaining friction points — Depsang and Demchok — and there is no change in status at the other friction points where buffer zones were set up since the disengagement from 2020-2022. Since April 2020, the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) has amassed a large number of troops and armaments in eastern Ladakh and other areas along the 3,488 km LAC. The PLA moved into Indian territory and built fortified structures and defences, in an attempt to permanently alter the status quo on the ground. While there are differences in perception of the alignment of the LAC, both sides have, over the years, concluded a series of agreements to maintain peace at the border. On May 5, 2020, clashes erupted on the north bank of Pangong Tso in which over 70 Indian soldiers were injured. The norm was that the Indian Army would patrol the area up to Finger 8, and the Chinese ingress blocked this routine. On May 9, 2020 clashes were reported at Naku La in north Sikkim. India responded by mobilising additional troops and equipment to match the Chinese build-up. Since then, both sides have amassed over 50,000 troops on each side, deployed a range of long-range firepower and equipment, and have undertaken massive infrastructure build-up.

What about Arunachal Pradesh?

According to official sources, there was also an understanding over Yangtse in Arunachal Pradesh "that Chinese patrols will be allowed like before and their movement will not be blocked." Yangtse in Tawang is one of the identified disputed areas between the two countries and has witnessed consistent transgressions since 2011. On December 9, 2022, Indian soldiers clashed with the Chinese resulting in injuries. This was the first such incident since June 15, 2020, when 20 Indian soldiers were killed in a clash with the Chinese PLA at Galwan. The face-off led to a

physical scuffle in which the Indian Army prevented the PLA from transgressing into Indian territory, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh had said in a statement. Defence sources had stated then that in several areas along the LAC in the Tawang sector, both sides patrol the area up to their claim lines, a trend since 2006. Army sources denied any "quid pro quo" in the latest agreement but admitted that talks are on in all sectors along the LAC.

What is the way forward? The disengagement process at five friction points was completed in September 2022. Depsang and Demchok proved to be tricky, and the latest agreement on disengagement brings hope for the next steps, which are de-escalation and de-induction. Details on new patrolling norms will have to be worked out to remove the buffer zones and resume patrolling as earlier. Sounding a cautionary note on this, Army Chief General Upendra Dwivedi said last week they are "trying to restore" trust, that "we are not creeping" in the buffer zones created and to reassure each other. "... As we restore the trust, the other stages will also follow through soon," he added. Former diplomats and military officers also advised caution on the continued presence of buffer zones which are in the Indian territory. The current agreement, Army sources said, will restore the ground status to one that existed before April 2020 at Depsang and Demchok. This means that the Indian Army will again be able to patrol up to the Patrolling Points (PP) 10, 11, 11A, 12, and 13 in the strategic Depsang area which have been off limits since the stand-off.

How many patrolling points are there?

There are 65 PPs starting from Karakoram pass to Chumur which are to be patrolled regularly by Indian forces. According to one of the research papers submitted at the annual Director General of Police conference in January 2023, "Out of 65 PPs, our [India's] presence is lost in 26 PPs due to restrictive or no patrolling by the Indian Security Forces (ISF). Later on, China forces us to accept the fact that, as such areas have not seen the presence of ISFs or civilians since long, the Chinese were present in these areas. This leads to a shift in the border under control of ISFs towards Indian side and a buffer zone is created in all such pockets which ultimately leads to loss of control over these areas by India. This tactic of PLA to grab land inch-by-inch is known as 'Salami Slicing'." This underscores why patrolling is critical along the LAC, particularly in the strategic Depsang plains. On one side, the PLA ingress threatens Indian positions at Daulat Beg Oldie (DBO) by bringing Chinese troops closer to the 255 km-long crucial Darbuk-Skyok-DBO road. Also, Depsang is next to the Karakoram pass overlooking the strategic Saltoro ridge and Siachen glacier, which former Army Chief General Manoj Naravane had termed a "point of collusivity" between China and Pakistan. Defence sources have noted in the past that while PPs, benchmark locations mutually agreed to by both India and China,



