

New Governors for Haryana Goa; Ladakh gets new L-G

Kavinder Gupta appointed Lieutenant-Governor of Ladakh; Ashok Gajapathi Raju is the new Governor of Goa, and Ashim Kumar Ghosh to take charge as the Governor of Haryana

The Hindu Bureau

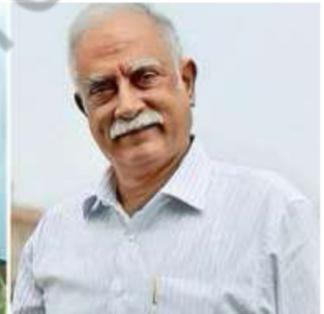
NEW DELHI

Former Deputy Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir Kavinder Gupta was appointed Lieutenant-Governor of Ladakh on Monday, replacing B.D Mishra, a communication by the President's Secretariat said. The President has accepted the resignation of Brigadier Mishra (retd), the statement said.

Former Civil Aviation Minister Pusapati Ashok Gajapathi Raju was appointed Governor of Goa and a senior Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader from West Bengal, Ashim Kumar Ghosh, was appointed Governor of Haryana.

The appointments will take effect from the dates they will assume charge, the statement said.

Brigadier Mishra (87) was appointed to the post on February 12, 2023 on removal of R.K Mathur, a retired bureaucrat.



(From left) Kavinder Gupta, Ashim Kumar Ghosh and Pusapati Ashok Gajapathi Raju appointed as Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh, Governor of Haryana and Governor of Goa respectively, on Monday. ANI

Mr. Gupta belongs to Jammu and he served as the Mayor of Jammu for three consecutive terms from 2005 to 2010. He is also a national executive member of the BJP.

The fresh appointment of Mr. Gupta comes in the wake of a fresh agitation call given by the Ladakh civil society groups on demands for statehood and constitutional safeguards.

After the special status of Jammu and Kashmir under Article 370 was read down by Parliament on August 5, 2019, civil society groups in Ladakh erupted in protests, demanding

protection of land, resources and employment.

Mr. Raju, a senior Telugu Desam Party (TDP) leader from Andhra Pradesh, will succeed P.S Sreedharan Pillai as the Goa Governor. Mr. Pillai was sworn in as the Governor of Goa on July 15, 2021.

Mr. Raju (74) served as the Civil Aviation Minister between May 27, 2014 and March 10, 2018 under Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Mr. Ghosh, who headed the party's West Bengal unit between 1999 and 2002, will succeed Bandaru Dattatreya as Haryana Gover-

nor. A former Labour and Employment Minister, Mr. Dattatreya assumed charge as Governor of Haryana on July 15, 2021.

Mr. Ghosh was born in 1944 in Howrah, West Bengal. He joined the BJP in 1991 and was a long-time member of the State Intellectual Cell.

In 1996, Mr. Ghosh became the State Secretary of the BJP and in 1998, he was appointed State vice-president. From 1999 to 2002, he served as the State president of West Bengal BJP. He was a member of the BJP National Executive from 2004 to 2006.

MGNREGS digital attendance system being manipulated, Centre tells States

Sobhana K. Nair

NEW DELHI

Nearly four years after introducing the digital attendance system for the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme workers and three years after making it mandatory, the government has discovered a whole range of ways the National Mobile Monitoring System (NMMS) platform used for the purpose is being “misused” and has now added four layers of analog monitoring to plug the gaps.

On July 8, the Union Rural Development Ministry issued a 13-page note to the State governments on the issue. As per the Ministry’s

note, there were at least seven ways that the NMMS is allegedly being gamed, which, the government said, was undermining the credibility of the digital attendance system and leading to “potential misuse of public funds”. The Ministry also cautioned that “no relaxation will be given in matters concerning the misuse or manipulation of NMMS”.

Under the NMMS, geo-tagged photographs of the workers are to be uploaded twice a day – first when they arrive for work and then at the end of their shift. Only exception for the second round of photographing is offered at sites with 20 or below workers. It was found that “irrele-

vant or unrelated photographs” were being uploaded. In many cases, “photo-to-photo capturing instead of live work images” was being done.

