

Tamil Nadu's electorate stands at 6.12 crore, marking a drop of 8 lakh

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

The Tamil Nadu electorate fell by 8 lakh and stood at 6.12 crore, including 3.11 crore women, 3.01 crore men and more than 7,900 of the third gender. The latest figures from the electoral roll of Continuous Updation, 2023 (Quarter 2), were released by the Election Commission on Wednesday.

In January, Tamil Nadu's total electorate was 6.20 crore, including 3.15 crore women, 3.04 crore men and more than 8,000 of the third gender. "During the above continuous updation, the names of 1,30,64 persons were included as new electors, and 19,11,820 deletions have been made on account of shifting, death and duplicate entries," an official press release said.

More than 51,200 voters had changed their address, and 1 correction of entries



There are 3.11 crore women, 3.01 crore men and over 7,900 of the third gender.

was made in respect of 2,60,103 electors, it said. The Shozhinganallur Assembly constituency in Chengalpattu district continues to have the highest number of electors in the State, at 6,51,077, including 3,26,253 men, 3,24,713 women and 111 of the third gender.

The Harbour constituency in Chennai continues to have the lowest number of electors, at 1,69,292 (87,924 men, 81,309 women and 59 of

the third gender). Kilvelur in Nagapattinam has the second lowest number of electors, with 1,69,750, including 86,079 women, 83,669 men and two from the third gender. There are 3,400 overseas electors in the electoral roll of Continuous Updation, 2023 (Quarter 2).

In view of the Election Commission's announcement that the youth could file advance applications with reference to three subsequent qualifying dates – April 1, July 1 and October 1 – and January 1, the roll would be updated every quarter and eligible youngsters could register in the next quarter of the year in which he/she has attained the qualifying age of 18. The roll of Continuous Updation, 2023 (Quarter 2), with reference to April 1 as the qualifying date, was published on Wednesday. On getting enrolled, an elector would be issued an Electoral Photo

Identity Card (EPIC).

How to check

The roll in portable document format (PDF) is available at <https://elections.tn.gov.in/>, the Chief Electoral Officer said in an official press release. All eligible persons who completed 18 years of age as on April 1 this year, but don't figure in the rolls, can apply in the following ways: An applicant can visit the offices of the Electoral Registration Officers and submit Form-6, or apply at <https://voters.eci.gov.in/> or through the Voter Helpline app available in the Google Play Store. "The forms and claims received in advance during the period of Special Summary Revision, 2023, and Continuous Updation, 2023, thereafter shall be processed by the Electoral Registration Officers concerned during the relevant quarter under Continuous Updation," the press release said.

GDP expanded 6.1% in 2022-23's last quarter

Full-year manufacturing GVA slid to 1.3% from 11.1%; only three of eight sectors, including farming and services, recorded higher GVA for FY23; despite Q4 uptick, consumption remained tepid

Vikas Dhoot
NEW DELHI

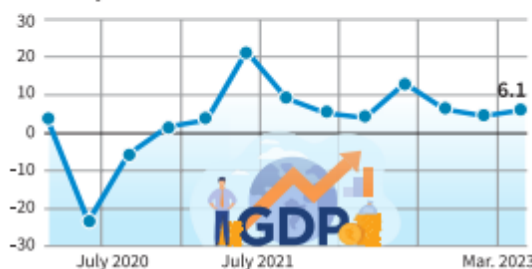
India's GDP growth accelerated to 6.1% in the January to March 2023 quarter, lifting the economy's expansion in 2022-23 to 7.2% from 7% estimated earlier, according to the provisional national income data released by the National Statistical Office (NSO) on Wednesday.

The Gross Value Added (GVA) in the economy is reckoned to have risen 7% in 2022-23, compared with 8.8% in 2021-22. Manufacturing GVA growth slid to just 1.3% from 11.1% a year earlier, despite a 4.5% rebound in the final quarter after six months of contraction.

Economists noted that though several sectors delivered a positive surprise, especially in the last quar-

Slow expansion

India's quarterly gross domestic product growth accelerated to 6.1% in the first three months of 2023, from 4.5% in the preceding quarter, while yearly economic growth for 2022-23 was 7.2%, compared with 9.1% in 2021-22, according to data released by the National Statistical Office



ter of the year, consumption remained tepid and the overall growth pattern remains uneven.