are sacrosanct, the perception of the LAC is not. The PPs, largely located on the Limit of Patrolling, have been in vogue since 1996, based on the China Study Group guidelines, they added. The traditional grazing grounds have served as pastures for the semi-nomadic community of Changthang region (Rebos) and given the scarcity of the rich pastures, they would traditionally venture into the areas close to the PPs. "Since 2014, enhanced restrictions on the grazing movement and areas have been imposed on the Rebos by ISFs

and this has caused some resentment against them," the paper noted. The issue of grazing grounds has been a major friction point between India and China and the latest agreement addresses that in the Demchok area. In talks between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping at Kazan, it was agreed that the Special Representatives on the boundary question, the apex mechanism to find a political resolution, are expected to meet at an early date to take forward the stalled process.

## Mount Everest is growing faster

Hyderabad: Mount Everest, towering at 8.85 kilometers above sea level, is still increasing in height, according to recent findings. The Himalayas, including Everest, began forming about 50 million years ago due to the collision between the Indian sub-continent and the Eurasian plate. While this historical tectonic activity has contributed to the region's steady uplift, researchers have discovered that Everest's rise has been more significant than previously expected.

A major factor behind this unexpected growth is the interaction between two nearby river systems, the Kosi and Arun Rivers. These rivers merged roughly 89,000 years ago, and their unification has influenced the mountain's elevation. This change has contributed to an uplift of about 49 to 164 feet, with the rate of elevation increasing at around 0.01 to 0.02 inches annually.

This phenomenon, known as isostatic rebound, explains how Earth's crust reacts to changes in surface weight. When heavy materials, such as ice or rock, are removed, the land beneath gradually rises in response, much like a boat lifting when cargo is offloaded. In this case, the extensive erosion caused by the merging of the rivers reduced the weight of the region surrounding Everest, enabling the crust to



rise. Researchers used numerical models to simulate how these river systems evolved and found that isostatic rebound accounts for about 10% of Everest's annual uplift rate. GPS measurements have confirmed this ongoing increase in elevation, which surpasses the effects of surface erosion from wind, rain, and river flow. This process is also impacting nearby peaks like Lhotse, the fourth-highest mountain, which experiences nearly the same rate of uplift as Everest. Makalu, the fifth-highest mountain and closer to the Arun River, is rising at a slightly faster rate. The study suggests that as erosion continues, Everest's growth due to isostatic rebound could further accelerate. In Scandinavia, the land continues to rise due to isostatic rebound following the melting of Ice Age glaciers. This process, still ongoing, is reshaping coastlines and landscapes, with parts of the region rising up to 1 centimeter annually

