

Overnight rain helps reduce State's deficit this monsoon

Chennai may receive moderate rain with thunderstorm and lightning in some areas today and parts of Tamil Nadu are expected to get scattered rains till November 21, says Met Dept. official

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

Rainfall over the State is set to reduce gradually as the weather system has intensified into depression on Wednesday and is likely to grow into deep depression and move further up. The weather system brought heavy overnight rains over 36 places, particularly in coastal districts, and also helped reduce seasonal rain deficit.

During the past 24 hours ending 8.30 a.m. on Wednesday, the rain gauge in DGP office registered 12 cm, which is the highest amount of rainfall in the State. Besides Nagapattinam and Karaikal (11 cm), several places in and around Chennai received heavy rains.

In its bulletin, the Regional Meteorological



Children playing in the stagnant water on the Marina Beach after heavy rains lashed Chennai on Wednesday. AKHILA EASWARAN

Centre, Chennai, has said the depression is likely to concentrate into a deep depression over West-central Bay of Bengal off Andhra Pradesh coast on Thursday morning. It would then re-curve north-northeastwards and reach North-west Bay of Bengal off Odisha coast on Friday morning and off North Odisha-West Bengal coasts on Saturday.

There would be a drop

in the rainfall activity in the State and scattered rains covering about 50% of the weather stations would occur with light to moderate intensity till November 21.

Officials said another upper cyclonic circulation prevails over Southwest Bay of Bengal and adjoining Sri Lanka. The weather system is being monitored for its impact. S. Balachandran, Additional Director-

General of Meteorology, Chennai, said the rainfall has contributed to a gradual decrease in shortage of seasonal rainfall. The State's rainfall deficit is now 13% compared to 17% recorded a few days ago. Tamil Nadu has so far received 24.1 cm of rains against its normal share of 27.6 cm since October 1.

Similarly, rainfall shortage has also reduced considerably in various districts like Chennai and Ariyalur, he said. Chennai may receive moderate rain with thunderstorm and lightning in some areas on Thursday, he said.

Pallikaranai, Nandanam, Nungambakkam, Villivakkam, Madhavaram and Meenambakkam in Chennai experienced rains. The spell has also helped in improving storage in tanks considerably across the State.

Life over death

Abolition of death penalty should form the core of any reform in justice system

It is disappointing that the parliamentary committee that examined the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), the proposed criminal statute likely to replace the IPC, has not made a recommendation to abolish the death penalty. Instead, the standing committee on Home Affairs, despite submissions from experts and jurists on abolition, chose to make a bland recommendation "that the matter may be left for the government to consider". Its observation is limited to a remark that it "has understood that the reason for a passionate argument against the death penalty is that the judicial system can be fallible and to prevent an innocent person from being wrongly sentenced to death". However, domain experts had made some persuasive submissions before the panel: that instances of trial courts awarding death were on the rise, whereas statistical trends showed that the Supreme Court of India was leaning away from capital punishment; that social scientists had demonstrated it had no deterrent effect and that global opinion was in favour of its abolition. The Court awarded the death penalty to only seven people from 2007 to 2022, while all death sentences were either set aside or commuted to life in 2023, as they did not fall under the "rarest of rare cases".

Members who added notes of dissent to the report also highlighted the argument that capital punishment has been shown to be no deterrent; that imprisonment for the remainder of the convict's natural life will be a more rigorous punishment and provide scope for reform; and that most of those on death row came from underprivileged backgrounds. They have also made the point that the three Bills proposing a new body of criminal law are substantially the same as the existing IPC, Code of Criminal Procedure and Evidence Act. If at all, Parliament moves to enact the draft Bills, with changes suggested by the parliamentary panel, it will be in the fitness of things if it is used as an occasion to reconsider the need to retain the death penalty. The BNS has defined 'life imprisonment' as a term for the remainder of one's natural life, and this should be the default alternative to death sentences. The case for abolition will gain strength if the trend of seeking premature release of life convicts on political grounds is arrested and life terms without remission become more common. Remission should be a humanitarian act and never a source of political controversy. Removing capital punishment from the statute book and introducing a rational and universal remission policy will be a substantive reform in the justice system.