Farm, services growth

The farm and services sectors buoyed economic outcomes as just three of eight broad economic activity

segments recorded higher GVA growth than in 2021-22.

The agricultural GVA grew 4%, up from 3.5% in the previous year. The financial, real estate and professional services sectors saw their GVA grow 7.1%, compared with 4.7%

in 2021-22. The GVA of the trade, hotels, transport, and communication sectors, as well as services related to broadcasting grew 14%, marginally faster than in the previous year.

Revised GDP, GVA

The NSO also revised GDP and GVA numbers lower for the first half of last year but bumped up the third quarter figures slightly. The first quarter's GDP growth in 2022-23 is now pegged at 13.1%, followed by a 6.2% rise in the second quarter and 4.5% growth in the third, higher than the 4.4% estimated in February.

In GVA terms, the final three months of 2022-23 recorded a three-quarter high of 6.5%.

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GDP expanded 6.1% in 2022-23's last quarter

The growth estimates for the first and second quarters were pared to 11.9% and 5.4% respectively, while the third quarter GVA growth was revised higher to 4.7%, from the 4.6% reckoned earlier.

"While growth in private final consumption expenditure witnessed a slight uptick to 2.8% in Q4 from 2.2% in Q3, it remained muted, belying the uptick in consumer sentiments as per the RBI's consumer confidence survey," ICRA chief economist Aditi Nayar pointed out.

The higher-than-expected GDP growth last year could also temper growth expectations for this year, which the government and central bank expect to be around 6.5%, said Madan Sabnavis, the Bank of Baroda's chief economist. Amid a global slowdown, maintaining growth over 6% will be challenging, he reckoned.

Chief Economic Adviser (CEA) V. Anantha Nageswaran was more optimistic and said the growth momentum continued across agriculture, industry and services sectors. India's 6.1% GDP growth was the fastest among major economies, he asserted, adding that prospects look better for this year than they did four months ago.

"We are prepared to stick our necks out and say that the risks to a 6.5% growth projection for this year are more evenly balanced now, than at the time of the Economic Survey's presentation when we felt that downside risks dominate," Mr. Nageswaran said.

Uncertain showers

Farmers need to be given timely, accurate information on rainfall

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) earlier this week updated its monsoon outlook from April. The latest analysis from the weather models that the IMD relies on suggests near-certainty of the development of an El Niño, a cyclical phenomenon of warming in the Central Pacific that six in 10 years is linked to diminished rainfall in the west, northwest and western parts of central India, especially between July and August. However, despite the certainty of an El Niño, the IMD has chosen to retain its outlook of a 'normal' monsoon, at 96% of the 50-year long-term average of 87 cm. Anything below 96% would have been categorised as 'below normal'. Underlying its assessment is a calculation that another phenomenon, called the Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD) – a temperature swing between the western and eastern Indian Ocean – would favour rain development and offset the loss in rains from an El Niño. It is important to note that IODs are not as strongly linked to bountiful rains as the El Niño is to depressed rains. In 1997, India had a strong El Niño but received 2% excess rain because of a positive IOD. However, both have not appeared at the same time since that year, and this is the first time since then that both factors are expected to play out in the same monsoon season. The years India last reported a greater than 10% deficit in monsoon rainfall were 2014 and 2015 – both El Niño years.

The IMD update also underlines that rainfed-agriculture zones of the country would be between 92%-104% of the average. While this technically qualifies as 'normal', it is also a very large variation and could mean long, dry spells followed by a period of incessant downpours. This might help meet the region's rainfall 'numbers' but will not be helpful for agriculture. While every monsoon has its own peculiarities whatever the models might say, it would be crucial to watch out for the monsoon's distribution, both spatially and temporally. Sharp deficits during July and August, particularly in central India, are likely to influence agricultural output. More accurate assessments of rain during this month are available through the IMD's extended range forecasts that give a fortnightly prognosis; and these can be quite dynamic. The monsoon is forecast to reach Kerala by June 4, and whether it sticks to this date or arrives a tad early or late has little bearing on the quantity of rain during the core monsoon months. This year, States and the Centre must redouble efforts to convey accurate, timely information to farmers, using all available information channels, down to the block level.