# Power outages, broken exhibits and poor upkeep: What ails the iconic dino park and museum in Gujarat's Balasinor

The first thing that catches the eye at the iconic Dinosaur Fossil Park and Museum in the village Raiyoli in Gujarat's Balasinor taluka are the overgrown bushes. Standing up to two feet tall, they frame every winding path that leads visitors to fossil exhibits, their wild growth and prickly thorns getting caught in delicate pieces of clothing and sparking concerns about snake bites. Earlier this month, teams from the Geological Survey of India visited the protected fossil site to help pitch it as a contender for the coveted UNESCO "geo-heritage" tag. The survey came 40 years after two geologists, GN Dwivedi and DM Mohabey, stumbled upon large dinosaur bones and fossilised eggs in the area – a discovery that put Raiyoli on the map. But for a site that aims to become one of the major tourist destinations of the country, the park paints a picture of neglect. From overgrown vegetation in the park and seepages and broken exhibits in the Rs 25-crore state-of-the-art museum to a lift irrigation project nearby that experts claim poses a threat to the protected site, the Dinosaur Fossil Park and Museum appears to be plagued with problems. A signboard welcoming visitors to the fossil park in Raiyoli, Balasinor. A signboard welcoming visitors to the fossil park in Raiyoli, Balasinor. (Express photo: Aditi Raja) When The Indian Express visited the place, the overrun pathway leading in the 72 hectare-park meant many exhibits further in were almost inaccessible. Meanwhile, at the museum that lay across the road, some other visitors who had travelled here from outside Gujarat were in for a disappointment: the museum was facing a power outage, shutting down the major digital displays. According to a senior GSI official, "earnest efforts" are being made to have the site included in the UNESCO list. "It's an extremely important site for research on dinosaurs and there's a possibility that more rare fossils are located around it," this official says. Meanwhile, a staff member at the park promises that "the vegetation will be removed soon". According to GSI's 'Dinosaurs of Gujarat', a February 2017 publication of the different research projects on the dinosaur fossils in the state, Dwivedi and Mohabey were conducting a systematic geological mapping when they stumbled upon the bones about 1 km west of Raiyoli. "Subsequently, the Paleontology Division of Western Region of GSI confirmed them to be of the dinosaurs. After the formal processes, the excavation work commenced in January 1983 on the western slopes of the hillock facing Raiyoli village, using crow-sbars, spades, shovels, chisels, hammers, plaster of Paris, cloth bandages, and chemicals," it says. The bones were eventually discovered to belong to *Rajasaurus narmadensis* and *Rahiolisaurus gujaratensis*, large bipedal carnivorous theropod dinosaurs believed to have walked the earth in the Late Cretaceous period some 67 million years ago.

Although similar discoveries were subsequently made in different parts of Gujarat, what made the Balasinor one special was that it was one of the largest hatcheries of dinosaur eggs in the world, third only to Aix-en-Provence in France and the Mongolian Gobi Desert. The possibility of

the discovery of a new species of dinosaurs in Gujarat had sparked international interest in the 90s – in December 1997, a team of 50 paleontologists, including an American paleontologist Kirk Johnson, currently the director of Natural Museum of Natural History Museum in Washington DC, visited Balasinor to study the dinosaur eggs. The erstwhile royal family of Balasinor welcoming a team of 50 palaeontologists that visited the fossil park in December 1997. (By special arrangement) The erstwhile royal family of Balasinor welcoming a team of 50 palaeontologists that visited the fossil park in December 1997. (By special arrangement) It was also around this time that Aaliya Sultana Babi, the nawabzadi of the erstwhile princely state of Balasinor and an amateur paleontologist and conservationist, began to take keen interest in the site. Popularly known as 'Dinosaur Princess', Aaliya has been involved with the site's preservation ever since.

Before the area was discovered to be a fossil site, locals would use the eggs to grind masalas, she tells The Indian Express. "After they were proven to be fossils, I came across a woman in a local village grinding masala with what looked like a dinosaur egg. On closer examination, it was indeed a fossilised egg covered with chilli paste. Since then, it's my prized possession, humorously named the 'masala anda'," she laughs. Aaliya Sultana Babi, nawabzadi of the erstwhile princely state of Balasinor, holds up 'masala anda' | Express photo: Aditi Raja Aaliya Sultana Babi, nawabzadi of the erstwhile princely state of Balasinor, holds up 'masala anda'. (Express photo: Aditi Raja) According to officials and locals, the site has been a source of employment for residents and sees about 2,500 visitors a month. This number goes up during weekends, even going to as many as 2000/day around Diwali. Paleontologist Ashok Sahni, professor emeritus at Panjab University, Chandigarh, who set up the Dinosaur of India Gallery in that city, says there's much around the area that hasn't been explored even though "much money has been poured into the museum". "The problem is that the government moves slowly and by the time, most of the things are lost," he says. On their part, officials of the Gujarat tourism department say that while there had been plans to expand the scope of the park, it was on reserved forest land, which limits the amount of work that could be undertaken there. "There was a plan to create two pits where the fossils were found and erect a glass wall to allow tourists to go inside to see how the fossils were discovered but it hasn't taken off," says one official. However, Deputy Conservator of Forests (DCF) Mahisagar District NV Chaudhary says that while the state forest department can clear the site of vegetation, more ambitious plans at the site require the central government's permission. Overgrown bushes and shrubbery in the fossil park in Raiyoli, Balasinor | Express photo: Aditi Raja Overgrown bushes and shrubbery in the fossil park in Raiyoli, Balasinor.