Food flux

Amid the cooler headline inflation, food price pressures pose a risk

In October, India's consumer price inflation eased to a four-month low of 4.87%, while wholesale prices declined year-on-year for the seventh successive month by a minor 0.5%. Although only marginally lower than the 5% retail inflation in September, October's price rise pace – which is exactly the same as that in June – surely represents some relief for the third successive month from July's 15-month high pace of over 7.4%. Rural consumers still face a higher inflation of 5.1%, though. Core inflation, which excludes energy and food costs, has eased further and household services inflation dropped below 4% after several months above. The rise in prices of vegetables, which had surged over 37% in July, eased to 2.7% in October. However, the overall uptick in food costs for households stayed firm at 6.6%, virtually unchanged from September, as other essential edibles saw faster price hikes or remained at elevated levels. Some of these – like pulses (up 18.8%) and cereals (10.7%) – may be attributed to worries about the *kharif* output and uncertain *rabi* prospects as well as hikes in minimum support prices for crops. Pulses prices were up 19.4% at the wholesale level, signalling that more pass-through to retail prices is likely.

The Monetary Policy Committee of the Reserve Bank of India, which meets early December for its next review, will not be too swayed by the October tidings. As per its 5.6% average inflation projection for this quarter, down from 6.4% in the previous quarter, November and December may well see an average inflation of 5.95%, fractionally short of the central bank's upper tolerance threshold. Excluding edible oils, whose 13.7% year-on-year drop in prices played a key role in moderating the Consumer Price Index, would have meant a 5.6% rise in prices. Base effects from last year, when the Ukraine conflict had spiked edible oil prices, will start to dissipate in coming months. Similarly, while the 6.8% inflation recorded in October 2022 helped cool price rise last month, those base effects will surely ebb this month. Retail inflation had eased to 5.88% last November, with the food price index rising just 4.7%, from 7% in the previous month. The perceived retreat of inflation last month thus may only be fleeting. Households that seem to have adjusted to the continuous recent rise in living costs, by pulling back on discretionary spends and downsizing essential consumption as per industrial output trends, are likely to remain cautious rather than loosen their purse strings anytime soon. For an economy whose resilience relies on its domestic demand buffer against global shocks, reluctant or budget-cramped consumers are the biggest headwind for policymakers to strive to address.

Modi launches mission for most backward of the Scheduled Tribes

The PM-PVTG mission is meant to bring 11 key interventions to 22,500 villages; Modi releases PM-Kisan instalment hours before campaigning came to an end in Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh

Abhinav Lakshman
NEW DELHI

"Today, we are reaching 75 PVTGs [Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups] of the country who have been deprived of even basic amenities so far. All previous governments did was count them and classify them. I don't want to just add up numbers. I want to bring people together," Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Wednesday as he launched the ₹24,000-crore PM-PVTG Development Mission and a Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra focused on government scheme saturation to the last mile in tribal districts.

In addition to launching these schemes, the Prime Minister released the 15th instalment of the PM-Kisan payout to farmers, and dedicated a host of projects worth over ₹7,000 crore to the nation, including a campus of the IIM in Ranchi, and projects in the coal, railways, roads, petroleum and natural gas sectors in Jharkhand.



Flag-off: Prime Minister Narendra Modi during a visit to Ulihatu, the birth place of tribal icon, Birsa Munda, in Khunti district. PTI

Mr. Modi's remarks, while celebrating the birth anniversary of tribal icon Birsa Munda in his birthplace in Jharkhand, came hours before election campaigning came to a close for the Assembly elections in Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh, where a large numbers of farmers reside and the Model Code of Conduct is in place.

The PM's jibe at previous governments prioritising counting popula-

tions comes even as the Congress and other Opposition parties have made it a point to drum up the urgency of a countrywide caste census in the past few weeks of poll campaigning, routinely questioning the BJP's reluctance to discuss it.

The programme in Khunti was attended by Tribal Affairs Minister Arjun Munda, Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren, former Chief Minister

Babulal Marandi, and Jharkhand Governor C.P. Radhakrishnan. Before the launch of the schemes, a recorded video address of President Droupadi Murmu was also played, in which she wished all citizens on the occasion of Janjatiya Gaurav Diwas.

In his address on the PM-PVTG mission, the Prime Minister also thanked the President for her special attention and guidance for this project.