There was also “mismatch in actual vs recorded count”. A mismatch in gender composition of workers was found at several work sites. The same photo of workers in multiple muster rolls, mismatch in workers in morning and afternoon photos, and non-uploading of photos in the afternoon session are the other discrepancies flagged by the Ministry.

The Ministry has directed the States to ensure that these photographs and attendance of workers is verified at gram panchayat,

block, district, and State level. At gram panchayat level, they want 100% verification of the present workers. The percentage of physical verification of the uploaded photographs of workers reduces at different levels. So, while at the block level, 20% of the photos at random need to be verified, at the district level, this number is down to 10%, and at State level to 5%. The other significant change is that the government now allows for editing the muster rolls before making the wage bill. So far, this could be done only at the District Collector’s level, who also took action in case of complaints. Such amendments of the muster rolls were rare.

Can't stop Kerala from withdrawing its case against Governor: SC

Krishnadas Rajagopal

NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday made it clear to the Centre that it may have no option but acquiesce to Kerala's wish to withdraw two petitions filed against its Governor's delay in clearing crucial Bills.

Appearing before a Bench headed by Justice P.S. Narasimha, senior advocate K.K. Venugopal and advocate C.K. Sasi, representing Kerala, repeated a request of many months to permit them to withdraw the case. They submitted that a judgment delivered by the court on April 8 in an identical case concerning the Tamil Nadu Governor has become the established law and would apply to Kerala too.

The April 8 judgment has prescribed a maximum three-month deadline for both the President and Governors to act on State Bills sent to them for approval or reserved for consideration under Article 200 and 201, respectively, of the Constitution.

'Infructuous pleas'

Mr. Venugopal said he was under instruction from the Kerala government to submit in court that the April judgment has made the State's petitions infructuous. However, the State's plea was met with stiff opposition from the Centre, represented by both Attorney-General R. Venkataramani and Solicitor-General Tushar Mehta. The top law officers objected to the plea to withdraw.



They informed the court that the April 8 judgment was the subject of a pending Presidential Reference. The law officers said the court ought to wait for the Constitution Bench to hear the Reference.

Mr. Mehta said the Presidential Reference would authoritatively settle the law on whether the apex court could employ its inherent powers under Article 142 to "impose" timelines and prescribe the manner of conduct of Governors and the President while dealing with Bills.

"Even assuming the Reference is listed and comes before a Constitution Bench or whatever, the State of Kerala is still entitled to withdraw its petitions against its Governor," Justice Narasimha said, adding it would be "very, very difficult" for the apex court to stop Kerala from withdrawing its petitions.

However, Mr. Venkataramani urged the Bench to wait as the court's Rules required the Presidential Reference to be listed for a preliminary hearing very soon.

The court agreed to list the case on July 25.

Delhi to get 7 super-speciality hospitals, be developed into a world-class medical hub: CM

Major transformations in healthcare sector under way, says Rekha Gupta; adds that her govt. will ensure a comfortable Kanwar Yatra for pilgrims, take strict action against those creating obstacles

The Hindu Bureau

NEW DELHI

Seven under-construction ICU hospitals, commissioned by the previous Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) government during the pandemic, will be turned into super-speciality medical facilities, Chief Minister Rekha Gupta said on Monday. She added that each facility will be equipped to treat cases of a specific nature, such as cancer, high-risk deliveries, and transplants, which require advanced medical expertise.

Ms. Gupta said Delhi's healthcare sector is undergoing "major transformations" and on the way to becoming a "world-class medical hub for people from India and abroad".

Speaking at the inauguration of a private hospital in north Delhi's Model Town, the CM said, "By developing the seven hospitals into super-speciality medical facilities, we are ensuring that not a single rupee spent by the government goes to waste."



A group of devotees crossing a bridge over the Yamuna river in Delhi while carrying water from the river Ganga. SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

Ms. Gupta said during the pandemic, when AAP was in power, the "scarcity of hospital beds led to loss of lives". "At one point in Delhi, the city had only 0.42 hospital beds per 1,000 citizens and just six MRI machines and 12 CT scan machines, which is unimaginable for a city of this scale," she said.

Security for devotees

The CM also said the government will ensure a "secure and comfortable" Kanwar Yatra for devotees and that the police will

take strict action against those found creating obstacles for pilgrims. Her comments come a day after the police detained an e-rickshaw driver following the discovery of glass shards on a road along the pilgrimage route in north-east Delhi's Shahdara, raising concerns over the safety of the pilgrims walking barefoot.

