

# DAILY PT POINTERS

28<sup>th</sup> August, 2024



## Indian Express-Governance(GSII)

### In Kavitha bail, PMLA exception for women, unclear link to crime

APURVA VISHWANATH  
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 27

THE Supreme Court on Tuesday granted bail to Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) leader and Telangana MLC K Kavitha in the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) and Enforcement Directorate (ED) cases against her in the Delhi excise policy case.

The ruling is yet another blow for the agencies whose high-profile investigation in the case led to the arrest of several opposition leaders, including Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and former Delhi Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia. The SC granted bail to Sisodia on August 9 and will hear Kejriwal's bail plea on September 5.

While a detailed order with the reasons for granting bail to Kavitha is yet to be made public, a Bench comprising Justices BR Gavai and KV Viswanathan made various observations during the hearing that raise questions on the investigation.

#### 'Vulnerable' woman

The SC, in granting bail to Kavitha, set aside the Delhi High Court's July 1 order. In particular, the court criticised the HC's observations on whether Kavitha can be considered a "vulnerable" woman under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) for allowing concession in granting bail.

Section 45 of PMLA provides for bail on money laundering charges. This provision, like the stringent bail standard in the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967 (UAPA), puts the onus on the accused to prove that there is no prima facie case against them.

Section 45(1) reads: "No person accused of an offence under this Act shall be released on bail or on his own bond unless (i) the Public Prosecutor has been given an opportunity to oppose the application for such release; and (ii) where the Public Prosecutor opposes the application, the Court is satisfied that there are reasonable grounds for believing that he is not guilty of such offence and that he is not likely to commit any of-

concession in granting bail. Section 45 of PMLA provides for bail on money laundering charges. This provision, like the stringent bail standard in the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967 (UAPA), puts the onus on the accused to prove that there is no prima facie case against them.



Kavitha is among several top political leaders who have been arrested. [PTI](#)

trial court (in April) held that since she is a "well-educated" woman, she cannot be considered "vulnerable".

The SC said these "perverse observations" in the Delhi HC order had to be remedied since it could lead to a situation where "no educated woman can get bail".

Kavitha's lawyers had argued that the HC did not properly apply a 2023 precedent on defining a vulnerable woman.

In 2023, Delhi HC granted bail to 40-year-old Preeti Chandra, wife of Sanjay Chandra, who was the Director of M/s Unitech Group, underlining the exception for women.

The ED, like in Kavitha's case, had made an argument that the accused was not a "household lady". However, the HC said the PMLA or the Constitution does not make a distinction between a household lady, a businesswoman, or a political figure.

"Thus to argue what kind of woman is entitled to fall within the proviso to section 45(1) PMLA by creating an ad-hoc illusory sub-classification of educated women, business women, women belonging to high so-

cial strata, within the broader classification of 'woman', as sought to be done by the respondent, is misconceived," the court had said.

However, the court added a qualifier that the accused cannot be a "flight risk" or "tamper witnesses" to be eligible for bail.

#### Tampering with evidence

The ED argued that Kavitha had "tampered with evidence" by formatting her phone when the agency asked her to submit it.

Justice Viswanathan orally observed that changing or formatting phones is common and may not be sufficient to allege tampering with evidence. Oral observations have no legal value on their own, but often indicate what the judges could be thinking.

The ED also argued that it was on Kavitha's insistence that Hyderabad-based businessman Arun Pillai – considered a key conspirator and frontman for Kavitha – retracted his initial statements to the ED that incriminated her. To this, the Bench asked how Kavitha could have influenced someone (Pillai) who was already in ED custody.

#### Connection with crime

The Bench then asked the ED how Kavitha was linked to the excise scam. Additional Solicitor General SV Raju told the court that apart from statements of the approvers, the ED has access to the call detail record which shows that Kavitha was in touch with some of the accused (approvers).

The ED read out parts of the statement from approver Raghav Magunta, son of TDP MP Magunta Srinivasulu Reddy, in which he refers to Kavitha's alleged involvement.

According to Reddy's statement, the ED said Reddy's first meeting was with Kejriwal, and in that meeting the CM allegedly told him that Kavitha is also interested in the excise policy. The allegation is that after that meeting, Kavitha called Reddy and was in touch with him.

However, the SC, in an oral observation, questioned how the agency could count Reddy as an approver since he was also a witness in the case. It raised questions on how the agency made Reddy an approver, even when he was directly involved in the alleged scam.

- The Supreme Court granted bail to Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) leader K Kavitha in the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) and Enforcement Directorate (ED) cases against her in the Delhi Excise policy case.

### Law and exception

- Section 45 of the PMLA provides for bail on money laundering charges. This provision in the law, like the stringent bail standard in the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967 (UAPA), puts the onus on the accused to prove that there is no prima facie case against them while seeking bail.
- However, the proviso to clause (1) of Section 45 allows courts the discretion to exempt persons below 16 years of age, women, the sick or the infirm from these dual conditions for bail, providing humane relief.