While launching the PM-PVTG mission, which was announced in this year's Budget by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, the Prime Minister said the programme was directed towards the most backward of the Scheduled Tribes in the country.

Key interventions

The scheme is meant to bring 11 key interventions like the PM-Gram Sadak Yojana, PM-Gram Awaas Yojana, Jal Jeevan Mission, etc. by coordinated work of nine ministries to about 22,500 villages across 18 States and Union Territories.

Kohli's record 50th, Shami's sizzling seven drive India

Shreyas too plays a crucial hand with second hundred on the go, as the Men in Blue post a huge total; the Kiwis, despite a spirited ton by Mitchell and his 181-run stand with Williamson, lose by 70 runs

ODI WORLD CUP

K.C. Vijaya Kumar
MUMBAI

A Wednesday night of delight ebbed away at the Wankhede Stadium as the Men in Blue, savouring individual excellence and team solidarity, got past New Zealand in the World Cup semifinal.

Virat Kohli's record-breaking 50th ODI ton, Shreyas Iyer's century, and Mohammed Shami's seven for 57, all combined wonderfully as India defeated Kane Williamson's men by 70 runs.

Turning the tables
Chasing India's 397 for four, New Zealand finished with 327 in 48.5 overs. Having lost to the same rival in the 2019 World Cup semifinal at Manchester, Rohit Sharma's men turned the tables, and will now march into Sunday's final at Ahmedabad, awaiting the victor of the Australia-South Africa semifinal.



Stellar shows: Kohli became the highest scorer in a single edition of the World Cup and Shami emerged as the most successful bowler in the knockouts, as India entered the final. EMMANUEL YOGINI



per Williamson, tight defence and watchful eyes, drove a four off Shami, the latter in turn scalped Ravindra, drawing an edge.

Williamson and Daryl Mitchell then stitched a defiant 181-run third-wicket partnership.

The latter was all swagger while thumping a six off Shami. Williamson had a close shave when Rahul accidentally disturbed the

stumps and there was no conclusive evidence about whether the second ball too was dislodged before the direct throw disturbed the timber with Williamson's bat being on the line.

Later Shami dropped Williamson on 52 but Mitchell was in terrific form, lashing at Jasprit Bumrah, and soon registered his ton.

SCOREBOARD

INDIA

Rohit Sharma c Williamson b Southey 47 (29), 4x4, 4x6, Shubman Gill (not out) 80 (66), 8x4, 3x6, Virat Kohli c Conway b Southey 117 (113), 9x4, 2x6, Shreyas Iyer c Mitchell b Boult 105 (70), 4x4, 8x6, K.L. Rahul (not out) 39 (20), 5x4, 2x6, Suryakumar Yadav c Phillips b Southey 1 (2b); Extras (b-1, lb-1, w-6); 8; Total (for four wks. in 50 overs): 397.

FALL OF WICKETS

1-71 (Rohit, 8.2 overs), 2-327 (Kohli, 43.6), 3-381 (Shreyas, 48.5), 4-382 (Suryakumar, 49.1).

NEW ZEALAND BOWLING

Boult 10-0-86-1, Southey 10-0-109-3, Santner 10-1-51-0, Ferguson 8-0-65-0, Ravindra 7-0-60-0, Phillips 5-0-33-0.

NEW ZEALAND

Devon Conway c Rahul b Shami 13 (15b, 3x4), Rachin Ravindra c Rahul b Shami 13 (22b, 3x4), Kane Williamson c Suryakumar b Shami 69 (73b, 8x4, 1x6), Daryl Mitchell c Jadeja b Shami 134 (119b, 9x4, 7x6).

(119b, 9x4, 7x6), Tom Latham lbw b Shami 0 (2b), Glenn Phillips c Jadeja b Bumrah 41 (33b, 4x4, 2x6), Mark Chapman c Jadeja b Kuldeep 2 (5b), Mitchell Santner c Rohit b Siraj 9 (10b), Tim Southey c Rahul b Shami 9 (10b, 1x4), Trent Boult (not out) 2 (2b), Lockie Ferguson c Rahul b Shami 6 (3b, 1x6); Extras (b-4, lb-5, w-19, nb-1); 29; Total (in 48.5 overs): 327.