T.N. reiterates opposition to Karnataka's proposal for a dam at Mekedatu

State will oppose the proposal at all levels, says Water Resources Minister Duraimurugan, in response to Karnataka Irrigation Minister D.K. Shivakumar's statement a day earlier

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

A day after Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar, who also holds the Irrigation portfolio, reportedly said his State was keen on building a dam across the Cauvery at Mekedatu, Tamil Nadu Minister for Water Resources Duraimurugan on Wednesday reiterated that Tamil Nadu would oppose the proposal at all levels.

Mr. Duraimurugan said the proposal for a dam at Mekedatu, in the uncontrolled intermediate catchment, "would affect Tamil Nadu" and was "not welcome". Expressing confidence that he would be able to meet the Karnataka Minister soon, he said the issue could be discussed in detail at the meeting. He hoped Mr. Shivakumar would be patient till then.



Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar said the State was keen on building a dam at Mekedatu, and ₹1,000 crore had been allocated for the project. FILE PHOTO

Mr. Duraimurugan said he was surprised that Mr. Shivakumar chose to ruffle Tamil Nadu's feathers days after he was sworn in as a Minister.

He said officials may not have given the new Minister complete information

on the proposal.

His remarks came in response to media reports on Mr. Shivakumar's statement that Karnataka was keen on a dam at Mekedatu and ₹1,000 crore had been allocated for the project.

AMMK founder T.T.V.

Dhinakaran demanded that the DMK government take legal steps against Karnataka's proposal. Stating that Mr. Duraimurugan's condemnation of Karnataka's plan was not enough, he sought the Chief Minister's intervention.

Re-introduce Chennai-Tokyo direct flight, Chief Minister urges Centre

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

On his way back from Tokyo, Chief Minister M.K. Stalin on Wednesday wrote to Union Minister for Civil Aviation Jyotiraditya Scindia, requesting him to re-introduce direct flight connectivity between Tokyo and Chennai. He also sought more flights between Singapore and Madurai.

The Chief Minister visited Japan and Singapore to invite industrialists to the Global Investors' Meet in Chennai in January.

The direct flight between Chennai and Tokyo, launched in October 2019 by All Nippon Airways (ANA), was discontinued during the COVID-19 pandemic, he pointed out.

"The lack of direct flight connectivity more than doubles the travel time between these two destinations by about seven hours, which is significant.



The Chennai-Tokyo direct flight was discontinued during the COVID-19 pandemic.

There have been persistent requests from the Japanese business community in Tamil Nadu to resume direct flight services between Chennai and Tokyo," he said.

Increased influx

Several Japanese conglomerates such as Nissan, Toshiba, Yamaha, Komatsu, Mitsubishi and Hitachi had set up manufacturing facilities in Tamil Nadu. Of the 12 industrial townships established in India under the Japan-India Investment

Promotion Partnership Program, three were in Tamil Nadu. With over 600 Japanese companies having establishments in the State for the past two decades, the influx of Japanese expatriates had gradually increased. Chennai was home to the largest Japanese community in India, Mr. Stalin said.

"At the same time, Japan also has a significant Tamil diaspora, particularly professionals in fields related to Information Technology and finance. As a result, there has been a steady strengthening of economic and cultural relations between Tamil Nadu and Japan, and people-to-people relationships in the form of tourism are also growing," the Chief Minister said.

Singapore connectivity

Singapore had nearly 4 lakh people of Tamil origin, who maintained links with their native towns and villages, predominantly in

southern Tamil Nadu. Further, many people travelled from the southern districts of Tamil Nadu to Singapore for employment, the Chief Minister said.

"While there are multiple daily flights between Singapore and Chennai and Tiruchi and one daily flight between Singapore and Coimbatore, there is only a tri-weekly flight between Singapore and Madurai. This need for more flight services between Singapore and Madurai was raised by the Minister for Home Affairs and Law of the Government of Singapore, K. Shanmugam, when he met me," Mr. Stalin said.

A similar request was made by many members of the Tamil diaspora in Singapore, Mr. Stalin said. "I would be grateful if the request for permitting more flights between Singapore and Madurai is favourably considered," he added.