Mired in controversies

The previous AAP government had announced the construction of the seven "makeshift ICU hospitals"

in September 2021 to create 6,800 beds in the Capital over six months. Two of these were to be set up near existing medical facilities – Chacha Nehru Bal Chikitsalaya and GTB Hospital – and the remaining in Sarita Vihar, Raghbir Nagar, Shalimar Bagh, Kirari, and Sultanpuri.

In 2022, Lieutenant-Governor V.K. Saxena had ordered a probe into allegations of irregularities in awarding tenders for the project.

On June 26 this year, the Delhi government's Anti-Corruption Branch registered an FIR against AAP leaders and former Health Ministers Satyendar Jain and Saurabh Bharadwaj over "irregularities" in the project. The agency alleged that the "₹1,125-crore ICU Hospital Project remains only 50% complete after nearly three years and expenditure of ₹800 crore despite an initial six-month completion timeline". In response, AAP had dared the Delhi government to make the details of the case public.

IN LINE WITH SPECIAL BULLETIN ISSUED BY U.S. FAA IN 2018

DGCA orders inspection of fuel switch locking system in most Boeing planes

Regulator tells airlines to complete exercise by July 21; some overseas carriers start voluntary checks

SUKALP SHARMA
NEW DELHI, JULY 14

WITH THE investigation into the Air India Boeing 787-8 aircraft crash last month focussing on the engine fuel control switches, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has ordered an inspection of the switches' locking mechanism on most of the India-registered Boeing commercial aircraft by July 21.

This is in line with the Special

Airworthiness Information Bulletin (SAIB) issued by the US Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) in December 2018, with regard to the potential disengagement of the fuel control switch locking feature.

A number of aircraft models were mentioned in the SAIB, including variants of popular models 787 and 737 that are operated by Indian airlines. Air India operates the 787s, while Air India Express, Akasa Air, and SpiceJet operate variants of the 737.

THE EDITORIAL PAGE

SHINE MORE LIGHT

DGCA asking for inspection of fuel switch locking systems is welcome; preliminary report raises important questions

PAGE 8

Air India also operates Boeing 777 aircraft, but these were not mentioned in the SAIB and are therefore not under the scope of

the DGCA order. IndiGo also operates a damp-leased 787, but that aircraft is not registered in India.

A report in the *Financial Times* said that when asked about the DGCA's decision, Boeing said it deferred to the regulator and declined to comment further.

In its preliminary investigation report last week, India's Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau (AAIB) said the Air India plane crashed after both its engines were starved of fuel as the two fuel control switches transi-

tioned from 'RUN' to 'CUTOFF' position within a second of each other, moments after lift-off.

The DGCA order came after a few Boeing aircraft operators, mainly those overseas, initiated voluntary inspections advised in the 2018 SAIB. A few foreign carriers, including Abu Dhabi-based Etihad, have begun voluntary checks of the fuel control switches on their 787 fleets despite the FAA and Boeing notifying operators of 787 jets that the

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Next-gen bullet train to debut in India & Japan at same time: Rlys

DHEERAJ MISHRA
NEW DELHI, JULY 14

THE MINISTRY of Railways Monday said that the next-generation Japanese bullet train — the E10 Shinkansen — will be introduced in India and Japan simultaneously.

The statement comes at a time when the questions are being raised over the delay in finalising the procurement deal for the E5 Shinkansen model which is supposed to run on India's ambitious Mumbai-Ahmedabad high-speed rail (MAHSR) corridor.

“The Japanese Shinkansen [system] is currently running E5 trains. Next generation trains are E10. In the spirit of strategic part-

nership between Japan and India, the Japanese government has agreed to introduce E10 Shinkansen trains in the Mumbai-Ahmedabad Bullet train project. It is noteworthy that E10 will be introduced simultaneously in India and Japan,” said the Ministry.

The Ministry claimed there was no delay in the project's execution and that trials would be conducted in 2026-27 as per schedule.

Meanwhile, Indian Railways' Integral Coach Factory in Chennai has awarded a tender to state-run BEM Ltd to manufacture two high-speed trainsets, with a test speed of 280 kmph, that will be somewhat similar to the Japanese bullet train.