FALL OF WICKETS

1-30 (Conway, 5.1), 2-39 (Ravindra, 7.4), 3-220 (Williamson, 32.2), 4-220 (Latham, 32.4), 5-295 (Phillips, 42.5), 6-298 (Chapman, 43.3), 7-308 (Mitchell, 45.2), 8-319 (Santner, 47.5), 9-321 (Southey, 48.2).

INDIA BOWLING

Bumrah 10-1-64-1, Siraj 9-0-78-1, Shami 9-5-57-7, Jadeja 10-0-63-0, Kuldeep 10-0-56-1.

Toss: India; Post: Shami.

India won by 70 runs to reach the final to be played at Ahmedabad on November 19 (Sunday).

Why are IAS coaching centres being probed by the CCPA?

Which are the coaching institutes under scrutiny by the Central Consumer Protection Authority?

Saptaparno Ghosh

The story so far:

On October 23, the Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA) said that it was probing 20 IAS coaching institutes for making misleading claims in their advertisements and for unfair trade practices. Four of the 20 institutions have been slapped with a penalty of ₹1 lakh.

What has the CCPA observed?

Elaborating on the broader mechanism at play, Chief Commissioner at CCPA Nidhi Khare told DD News that every time the results of any competitive exam, including the UPSC Civil Services, are announced, coaching institutes would go on an advertising spree. Names and pictures of the top rankers are used in these ads to indicate their enrolment at the institute. However, they do not disclose the nature of the enrolment, that is, the course they might have pursued in

the institute. UPSC CSE exams are conducted at three stages – prelims, mains and interview. CCPA has observed that most rank holders showcased in the advertisements only took mock interviews from these institutes. In fact, coaching institutes have been found to provide mock interviews free of cost, since it serves their own interests. This information is not disclosed in the advertisements, which ideally must include the course they enrolled for. Thus, it would qualify as deliberate concealment of important information and can be categorised as a 'misleading advertisement' under Section 2(28) of the Consumer Protection Act, 2019.

What is the ecosystem like?

UPSC recommended a total of 933 candidates post its CSE examinations in 2022. However, as observed by the CCPA, the total selections claimed by the institutes together being probed exceeded the recommendations – the cumulative

count was over 3,500. This could also be because of multiple enrolments among students. At present, four institutes have been fined – Chahal Academy, IQRA IAS, Rau's IAS Study Circle and IAS Baba. While IAS Baba has received a stay on the notice from the Karnataka High Court, Rau's IAS has appealed against the order in the National Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission. Other coaching institutes currently being probed include Vajirao and Reddy Institute, KSG - Khan Study Group IAS, Apti Plus, Analog IAS, Shankar IAS, BYJU's IAS, Unacademy, Drishti IAS, Sriram's IAS, NEXT IAS, Yojana IAS, Plutus IAS, ALS IAS, Dhishti IAS and Vision IAS, among others.

During the probe, the institutes were given the opportunity to make their submissions against the allegations of exaggerated claims. Their submissions reveal some of the same concerns raised by the CCPA. For example, Khan Study Group claimed that 682 of the 933 selected belonged to their institute.

However, their submission indicated that 673 students took only mock interviews. Vajirao and Reddy also professed about 617 selections – all of whom took the interview guidance programme.

What do we know about the overall coaching industry?

Manisha Kapoor, CEO and Secretary General at the Advertising Standards Council of India (ASCI) told The Hindu that education has emerged as "one of the most violative sectors in advertising" in recent years. "Most violations would be in the areas of leadership claims, placement to best colleges, success assurances etc. While there is fierce pressure in education, misleading ads in the category often perpetuate the problem and end up targeting vulnerable students and parents," she says.

According to Pune-based consultancy Infinium Global Research LLP, the coaching class market in India is expected to reach about ₹1.79 lakh crore by 2030 and grow at a Compounded Annual Growth Rate of 14.07% over a forecast period of 2023-30. Categorising the market, it said that higher education holds the largest market share – of about 32.75% in 2022. With migration also forming a part of the landscape, the coaching centre system is further complimented by the demand for services such as rented accommodation and local tiffin services among other things.

With inputs from Jigesh A.M.