Experts also see the nearby Lift Irrigation Pipeline Project as a major threat.



Aimed at providing irrigation facilities to water deficient villages of about six talukas of Kheda and Mahisagar district, the 40-lakh litre tank and pipeline project stands just 100 metres away from the boundary wall of the fossil park. According to Sahni, the project poses a threat not only to the protected site and also many potentially undiscovered fossils in the area. But Balasinor Sub-Divisional Magistrate Hiren Chauhan, also co-chairman of the Fossil Park Society that's formed to ensure inter-departmental coordination for the park, believes the water pipeline project is imperative to the area's development. "The project is coming up after following due process and will cover the five adjoining districts facing water scarcity. We have to look at development while also balancing heritage," he says. What ails the museum? Problems also plague the museum complex located 500 metres from the fossil park. Inaugurated in two phases in 2019 and 2022, the sprawling 25,000 sq. ft facility has 16 galleries and allows tourists to experience its displays through 3D projection mapping and holograms, sensor-based interactive consoles, 360-degree interactive Virtual Reality Tour, Animated Diorama Dynamic sculpture installation, a 5D theatre and a digital forest. For its maintenance and upkeep, the Gujarat government has contracted the Ahmedabad-

based VAMA Communications. However, issues such as poor manpower and security, power outages and water leakage and non-functioning displays frequently plague the museum. Vandana Raj, founder and Chief Executive Officer of VAMA Communications, which is also behind the Jallianwala Bagh memorial complex in Amritsar, says that the company maintains over 40 museums across India. She also attributes the problems plaguing the Raiyoli museum to "structural issues" and "irregular payments" from the state government. "Repair work is undertaken regularly but waterlogging in the older section of the museum is a structural problem since it was handed over to us. We also face a strain with funds as despite the clause for monthly payments, the authorities release funds only once in four months," she says, adding that repairs have now been undertaken. But SDM Chauhan denies that funds are an issue, instead emphasising on the need for better supervision. "I have written multiple letters to the agency urging them to overcome the problems. Government payments may be delayed but they are usually cleared within a few weeks," he says. "The issue is that of supervision. The technical faults are anyway not related to payments, and the agency is supposed to maintain them on its own."

## Beware of juice jacking: Protect your devices

Hyderabad: Devices like smartphones and tablets sharing a USB cable for charging and data transfer may be vulnerable to "juice jacking." The attack aims to either infect the device with malware or secretly copy potentially sensitive data

What is juice jacking?

A cyberattack known as "juice jacking" occurs when hackers utilise public charging stations, such as coffee shops or airports, to install malware or steal data

from devices. A man-in-the-middle assault with a hardware focus is juice jacking. Malicious software can gain access to your device by connecting your phone or tablet to these vulnerable USB ports, which could result in data theft or unauthorised control.

Operation of juice jacking-The attacker either infects a connection cable and leaves it plugged in, anticipating that someone will use the "forgotten" wire, or they utilise a USB connection to inject malware directly into the charging station.