The Ministry said the entire 508-km corridor is being developed with Shinkansen technology. Out of the total length, 465.38 km is being built on viaducts — a bridge with a series of spans that is supported by piers or towers. On July 9, the first breakthrough was achieved in the 21-km tunnel which is being constructed between Bandra-Kurla Complex (BKC) and Shilphata in Maharashtra, marking the successful completion of a 2.7-km section of the tunnel.

Five kilometres of the tunnel are being excavated using the New Austrian Tunnelling Method between Shilphata and Ghansoli, while the remaining 16-km will be excavated using Tunnel Boring Machines.

Australia hosts largest drills involving 19 nations, with chances of Chinese scrutiny

Associated Press

MELBOURNE

The largest-ever war-fighting drills in Australia, Exercise Talisman Sabre, are under way and expected to attract the attention of Chinese spy ships.

Australia launched missiles from its M142 High Mobility Artillery Rocket System, known as HIMARS, on Monday during live-fire exercises at the Shoalwater Bay Training Area, a 4,500 sq. km. Outback expanse in Queensland State. The HIMARS launchers were recently bought from the United States.

Talisman Sabre began in



HIMARS rockets are fired as part of the Talisman Sabre 2025 joint war fighting exercise at Shoalwater Bay on Monday. REUTERS

2005 as a biennial joint exercise between the U.S. and Australia.

This year, more than 35,000 military personnel from 19 nations, including

Canada, Fiji, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Japan, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, South Korea, Singa-

pore, Thailand, Tonga, and the United Kingdom, will take part over three weeks, Australia's defence department said.

Papua New Guinea

The exercise will also take place in Papua New Guinea, Australia's nearest neighbour. It is the first time Talisman Sabre activities have been held outside Australia.

Chinese surveillance ships have monitored naval exercises off the Australian coast during the last four Talisman Sabre exercises and were expected to surveil the current exercise, Defense Industry Minister Pat Conroy said.

Trump threatens Russia with tariffs if Ukraine war is not resolved in 50 days

U.S. President warns of 'secondary tariffs' that target Russia's remaining trade partners; he unveils a deal under which the NATO bloc will buy arms from the U.S. — including Patriot anti-missile batteries — and distribute them to Ukraine

Associated Press
WASHINGTON

U.S. President Donald Trump on Monday told Russia to resolve its Ukraine war within 50 days or face massive new economic sanctions as he laid out plans for new infusions of weaponry for Kyiv.

"We are very, very unhappy" with Russia, Mr. Trump told reporters as he met with NATO chief Mark Rutte in the White House. "We are going to be doing very severe tariffs if we don't have a deal in 50 days, tariffs at about 100%," Mr. Trump said, adding that they would be



Brain storming: NATO Secretary-General Mark Rutte meets Donald Trump at the Oval Office of the White House on Monday. AP

"secondary tariffs" that target Russia's trade partners — thereby seeking to cripple Moscow's ability to survive already sweeping Western sanctions.

Mr. Trump and Mr. Rutte also unveiled a deal under which the NATO military alliance would buy arms from the U.S. — including Patriot anti-missile

batteries — and then distribute them to Ukraine to help it battle Russia's invasion.

"This is billions of dollars worth of military equipment is going to be purchased from the United States, going to NATO.. and that's going to be quickly distributed to the battlefield," Mr. Trump said.

Mr. Rutte, a former Dutch Prime Minister, said Ukraine would get "massive numbers" of weapons under the deal.

Mr. Trump's announcement on Monday came as his special envoy Keith Kellogg arrived in Kyiv to meet Mr. Zelenskyy.

Mr. Zelenskyy hailed the "productive meeting", saying they had discussed "strengthening Ukraine's air defence, joint production, and procurement of defense weapons in collaboration with Europe."

Russian forces meanwhile said on Monday they had captured new territory in eastern Ukraine with the seizure of two villages, one in the Donetsk region and another in the Zaporizhzhia region.

✓ In Kyiv, Mr. Zelenskyy also proposed a major political shake-up, recommending Economy Minister Yulia Svyrydenko take over as the country's new Prime Minister.