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Jaishankar to meet Lavrov, Qin during BRICS summit

St Jasini Haidar
NI W DELHI

External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar left early on Wednesday for a week-long visit to South Africa and Namibia, beginning with his attendance at the BRICS (Brazil-Russia-India-China-South Africa) Foreign Ministers' meeting in Cape Town.

The FMs will finalise the agenda for the BRICS summit in August, with plans to expand the grouping and discuss a "BRICS currency", seen as a counter to the U.S. dollar, and meant

to circumvent western sanctions against Russia.

"Besides attending the meeting, [Mr. Jaishankar] will also hold a bilateral meeting with his South African counterpart Naledi Pandor. He will call on the President of South Africa and is expected to hold bilateral meetings with other BRICS Foreign Ministers and participating 'Friends of BRICS' Ministers from other countries," the Ministry of External Affairs said in a statement on Wednesday. The "Friends of BRICS" or "BRICS Plus" conference on Friday will



S. Jaishankar

include 15 Foreign Ministers from Africa and the Global South.

The importance of the meetings in South Africa can be gauged by the fact that Mr. Jaishankar left Delhi hours before Nepal Prime Minister Pushpa Ka-

mal Dahal "Prachanda" arrived for the first official visit of his tenure on Wednesday.

Seeking consensus

In Cape Town, Mr. Jaishankar will meet with Chinese Foreign Minister Qin Gang and Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov at the conference.

Apart from discussing the modalities of the SCO summit on July 4, this will be an opportunity for the External Affairs Minister to attempt to convince his Chinese and Russian counterparts to agree to a con-

sensus statement at this year's G-20 summit to be held in New Delhi in September. Efforts to bring them on board on a joint statement failed at both the G-20 Finance and Foreign Ministers' meetings in India earlier this year.

With the SCO now moving to a virtual format, it will be left to Prime Minister Narendra Modi to make similar efforts at the BRICS summit to be held in Durban from August 22 to 24, where Russian President Vladimir Putin and Chinese President Xi Jinping will attend in person.

During the conference, Mr. Jaishankar is expected to stress on India's priorities for the Global South, including mitigating the economic impact of the Ukraine war, as well as the importance of territorial sovereignty and cooperation against terrorism.

As BRICS is mainly an economic engagement, all eyes will be on whether the BRICS FMs agree to move forward with the plan for a BRICS currency initiative that would propose an alternative currency based on gold, commodities and critical minerals.



Now, Ahmednagar to be renamed 'Ahilyanagar'

Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde on Wednesday announced that Ahmednagar city would be renamed 'Ahilyanagar' after the 18th century Maratha queen Ahilyabai Holkar, famed for her piety and benign administration. Mr. Shinde's announcement came on the 298th birth anniversary of Ahilyabai Holkar, who had proved to be an extremely able ruler in the erstwhile Maratha province. The renaming of Ahmednagar follows the Shinde-Fadnavis government's move in February this year to rename Aurangabad as 'Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar' and Osmanabad as 'Tirunagar'. The demand for renaming Ahmednagar was started by BJP leader and MLC Gopichand Padalkar.

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Treatment worth ₹61,501 cr. provided under PM-JAY scheme

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Cancer treatment, emergency care, orthopaedic and urology (kidney-related ailments) top the tertiary care specialities treatment availed by beneficiaries under the Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB PM-JAY) till date, as per data released by the Health Ministry on Wednesday. The yojana has now recorded five crore hospital admissions amounting to ₹61,501 crore under the scheme.

Approximately 49% of Ayushman card recipients are women and over 48% of total authorised hospital admissions under the AB PM-JAY scheme have been availed by women, noted the data.

"Also, over 141 medical procedures under the PM-JAY are exclusively earmarked for women," it said, adding that AB PM-JAY beneficiaries can avail treatment corresponding to a total of 1,949 procedures under 27 different

The scheme being implemented by the NHA provides health cover of ₹5 lakh per family per year

specialities. The flagship scheme being implemented by the National Health Authority (NHA) provides health cover of ₹5 lakh per family per year for secondary and tertiary care hospitalisation to 12 crore beneficiary families.

The AB PM-JAY is being implemented in 33 States and Union Territories except Delhi, Odisha, and West Bengal. Till date, 23.39 crore beneficiaries have been verified and issued Ayushman cards for availing free treatment under the scheme.