# Badminton ejected out of Commonwealth Games is not a conspiracy against the sport or India

Badminton gave India some pathbreaking moments at the Commonwealth Games in the last 18 years. The CWG medals weren't particularly the toughest to win, but as milestones and boxes to tick in a shuttler's career go, every edition since 2006 has proved pivotal. So the general outrage emanating from Indian shores at its omission from the 2026 Glasgow Commonwealth Games is understandable. But, does the Glaswegian indifference hint at derision towards India or an evil conspiracy? Highly unlikely. Hockey had a better competition cohort amongst CWG nations, squash really could have done with a good dress rehearsal at a Games ahead of Olympics and Archery is the most compelling watch amongst the sports left out. Scotland genuinely digs its Rugby which got dropped and even at the height of Andy Murray's ascent, Glasgow 2014 didn't think twice about dumping tennis. It's perhaps time to bluntly acknowledge – the UK doesn't have money. And no sport was personally targeted, the Commonwealth just can't cough up enough dough to put together the infrastructure beyond their preferences or even host team sports. But this is no specific judgment on badminton's place in the sporting universe. Guests don't dictate menus at weddings, so unless India hosts another edition, badminton stays dropped from the 2026 gig.

But CWG had its uses. And it gave badminton the much-needed impetus 14 years ago. In fact it all started in 2006 Melbourne, when then head coach Vimal Kumar, fielded a 15-year-old Saina Nehwal in a team tie, trusting her to pull out a match with a medal at stake. 2010 was of course seminal with Nehwal and Jwala Gutta-Ashwini Ponappa taking India past England on the medals table with gold. 2014 was interesting. Having won its first Olympic medal in 2012, India was properly the top badminton nation, having overtaken Malaysia and England. Parupalli Kashyap showed Indian men they could break through at a time when even cracking Top 10 used to be almighty difficult. But it was Sindhu's loss to Michelle Li of Canada that led to a massive shakedown, with a fuming coach Gopichand reminding her of her potential and stressing on the need to grow ambition in her heart. Sindhu left Glasgow in tears that morning, but by 2017 when she returned to the same arena, she was an Olympic silver medalist and ended a memorable World Championship silver medalist. Glasgow CWG 2014 bronze, the defeat, the coach's angry monologue, contributed more to the Rio silver than even an early title could have.

2018 saw Indian badminton peak with Saina and Sindhu in the final. And it can be partly argued that the loss, once again and especially against Saina, firmed up Sindhu's resolve for what followed – 2019 World title, her 2021 Olympics bronze and finally the CWG gold in 2022. Losses can prolong careers in the sense that it keeps the hunger alive, much more than a satiating gold. CWG – though not a patch on competition at the Asian Games – stoked Sindhu's ambition like little else could. The

2022 title for Lakshya Sen gave him confidence he belonged to the big stage – though the opponent once again, wasn't particularly fearsome. It must be noted that Lee Zii Jia skipped the 2022 CWG edition, but showed up when he really needed to, at the Paris bronze playoff. It offers a slantways perspective on the importance – or not – of CWG. Kidambi Srikanth lost the 2018 final, but the seeds of India's Thomas Cup win, of the team vibe, were sown when India won the team gold at the Gold Coast. Satwik-Chirag ticked the CWG box at Birmingham in 2022, and with 3 gold badminton sure chipped in for the final standings. The CWG has always proved a harbinger of sorts for India's shuttlers, and built Games character. But does its omission spell a knell? That would depend on how the Indian badminton stakeholders react. Sure, a Malvika Bansod or Anmol Kharb or Treesa-Gayatri could have targeted the 2026 gold to announce their arrival into the big league. But there will have to be a recalibration of goals – raising the bar to Asian Games or Tour titles (which don't get even a fraction of that attention). It could have funding ramifications, if Delhi turns short-sighted and pulls back the monies, ignoring the Asian Games in Septem-



ber of same year, giving badminton the short shrift. And the cash-prizes will definitely dry out. But India's top shuttlers would do well to understand the CWG has always been a stepping stone, not the ultimate pedestal, with just Malaysia, Singapore, England and Canada in the fray. Beating Mew Choo Wong at Siri Fort in 2010, Saina Nehwal brought Badminton back into India's consciousness, after nine years of oblivion since Gopichand's All England.