+ Israel strikes Syrian tanks after 99 killed in sectarian clashes

Agence France-Presse

DAMASCUS

Syrian government forces were advancing towards the southern city of Sweida on Monday amid clashes in the region between Druze fighters and Bedouin tribes that have killed nearly 100 people, according to a war monitor.

As the violence escalated, Israel – which had previously warned that it would intervene in Syria to protect the Druze – said it struck “several tanks” in the area, citing security concerns.

Regime’s challenges

The fighting underscores the challenges facing interim leader Ahmad al-Sharaa [Muhammad al-Jolani], whose Islamist forces ousted President Bashar al-Asad in December after 14



Keeping guard: A member of the Syrian security forces stationed in Sweida in southern Syria on Monday. AFP

years of civil war.

The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights war monitor raised its death toll to 99 killed since fighting erupted on Sunday, including 60 Druze, four of them civilians, 18 Bedouin fighters, 14 security personnel and seven unidentified persons in military uniforms.

Syrian forces on Mon-

No specific date set for nuclear talks with U.S.: Iran

Agence France-Presse

TEHRAN

Iran said on Monday it had “no specific date” for a meeting with the U.S. on Tehran’s nuclear programme, following a war with Israel that had derailed negotiations.

“For now, no specific date, time or location has been determined,” Foreign Ministry spokesman Esmail Baqaei said regarding plans for a meeting between Iran’s top diplomat Abbas Araghchi and U.S. envoy Steve Witkoff.

“We have been serious in diplomacy and the negotiation process, but before the sixth round, the Zionist regime, in coordination with the U.S., committed military aggression against Iran”, Mr. Baqaei said.

day took control of the Druze village of Al-Mazraa, where Bedouin fighters were also located. A commander, Ezzeddine al-Shamayer, said the forces “are heading toward Sweida” city.

The Interior Ministry declared that “Army and internal security forces have moved closer to the centre” of Sweida.

Employment by GCCs in India expected to go up to 2.8 million by 2030, says FM

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU
NEW DELHI, JULY 14

APPROXIMATELY HALF of Fortune 500 companies have set up their Global Capability Centres (GCCs) in India, Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said on Monday, adding that GCCs currently employ nearly 2.16 million professionals and the number is expected to go up to 2.80 million by 2030.

“All the GCCs in India employ nearly 2.16 million professionals. The CAGR at which it has grown is 11 per cent over the last five years. And this number of 2.16 million is



Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman at the CII Global Capability Centre Summit, in New Delhi.

ANI

expected to go to 2.80 million by 2030. This is a very conservative number,” she said at Confederation of Indian Industry’s (CII’s) event named ‘The GCC Opportunity in India’. Over 32 per cent of global GCC talent is currently based in India, she said adding that the country’s GCC sector contributes \$68 billion as direct gross value addition (GVA), that is, around 1.6 per cent of the national GDP. “By 2030, the gross value addition from GCCs could potentially range between \$150 billion to \$200 billion. That is the scope we have before us and the potential we can see,” she said.

The setup rate of engineering research & development GCCs has

grown 1.3 times faster than the overall GCC setup over the last 5 years, indicating a clear shift towards high-value-added work in India, the minister said. “...they are not just for product development, it is not services in operation and it is not just delivery, complex work that requires a significant understanding of the business context and the imperatives. The setup rate, and this is again one interesting detail – the setup rate of engineering research and development, the GCCs have grown 1.3 times faster than the overall GCC setup over the last five years,” she said.

FULL REPORT ON
www.indianexpress.com

Two unequal

World Bank gets it wrong. India cannot have world's lowest consumption inequality and highest income inequality



SURJIT S BHALLA

THE FACTS ARE clear and unambiguous — consumption inequality in India, as measured by the Gini index, was the lowest (most equal) in the world in 2022-23. However, the debate on this is messy and bordering on sordid. What is interesting is that all the important participants in the discussion/debate (Government of India, World Bank, and Indian media) have got it wrong in one way or another. This is not idle armchair criticism, as I document below.

It all started with an essay published on the ORF website which says that, “contrary to popular narratives, India is not merely the world’s fourth-largest economy; it is also the world’s fourth most equal society”. Unfortunately, this is false on both counts. India will not be the fourth-largest economy at least until March 2027; and India today is the most equal society — not fourth most equal — but only in terms of consumption. Its rank in terms of an income Gini is not known since India, to date, has not conducted an official income distribution survey.