The PM-JAY empanelled hospital network consists of 28,351 hospitals, including 12,824 private hospitals, across the country.

A senior Health Ministry official said the AB PM-JAY was launched with the vision to achieve Universal Health Coverage.

OTT platforms mandated to show anti-tobacco warnings

If the streaming apps fail to comply, a notice shall be issued to explain such failure, says Centre's notification; industry executives complain that they were not consulted before the decision

Bindu Shajan Perappadan
Aroon Deep
NEW DELHI

It's now mandatory for over-the-top (OTT) streaming platforms to display anti-tobacco warnings as seen in movies screened in theatres and TV, as per a Union Health Ministry notification on Wednesday amending the rules under the Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products Act (COTPA), 2004.

OTT platforms like Amazon Prime Video, Netflix, Hotstar and ZEE5 did not respond to *The Hindu's* request for comment, but an industry executive said that the companies would collectively reach out to the government to articulate their view that static smoking warnings on small screens for content that is explicitly being requested by users may not be appropriate.

"The streaming industry was not consulted be-



OTT platforms will be required to display anti-tobacco health spots at the beginning and middle of the programme. REUTERS

fore the notification," the executive said.

Prominent warnings

Meanwhile, as per the notification released on World No Tobacco Day, publishers of online curated content displaying tobacco products, or their use will be required to display anti-tobacco health spots at the beginning and middle of the programme.

They shall also be required to exhibit an anti-tobacco health warning as a

prominent static message at the bottom of the screen when tobacco products or their use are displayed during the programme.

It added that the anti-tobacco health warning message as specified in clause (b) of sub-rule (1) shall be legible and readable, with font in black colour on white background and with the warnings 'Tobacco causes cancer' or 'Tobacco kills'.

Besides warning messages, health spots and au-

dio-visual disclaimers will have to be in the same language as used in the show.

"Additionally, if the publisher of online curated content fails to comply with the provisions, an inter-ministerial committee shall issue notice giving reasonable opportunity to explain such failure and make appropriate modification in the content," the notification said.

The expression "online curated content" means any curated catalogue of audio-visual content, other than news and current affairs content, which is owned by, licensed to, or contracted to be transmitted by a publisher of online curated content, and made available on demand, including but not limited through subscription, over the internet or computer networks, and includes films, audiovisual programmes, television programmes, serials, series and other such content.

World's largest grain storage plan: Centre to implement pilot project in 10 districts

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Union Cabinet on Wednesday approved the constitution and empowerment of an Inter-Ministerial Committee (IMC) for facilitation of the "world's largest grain storage plan in cooperative sector" by convergence of various schemes of the Ministries of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution and Food Processing Industries.

A government statement said that to ensure timely and uniform implementation of the plan in a professional manner, the Ministry of Cooperation would implement a pilot project in at least 10 selected districts of different States.

The committee will be chaired by Cooperation and Home Minister Amit Shah. It will lay guidelines for creation of infrastructure such as godowns, for agriculture and allied purposes, at selected 'viable'



Farmers could sell their crops to PACS by receiving some advance payment at the Minimum Support Price. NAGARA GOPAL

Primary Agricultural Credit Societies (PACS).

The plan would be implemented by utilising the available outlays provided under the identified schemes of the respective Ministries.

Fair price

Welcoming the decision, Mr. Shah said in a tweet, "Lack of agricultural storage capacity leads to wastage of food grains and farmers are forced to sell their crops at low prices. With this decision, farmers will now get modern grain storage facilities in their

blocks through PACS, so that they will be able to get fair price for their grains."

He said PACS were an important pillar of the rural economy. "With this plan, the country will get food security and crores of farmers associated with cooperatives will be benefited," he said.

The statement said that farmers could sell their crops to PACS by receiving some advance payment at the Minimum Support Price (MSP), and get the balance after the PACS sold the food grains in the market.

North Korea spy satellite launch fails as Chollima-1 rocket falls into the sea

Pyongyang says its space agency will investigate what it calls 'the serious defects revealed' by the launch and conduct a second launch as soon as possible; South's military says it salvaged an object presumed to be part of the crashed rocket

Associated Press
SEOUL

North Korea's attempt to put its first spy satellite into space failed on Wednesday in a setback to leader Kim Jong-Un's push to boost his military capabilities as tensions with the U.S. and South Korea rise.