Indian Express –Economy(GSIII)-Page 13

## Over 3 crore PM Jan Dhan accounts to be opened in FY25: FM Sitharaman

### THE JAN DHAN PUSH

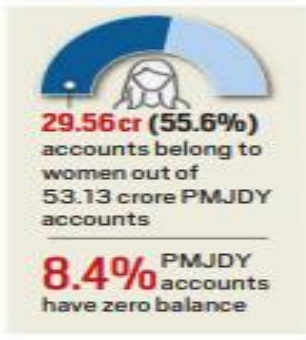
**3 CR** Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY) accounts to be opened during FY25

**53.13 crore** accounts are operative PMJDY accounts, out of over 173 crore operative CASA accounts, as on August 14, 2024

**₹2.3 lakh crore** deposit balance in 53.13 crore Jan Dhan accounts

**66.6%** of total PMJDY accounts are opened in rural and semi-urban areas

**Average balance** in PMJDY accounts has increased to ₹4,352 (August 2024) from ₹1,065 (March 2015)



ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU  
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 27

THE GOVERNMENT aims to open more than 3 crore accounts under the Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY) during the current financial year 2024-25, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said on Tuesday. On the eve of the PMJDY completing ten years, Sitharaman said the scheme has helped the government to reach out to people, especially in identifying people who



Nirmala Sitharaman, Union Finance Minister. File

for people-centric economic initiatives. PMJDY has helped provide adults with a bank account which has helped in direct benefit transfers, COVID-19 financial assistance, PM-KISAN.

The JAM Trinity (Jan Dhan, Aadhaar, Mobile) has given a boost to the Direct Benefit Transfer programme and expanded its coverage from partial to ubiquitous, the Finance Ministry said. Of the total accounts opened under the scheme, about 66.6 per cent accounts are opened in rural and semi-urban areas. Of the total

- The government aims to open more than 3 crore accounts under the Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY) during the current financial year 2024-25, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said on Tuesday. On the eve of the PMJDY completing ten years, Sitharaman said the scheme has helped the government to reach out to people, especially in identifying people who are in need of money.
- The government's flagship financial inclusion programme Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY) was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi ten years ago on August 28, 2014.
- The number of bank accounts under PMJDY has risen nearly four-fold to 53.13 crore as on August 16, 2024 from 14.72 crore in March 2015. Total deposits under PMJDY have increased to over Rs 2.31 lakh crore as of August 2024 from Rs 15,670 crore as of March 2015,
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# HEADLINES OF THE DAY

## PIB –Economy(GSIII)

Ministry of Coal

### Coal Production in the Country Grows 7.12% YoY to Reach 370 MT in FY 2024-25

Coal Stock at 121.57 MT, with a YoY Growth of 36.2%

Posted On: 27 AUG 2024 6:11PM by PIB Delhi

The Ministry of Coal has achieved upswing in overall coal production upto 25<sup>th</sup> August 2024. The cumulative coal production for FY 2024-25, as on 25.08.24, has significantly increased to 370.67 MT, compared to 346.02 MT during the same period in FY 2023-24, reflecting a growth of 7.12%.



- The country has registered significant growth of 7.12 per cent in the overall coal production so far this year. The Ministry of Coal in a statement today said that the cumulative coal production for this financial year as of 25<sup>th</sup> August has increased to 370.67 million tonnes, compared to 346.02 million tonnes during the same period last year.
- Coal is the most important and abundant fossil fuel in India. It accounts for 55% of the country's energy need. The country's industrial heritage was built upon indigenous coal.
- Commercial primary energy consumption in India has grown by about 700% in the last four decades. The current per capita commercial primary energy consumption in India is about 350 kgoe/year which is well below that of developed countries.

# HEADLINES OF THE DAY



## PIB-Science and Tech(GSIII)

Ministry of Science & Technology

### New smart sensor for adjusting drug dosage to manage Parkinson's Disease

Posted On: 27 AUG 2024 2:44PM by PIB Delhi

- Scientists have developed an affordable, user-friendly, portable smartphone-based fluorescence turn-on sensor system that can assist in managing Parkinson's disease.
- The sensor would help in accurately detecting the concentration of L-dopa in the body, thereby helping to determine the precise dosage required for effective control of the disease.
- Parkinson's disease is marked by a continuous decrease in neuron cells, which leads to a significant reduction in dopamine (neurotransmitter) levels in our body. L-dopa is a chemical which is converted to dopamine in our body and so act as anti-Parkinson's drugs.