The government has endorsed these wrong “findings” through a PIB release; the BJP also wrongfully stated that India was the fourth most equal society — it only differed in stating that we ranked fourth in terms of social equality (whatever that index might be). The endorsers completely ignored the important, and correct, result that India was most equal only in terms of consumption inequality. Critics were quick to pounce, and correctly so, on the errors of interpretation. Which led to them compounding the error. And the debate goes on.

For example, Surbhi Kesar of SOAS has rightly claimed that the conclusion that India is amongst the most equal countries (as published in the GOI PIB report) was incorrect, since it compared apples with oranges or mixed consumption distributions with income distributions. “A fair comparison would either be to compare India’s income inequality with other countries’ income Ginis, or compare India’s consumption inequality with other countries’ consumption Ginis.”

This makes perfect sense. Unfortunately, after outlining the right procedure, Kesar

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makes the same mistake as others. She chooses to use a third source of data on distribution — not consumption, not income, but synthetic estimates of income distribution as published by the private-sector World Inequality Database (WID). WID constructs estimates by its own assumptions — a new literature has developed in leading American economic journals about the unrealistic and questionable nature of WID’s synthetic estimates for the US.

Inequality has always been discussed in terms of either the distribution of consumption or of income. Everyone recognises — from survey organisations to policy makers to academicians — that the measurement of distributions is flawed, imperfect, imprecise. All recognise that household surveys are the best instrument for gauging inequality in a society.

Towards this end, the World Bank has laboured to construct the popular and respected Poverty Inequality Platform (PIP), which provides data for all the official consumption and income surveys in the world. PIP reports data on 167 countries, 2,258 distributions for years 1963 to 2024. These data are the only “official” source of comparable income and consumption distributions. “Official” because governments provide unit-level data to the World Bank for analysis by its army of researchers and analysts. There is only one exception to this rigid, and correct, World Bank requirement: China only provides summary ventile (5 percentile) distributions to the World Bank for analysis and subsequent publication. Perhaps BRICS can “influence” China to comply with the open-data requirements of international organisations!

The PIP data does not contain any information on income distribution for India or South Africa — for good reason, because no official income survey exists for either of these countries.

According to PIP, the most unequal (consumption) country in the world, at least for the last 25 years, is South Africa with a Gini of 63.0. The most equal is India with a Gini of 25.5 in 2022.

Notwithstanding its own findings, and the

lack of any official data, the World Bank felt compelled to gratuitously note in its April 2025 Poverty and Equity Brief for India: “India’s consumption-based Gini index improved from 28.8 in 2011-12 to 25.5 in 2022-23, though inequality may be underestimated due to data limitations. In contrast, the World Inequality Database shows income inequality rising from a Gini of 52 in 2004 to 62 in 2023.” The briefs report summary data for 130 developing countries, but only for India does the World Bank quote WID synthetic results on income distribution. To add insult to statistical injury, the World Bank believes that official surveys have data limitations (yes they do), but WID synthetic distributions have no data limitations! In India, we call this kind of inference the advent of Kalyug, the “age of darkness”.

The World Bank has been a pioneer in the collection and verification of consumption and income distribution data since its creation. The PIP database is testimony to its intellectual honesty and expertise. However, the World Bank states that India has the lowest consumption inequality in the world; in the same breath (or paragraph) it states (via its endorsement of the WID synthetic results) that India has the highest income inequality. Such a paradoxical result has heretofore not been documented by any organisation in the world, let alone by a well-known and internationally renowned NGO. One of these estimates is clearly in huge error.

The memory banks of the World Bank will reveal that its own research (some 25 years ago) had documented that income Ginis were, on average, six Gini points higher than consumption Ginis. Would the World Bank care to explain how it finds credible an income WID Gini of 62 along with a consumption Gini of 26? What do these “facts” say about the World Bank’s credibility? About WID’s credibility? The whole world is watching, and awaiting, a meaningful response from sister organisations on this important credibility question.

The writer is chairperson, Technical Expert Group for the first official Household Income Survey for India. Views are personal