After an unusually quick admission of failure, North Korea vowed to conduct a second launch after it learns what went wrong. It suggests Mr. Kim remains determined to expand his weapons arsenal and apply more pressure on Washington and Seoul while di-



Launch residue: An object suspected to be part of North Korea's spy satellite salvaged by Seoul's military in the Yellow Sea. AFP

plomacy is stalled.

South Korea and Japan briefly urged residents to take shelter after the launch.

The South Korean mili-

tary said it was salvaging an object presumed to be part of the crashed North Korean rocket in waters 200 km west of the southwestern island of Eoche-

ongdo. Later, the Defence Ministry released photos of a white, metal cylinder it described as a suspected rocket part.

A satellite launch by North Korea is a violation of UN Security Council resolutions that ban the country from conducting any launch based on ballistic technology.

'Abnormal flight'

The newly developed Chollima-1 rocket was launched at 6:37 a.m. at the North's Sohae Satellite Launching Ground in the northwest, carrying the Malligyong-1 satellite. The rocket crashed off the Korean Pe-

ninsula's western coast after it lost thrust following the separation of its first and second stages, the North's official Korean Central News Agency said.

South Korea's military said the rocket had "an abnormal flight" before it fell in the water. Japanese Chief Cabinet Secretary Hirokazu Matsuno told reporters that no object was believed to have reached space. North Korean media said the country's space agency will investigate what it calls "the serious defects revealed" by the launch and conduct a second launch as soon as possible.

Gukesh floors Firouzja, leads with Caruana

Indian youngster punishes the World No. 2 in live ratings in 37 moves; Anish Giri, Wesley So and Shakhriyar Mamedyarov win their Armageddon games

CHESS

Sports Bureau

Continuing his stunning form, D. Gukesh brought down Alireza Firouzja – World No. 2 in live ratings – to open his campaign in the 11th Norway Chess in Stavanger, Norway, on Tuesday.

On a day when World No. 1 Magnus Carlsen lost to Fabiano Caruana, Gukesh nailed Firouzja in 37 moves to be the day's other winner in the classical time format in the elite 10-player field.

Later, Anish Giri, Wesley So and Shakhriyar Mamedyarov won their Armageddon games to follow the leaders.

The upper hand

In the Italian game, Gukesh played black and recognised Firouzja's bishop-move on the 28th turn as his chance to gain the upper hand.

Coupled with the fact that Alireza came under tremendous time-pressure – needing to make nine moves in 20 seconds without increment – Gukesh held a position of comfort.



Shrewd moves: Gukesh made the most of Firouzja's time pressure to come out the winner.

TWITTER/NORWAYCHESS

Alireza traded his rook for Gukesh's menacing knight but that did not ease the pressure.

Soon, after exchanging his queen for Gukesh's rook-pair, the Iran-born French national discovered that the black queen was ready to wreak more havoc.

With one second left on the clock for three moves, Alireza stared at his losing position and resigned after 37 moves.

The victory over Alireza,

rated 2785, was worth 5.7 rating points for Gukesh. The Indian youngster moved to the 15th spot in World rankings with a live rating of 2742.

As per the tournament rules, for winning the classical game, Gukesh and Caruana gained three points and shared the lead.

Since a drawn game is worth a point, a victory in the Armageddon games brought in an additional half-point to Mamedyarov, Giri and So.

The results: First round: Alireza Firouzja (Fra) lost to D. Gukesh (3); Fabiano Caruana (USA, 3) bt Magnus Carlsen (Nor); Nodirbek Abdusattorov (Uzb) drew with Anish Giri (Ned).

Shakhriyar Mamedyarov (Aze) drew with Aryan Tari (Nor); Wesley So (USA) drew with Hikaru Nakamura (USA)

Armageddon: Mamedyarov (1.5) bt Tari (1); Abdusattorov (1) lost to Giri (1.5); So (1.5) bt Nakamura (1).

Second-round pairings: Gukesh-Nakamura; Carlsen-So; Tari-Abdusattorov; Giri-Caruana; Firouzja-Mamedyarov.