# HEADLINES OF THE DAY

## Air-IR(GSII)

### India & Chile Strengthen Agricultural Ties In High-Level Meeting



- Minister of State for Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Ramnath Thakur met Chile's Agriculture Minister Esteban Valenzuela and his delegation for a high-level bilateral meeting in New Delhi. The meeting concentrated on key areas of mutual interest and collaboration, including the implementation of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Agricultural Cooperation, the Horticulture Action Plan, and the e-certification of phytosanitary certificates.
- Both countries cooperate extensively in multilateral fora and share similar views on climate change/renewable energy issues and on expansion and reforms of the UNSC
- India and Chile have signed Agreements/MoUs covering various fields of cooperation such as Sports, S&T, Antarctica, Defence, Air Services, Agriculture, New and Renewable Energy, Education, Outer Space, Geology and Mineral Resources, and Gainful employment of spouses and eligible dependents of diplomatic personnel

## The Hindu-Governance(GSII)-Page 10

### Himachal Pradesh raises minimum age of marriage for women from 18 to 21 years

Chief Minister Sukhwinder Singh Sukhu says Himachal Pradesh is the first State to take the initiative, and 'the Congress has always been at the forefront to work towards the betterment of women'

Updated - August 27, 2024 10:54 pm IST Published - August 27, 2024 10:53 pm IST - CHANDIGARH

VIKAS VASUDEVA



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- The Himachal Pradesh State Assembly on Tuesday (August 27, 2024) passed a Bill increasing the minimum age of marriage for women from 18 to 21 years in order to support gender equality and higher education.
- The Prohibition of Child Marriage (Himachal Pradesh Amendment) Bill, 2024 was introduced by Women Empowerment Minister Dhani Ram Shandil in the State Assembly during its ongoing monsoon session. The Bill was passed by voice vote.
- The Bill states the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006 was enacted to prohibit solemnisation of child marriage and matters related to it.

The Hindu-Science and Tech(GSIII)-Page 12

## IIL, Australian varsity develop needle-free COVID-19 vaccine

The Hindu Bureau  
CHENNAI

The Hyderabad-headquartered vaccine manufacturer Indian Immunologicals Ltd (IIL), in partnership with Griffith University, Australia has developed a needle-free intranasal booster vaccine against SARS-CoV-2, a press release from the company has said.

The company said the live-attenuated booster has been developed using “codon de-optimisation” technology. Its work on this vaccine has been published in the science journal *Nature Communications*.

According to the press release, codon de-optimisation involves decreasing the frequency of under-represented codon pairs (genetic determinants for amino acids) without changing the amino acid sequences. This method, the release said, is an efficient virus attenuation strategy, where the degree of attenuation can be regulated as required. It is extremely safe and takes less time than the conventional way of attenuating viruses, which usually takes several years, the release said.

K. Anand Kumar, managing director, Indian Immunologicals Ltd, said

**This method is extremely safe and takes less time than conventional way of attenuating viruses**

“This accomplishment signifies a major step forward in our battle against COVID-19. We are enthusiastic about the codon de-optimisation technology, and its use in targeted attenuation of microorganisms to be used as vaccine candidates.”

Union Health Minister J.P. Nadda told the Lok Sabha earlier this month that two strains, namely KP.1 and KP.2, were responsible for the recent surge in COVID-19 cases in India.

He said these strains evolved from the JN1 Omicron variant and were highly transmissible, and while there has been no associated increase in hospitalisations or severe cases reported thus far, both strains are being monitored.

As of December 2023, a total of 220.67 crore COVID-19 vaccine doses have been administered across the country. However, only 22.88 crore precautionary or booster doses have been administered across the country among the eligible adult population.

Hyderabad-headquartered vaccine manufacturer Indian Immunologicals Ltd (IIL), in partnership with Griffith University, Australia has developed a needle-free intra-nasal booster vaccine against SARS-CoV-2

The company said the live-attenuated booster has been developed using ‘codon de- optimisation’ technology.

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## The Hindu-Environment(GSIII)-Page 18

### This bird species was extinct in Europe. Now it's back, and humans must help it migrate for winter

The northern bald ibis, or the Waldrapp, once soared over North Africa, the Arabian Peninsula and much of Europe

Updated - August 27, 2024 12:46 pm IST Published - August 27, 2024 12:45 pm IST

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This photo provided by Waldrappteam Conservation & Research shows the migration from Northern Bald Ibis, or the Waldrapp from Seekirchen am Wallersee in Austria to Dasi Laguna di Orbetello in Italy during August and September 2022. | Photo Credit: AP

- The distinctive northern bald ibis, hunted essentially to extinction by the 17th century, was revived by breeding and rewilding efforts over the last two decades. But the birds — known for their distinctive black-and-iridescent green plumage, bald red head and long curved beak — don't instinctively know which direction to fly to migrate without the guidance of wild-born elders.
- The northern bald ibis once soared over North Africa, the Arabian Peninsula and much of Europe, including southern Germany's Bavaria. The migratory birds were also considered a delicacy, and the bird, known as the Waldrapp in German, disappeared from Europe, though a few colonies elsewhere survived.
- IUCN status :Endangered