Jwala and Ashwini poked England nicely, edging them out of second spot on a glorious Delhi afternoon. Badminton has leant on CWG for some of its best times with Prakash Padukone and Syed Modi winning. It will simply have to reorient energies towards Asian Games, even as it navigates some of its worse years after what is seen as the cold shoulder from the Empire folk. There's a couple of All Englands to show Glasgow what they have missed out on.

## In Hindu Nationalism in the Indian Diaspora, historian Edward Anderson traces the rise and proliferation of right-wing fervour in Indian communities abroad

Edward AndersonThe landscape of Anderson's book is populated with people and incidents which make us realise that the rise of Hindutva politics in the 1980s and 1990s culminating in the election of Modi in 2014 hasn't come out of thin air. The rise of right-wing political parties across the globe is a phenomenon which is the distillation of a political process not confined by political boundaries. Transnationalism forms an important sine qua non of national political ideologies. It is thus not surprising that more than 65 per cent of Turks living in Germany voted for Erdogan in the 2018 Turkish presidential elections. Similarly, the traditional Hungarian diaspora in the UK supports Prime Minister (PM) Viktor Orban. The Indian PM Narendra Modi, too, has a large diasporic support, particularly in the US and UK.

Diasporic support to individuals or major political parties is different from diasporic support to a sociopolitical ideology. In his recent book, Hindu Nationalism in the Indian Diaspora, author Edward Anderson has done an in-depth analysis of the support of the diaspora not only to PM Modi but to the politics of Hindutva and the metamorphosis of Hindu nationalism into what he calls "Neo Hindutva". This deeply researched book begins with the history of the inception of Hindu nationalism in the Indian diaspora, particularly in

East Africa. A large part of the book deciphers the formation and rise of Bharatiya Swayamsevak Sangh (BSS), as Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) was initially called overseas. In fact, Anderson writes that the first shakha of the BSS was inaugurated in Nairobi on January 14, 1947, just a year before Mahatma Gandhi was assassinated by an RSS man. This East African diaspora had an important role to play in the rise and activities of the Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh (HSS), which was formed in the UK in early 1970s. Anderson meticulously describes the working, composition and hierarchy of these outfits among Indian diaspora. The landscape of Anderson's book is populated with people and incidents which make us realise that the rise of Hindutva politics in the 1980s and 1990s culminating in the election of Modi in 2014 hasn't come out of thin air. Hindu transnationalism is a long-drawn process of meticulous conceptualisation and planning. More than capturing power, the process of Hindu transnationalism helps in propagating the idea of an imagined past of India. Anderson has dissected this reality with the skill and craft of a surgeon. He traces the footprint of Hindu nationalism globally and lets us see the mammoth in skin and flesh. Anderson feels that to understand the Sangh overseas, it is essential to consider the activities of diasporic swayamsevaks and karyakartas

outside the countries in which they live. He also draws vital differences between the working of the RSS at home and its sister organisations in more demographically diverse, democratic and cosmopolitan countries like the UK. Anderson's book, in one sense, reminded me of Akshaya Mukul's Gita Press and the Making of Hindu India (2016), another scholarly treatise on the functioning of one of the cogwheels of Hindutva. Anderson has correctly concluded that two events, namely the imposition of Emergency by Indira Gandhi (1975-77) and the Ram Janmabhoomi movement (in 1980s-90s), gave a shot in the arm to Sangh activities overseas. According to him, Britain was perhaps the most important of all overseas centres of Sangh activism but the size and impact of this activism remains unclear, more so because of misinformation and fake narrative. Anderson describes in detail the formation and working of the most important progeny of the RSS namely the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP). The regressive gender politics, militant cultural revivalism and collection and misappropriation of funds for Ayodhya's Ram Mandir by the VHP form the mainstay of this description. Anderson's book is an excellent scholarly work which needs to be read by those who want to understand the conception of a Hindu rashtra with cultural revivalism and the unimaginative, brutal Hindutva at the heart of it.